PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
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AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2005–06

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PERSONAL ASSISTANT/SECRETARY—Belinda Woodiwiss, Philippa Goodfellow (temporary)

EXECUTIVE CHEF—vacancy

RETAIL MANAGER—Mary de Souza

Catering Services - Palace of Westminster—

OPERATIONS MANAGER—Robert Gibbs

CATERING MANAGER—Alexandra Hewitt

RESTAURANT AND BARS MANAGER—Ginny Borthwick

PRINCIPAL FLOOR MANAGER— Catherine Joyce

DINING ROOM SUPERVISORS—Joaquim Ferreira (Press), Toby Dyer (Churchill Room), Fabrizio Maddedu (Principal Floor), Janice Spriggs (Principal Floor)

PRINCIPAL FLOOR SENIOR BAR ATTENDANT—Vacancy

BANQUETING MANAGER— Christian Purser

BANQUETING CO-ORDINATORS—Jason Bonello, Diane Elderfield, Carlos Ramirez Canessa

BANQUETING FLOOR MANAGER—Rui Duarte

BANQUETING SUPERVISOR—Vacancy

Catering Services - Outbuildings—

OPERATIONS MANAGER — Della Herd

SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGERS - OUTBUILDINGS —Andrew Buckmaster

MANAGERS - PORTCULLIS HOUSE —Denise Durkin

MANAGER - 1 PARLIAMENT STREET (BELLAMY'S)—Tammy Holmes

MANAGER - 7 MILLBANK—James Ellis

Finance and Accounts Office—

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER—Morounke Akingbola

FINANCE MANAGER—Caroline Attenborough
ACCOUNTS OFFICE STAFF—Connie Bichri, Alison Cutts, Hannah Scott, Jan Gundersen
CASHIER—Kate Lapidge
PURCHASING MANAGER—Kate Hunt (Acting)
HEAD STOREKEEPER—Mark Wildash

OTHER PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY—Alex Allan
COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL—Sir John Bourn, KCB
PARLIAMENTARY AND HEALTH SERVICE OMBUDSMAN—Ann Abraham

9 January 2006

Written Ministerial Statement

Monday 9 January 2006

HOME DEPARTMENT

Terrorism Bill

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I am today placing in the Libraries of both Houses a letter from Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the Terrorism Bill. I am grateful to the high commissioner for her letter. She suggests that the Bill would benefit from further scrutiny. The Bill is of course currently before the House of Lords where it is subject to detailed consideration.

The high commissioner has a number of specific concerns about the Bill. We do not believe that these are justified. She suggests that the Bill lacks a precise definition of terrorism. In fact, the Bill draws on the definition of terrorism contained in Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000. As has been made clear during the Bill's parliamentary passage, the Government do not believe that a better definition of terrorism can easily be created, but we have asked the independent reviewer of our terrorism legislation, Lord Carlile of Berriew, to conduct a review of the definition of terrorism used in legislation. He has said that in doing so he will consult widely and will report within a year of commencement of the new Act.

The high commissioner is concerned about Clauses 1 and 2 of the Bill. The Government have made a number of changes to these clauses during the Bill's parliamentary passage and given indications of further planned changes. These include imposing an intent test, with subjective recklessness, in Clause 1 and widening the defence of non-endorsement in both Clauses 1 and 2. The Government are satisfied that these clauses constitute a proportionate and necessary response to the threat of terrorism.

The high commissioner queries Clause 21, which extends the grounds for proscription to include those organisations that glorify terrorism. The Government believe that such organisations can create a climate in which terrorism can flourish and their activities need to be restricted. The full safeguards, including parliamentary approval subject to the affirmative resolution and appeal rights, will apply to any groups proscribed under these powers.

The high commissioner expresses concern about the proposal to extend the maximum pre-charge detention period in terrorism cases to 28 days. This has been extensively debated in Parliament and the Government accept Parliament's decision in this matter. The Government are satisfied that the safeguards in place, including regular judicial oversight, mean that an extension to the maximum pre-charge detention period to 28 days (as would an extension to 90 days) would be compatible with the UK's international human rights obligations.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 10 January 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Court Fee Increases

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, the Baroness Ashton of Upholland, has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today.

"I am today announcing the outcome of the recent consultation on Civil and Family Court Fee Increases. The Consultation Paper was published on 23 September and the consultation closed on 18 November. Some 50 responses were received from the judiciary, legal profession and other stakeholder bodies.

After careful consideration of these, my right hon. and noble Friend, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor has, with two exceptions, decided to proceed with all the fee increases proposed. Three Statutory Instruments containing the new civil, family and magistrates' court fees were laid before the House on 20 December 2005 and will take effect today. A report analysing the responses to consultation in detail will be published shortly.

The Lord Chancellor has decided not to introduce at this stage the proposed increase from £210 to £380 of the fee for an application for ancillary relief. Consultees expressed particularly strong concerns about the size and timing of this proposal. There were also concerns that a detrimental impact on access to justice in this context could also harm any children of the family. It will be necessary to look again at this fee following the planned review of the system of exemptions and remissions.

The Lord Chancellor has also decided not to pursue the proposed increases to the fees for issuing lower value monetary claims. Some consultees were concerned that these fees were disproportionately high relative to the amount claimed. These increases would also run counter to our longer-term strategy of achieving a better match between income and cost within the system.

The increases will raise about £10.6 million additional income in the current financial year, £43 million in a full year. They are necessary to ensure that Her Majesty's Courts Service can balance its budget and meet its cost recovery targets for this and future years. As the Consultation Paper made clear, the need to raise this income and the underlying fees policy were not in question; the issue was whether the particular package of increases proposed was most apt to meet the need.

A key objective of that package, with which the majority of those who commented agreed in principle, was to harmonise the fees, which shall enable more effective allocation of cases to the lowest appropriate level of judiciary. This in turn will benefit court users by enabling many cases to be dealt with more quickly.

The Government's policy remains that court fees should generally be set to reflect (on average) the cost of the service provided. Where they can afford to do so, it is right that litigants using the civil courts, rather than the taxpayer, should meet the cost. This ensures that the taxpayers' contribution to the cost of the civil and family courts is focused on funding the cost of the system of fee exemptions and remissions, in order to ensure that less well-off citizens are not denied access to justice. Setting fees generally at levels lower than the full cost would mean that corporations and other wealthy litigants would benefit from taxpayers contribution—increasing cost and putting pressures on other budgets like legal aid.

The current increases form part of our longer term strategy for court fees. Its objectives are to ensure that the system:

meets the cost recovery targets set for civil, family and probate business (including, as appropriate, the cost of investment to modernise the courts);

protects access to justice through a well-targeted system of exemptions and remissions;

ensures that the taxpayers' contribution to the cost of the court system remains affordable;

so far as practicable, broadly matches the level of particular fees or sets of related fees to thecost of the particular processes and type of case concerned.

This year, we plan to undertake two major reviews as the next steps in delivering this strategy.

The first will be a fundamental review of the system of exemptions and remissions to ensure that it adequately protects access to justice and is operated consistently. This review will be overseen by a steering group of stakeholders, including representatives of the Civil and Family Justice Councils, which I will chair.

The second will review the structure of the system, that is the points at which fees are charged. The key objective will be to achieve a closer match of income and cost drivers, in particular through the introduction of trial fees. This is necessary both to make the system fairer as between different types of litigant, and make it easier to ensure that cost and funding remain in balance as workload changes. This review will also consider the various specific suggestions for changing the fee structure raised by respondents to consultation."

DEFENCE

Reserve Forces

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am announcing today that a new order has been made under section 54 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996, so that reservists may continue to be called out into service to support operations in Iraq. The new order is effective until 3 January 2007 and replaces the previous order that expired earlier this month.

During the course of the last year, some 2,000 reservists were called out and accepted into service to support operations in Iraq. Details of the next tranche of reservists to be called out were announced to the House on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 86WS. Some 700 reservists are involved and they will be deployed to theatre from May, where the majority will complete six month tours. We remain very appreciative of the continuing support and commitment shown by reservists, their employers and their families.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq: Export Licence System

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): The arms embargo in Iraq continues under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 with exemptions for supplies of arms and related matériel

required by the Government of Iraq (GOI) or the Multi-National Force (MNF) to serve the purposes of the resolution.

Following a thorough review of its procedures for processing export licence applications to Iraq, Her Majesty's Government will consider as exempt from the embargo exports to the GOI, the MNF, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq, diplomatic missions in Iraq and entities contracted or subcontracted to GOI or the MNF. Export licence applications to these end users will not therefore require the approval of the GoI or MNF prior to approval of the application. For exports serving the purposes of UNSCR 1546 to entities other than these, Her Majesty's Government will seek the approval of the GOI or MNF to ensure that the proposed export is exempt from the embargo. Her Majesty's Government will keep the Government of Iraq informed on a quarterly basis of all exports of military equipment to Iraq.

Rendition: Additional Information

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): My reply of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1652W to the question put by the right hon. and learned Member for North-East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) stated that officials had identified a few instances during the administration of President Clinton where the US authorities had requested permission to render a detainee through UK territory or airspace. I added that officials continued to search the records.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have now completed a search of all relevant records back to May 1997. This search has turned up one further case, also in 1998; the Government declined a US request to refuel a flight carrying two detainees in route to the US.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Respect Action Plan

The Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety (Hazel Blears): I have placed in the Library of the House a copy of the "Respect Action Plan", which is launched today.

The "Respect Action Plan" sets out the Government's intention to broaden the current approach to tackling antisocial behaviour through addressing disrespect in every walk of life. We intend to deepen the approach by tackling the causes of antisocial behaviour, intervening early where problems occur and the agenda goes further than before by empowering communities themselves to challenge disrespect and encourage positive behaviour.

Broadening our approach will be accomplished through measures which include addressing school discipline and attendance. The plan stresses the critical role of schools and parents in tackling disrespectful behaviour, persistent truancy and inadequate supervision of excluded children. We also want to ensure that young people are active and learn how to make a positive impact as individuals in our society. There is a strong emphasis on expanding the role of sport, constructive activities and volunteering as positive routes to nurture a culture of respect among young people.

The cross-Government drive to address problem families and support good parenting is at the heart of our strategy to build a code of respect for the 21st century. By deepening our approach, we intend to intervene in families in crisis and provide support and practical advice. The plan promises a major new programme of projects to work intensively with the most problematic families who can cause such distress within our communities

And we will take our approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour further by ensuring that respect is promoted across government and throughout our programmes, funding and inspection regimes. Neighbourhoods will be empowered to ensure that local services deal quickly and effectively with the disrespectful behaviour of a minority. Our aim is to bring speedy, visible and reparative justice through a raft of measures which extend the powers available to address low-level crime and antisocial behaviour.

The "Respect Action Plan" is available on the web at: www.respect.gov.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Companies Registry

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela E. Smith): In accordance with article 677 of The Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, copies of the Companies Registry Annual Report 2004 have been placed today in the Libraries of both Houses.

Northern Ireland Credit Unions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela E. Smith): In accordance with Article 81 of The Credit Unions (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and Section 100 of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969, copies of the Credit Unions Annual Report 2004 have been placed today in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRANSPORT

Container Port Development

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Ports in the United Kingdom play a vital role in supporting the national economy and contributing to sustainable development. The Government are committed to maintaining and enhancing that role through our broad approach to ports policy and through the decisions we take on individual ports applications. We aim to exercise our responsibility in respect of applications as promptly as possible, consistent with the need to consider all relevant factors and allow all interested parties sufficient opportunity to comment.

I can now report to the House that, as part of that process, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport my hon. Friend the Member for Halton (Derek Twigg) announced on 21 December that he was minded to approve the proposal from Hutchison Ports UK for a container port at Bathside Bay at Harwich,

Essex. He noted, however, that there are some matters which require further clarification, including making sure that the right conditions are imposed on the development to secure the necessary highways improvements in good time to provide congestion relief. A similar letter, covering planning and listed building appeals related to the development, was issued by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. The Government believe this expansion in deep-sea container port capacity is justified by the economic benefits it will bring regionally and nationally. But we understand that there should be controls imposed on the development, to provide new road and rail infrastructure so that congestion does not increase, to provide compensatory habitats for wildlife displaced by the scheme, and to reduce other environmental impacts such as noise, pollution and the visual impact.

My hon. Friend had already announced in July last year that he was minded to approve the proposal from P&O Ports for a new container port at London Gateway, near Thurrock in Essex. Working in conjunction with my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, who had announced in parallel that he was minded to approve the proposed adjoining logistics centre at London Gateway, we have invited representations regarding road access and other matters both on that proposal and now on Bathside Bay. We will consider any representations carefully before moving to final decisions.

My hon. Friend is also considering a separate proposal from Hutchison for providing further deep-sea container port capacity through the reconfiguration of the Felixstowe South site in Suffolk. He, together with my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, expects to make announcements on that shortly.

The ports industry is responding to demand for capacity in other traffic sectors as well. On 21 December my hon. Friend also made a final decision approving the application from Associated British Ports plc to construct a short-sea container terminal at Quay 2005 in Hull. After carefully considering the likely impacts on local residents, and balancing them against the wider economic benefits, the Government are satisfied that this project will overall bring significant benefits to the city of Hull and the region as a whole. The Government are also satisfied that the project's likely impacts on nature conservation sites will be adequately compensated for by the creation of replacement habitat in the Humber estuary.

Airports (Policing)

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Following my statement of 21 November in which I announced that the Government had decided to commission an independent, wide-ranging review of policing at airports, I am pleased to announce today, that I have appointed Stephen Boys Smith, a retired Home Office Director-General, to lead the review. I expect the review to be completed by late spring.

The review will aim to identify a sustainable approach to the policing of airports that takes account of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in protecting an airport and in particular addresses the need for funding arrangements that are objective and transparent. The review will compare the present method of policing airports with that of other modes of transport and will consider whether the principle of designation can be made to work. If it cannot, the review is asked to propose alternative options. The full terms of reference are:

to review the role of the police service at airports, using as a base-line the recommendations of Sir John Wheeler's 2002 review of airport security. The Review will take account of any other relevant reports and will consider how the airport manager, the police and other stakeholders at the airport can best work together, given their respective roles and responsibilities, including under the National Aviation Security Programme. Account will also be taken of the extent of any overlap in security activities at airports and the scope for efficiencies;

to compare the present approach to the policing of airports with that applied to other modes of transport to establish any differences or similarities in policing approaches, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities that may apply. This will include the current review into the BTP;

to develop a model—with options recognising that different airports may require different approaches—for the policing of airports;

to develop criteria upon which an objective assessment can be made as to whether an airport should be designated for policing purposes. Then to consider whether, on the basis of these criteria and taking account of voluntary multi-agency risk assessments (MATRA), the principle of the existing designation process can be made to work; and if not, to propose alternative options;

to consider options and mechanisms for funding policing at airports in the light of any findings or recommendations that emerge from the review, taking account of the resources committed separately to security by airport operators and others. The Review will take into account the economic impact of any recommendations that it makes;

to consider any requirement for changes in legislation.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 11 January 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Adoption and Children Act (Representation of Children)

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, the Baroness Ashton of Upholland has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today

"The final stages of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 were implemented on 30 December 2005. This date saw the commencement of the core provisions for local authorities by the Department for Education and Skills and the National Assembly for Wales and rules of court from my Department that underpin the new provisions. Subsection 1(a) of s122 provides for representation of children within placement proceedings and rules made to come into force on 30 December 2005.

Subsection 1(b) and subsection (2) provide rule making powers for the separate representation of children in Children Act cases generally and in particular in section 8 cases. Both provisions were commenced on 7 December 2004. To inform our consideration of what rules of court might be made, my Department commissioned research by Cardiff University. We wanted to understand whether formal representation through a solicitor and guardian is meeting children's needs, or whether there are other ways in which their needs can be met. It also met our commitment to consult with children on this issue.

The Cardiff University research with children and families focused on their views on how they were heard/how involved when children were separately represented under the existing rule 9.5 of the Family Proceedings Rules 1991. We have now received the first draft of that research which I hope to publish next month.

The views of children themselves were not conclusive due to the small sample size, but when added to other evidence the research does not indicate that separate representation would be right for all children in all cases. New rules of court will be developed in the light of this research evidence and CAFCASS's important proposals in 'Every Day Matters'.

Existing provisions for the representation of children remain unaffected and offer a range of ways in which a court making decisions about them may hear children's wishes and feelings. In the first year after the issue of the rule 9.5 Practice Direction by the President of the Family Division in April 2004, CAFCASS figures indicate that courts made more than double the number of rule 9.5 appointments by comparison with the previous year. An updated analysis of figures at the end of the current financial year will provide further information about the extent of the courts' use of CAFCASS officers to undertake rule 9.5 work on behalf of children. The increased use of rule 9.5 appointments following the issue of the Practice Direction appears to have refocused issues on the child at an earlier stage in the proceedings, alongside consideration of the protracted concerns of the parents".

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Safeguarding Children/Vulnerable Adults

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly): The protection of children is a top priority for this Government. The case which has come to public attention this week raises very serious issues.

I take full responsibility for all decisions taken in the Department on whether individuals should be placed on LIST 99, the list covering those barred working in schools.

The LIST 99 barring scheme is a process that has operated for decades. In a number of specified serious offences an individual will automatically be included on LIST 99. Initial inquiries indicate that there have been a small number of cases where, on the basis of advice, in accordance with the process that has been in operation for many years, Ministers have made the decision not to include on LIST 99 an individual on the Sex Offenders Register.

It is of the utmost importance that the House and wider public are not misled by any information put into the public domain. I have therefore decided to commission as a matter of urgency an exhaustive review of all such cases since the introduction of the Sex Offenders Register in 1997—a register which provides an additional safeguard for prospective employers. I will also review the decision-making process surrounding such cases and any immediate policy implications. For example, I will consider:

How the closest possible alignment can be secured between LIST 99, the Sex Offenders Register and other data sources.

The role of Ministers in the decision making process.

How police advice can be more fully considered prior to decisions being made.

I will make a further statement to the House shortly.

The Government are already committed to implementing Sir Michael Bichard's recommendations to tighten the system for vetting and barring those who wish to work with children and vulnerable adults and to bringing forward legislation in this session of Parliament.

In the meantime, with immediate effect, I will personally consider any cases of individuals on the Sex Offenders Register where a Ministerial decision is required as to whether they should be placed on LIST 99.

HEALTH

Mental Health Act Commission

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Mental Health Act Commission's 11th biennial report entitled "In Place of Fear?" was laid before Parliament today.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 12 January 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Service (Management Functions) Act 1992 (Delegations/Authorisations)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Jim Murphy): No such delegations or authorisations were made during 2005.

DEFENCE

QinetiQ Shareholder Team

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): I am pleased to announce to Parliament the decision to float QinetiQ, formerly part of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA), on the London Stock Exchange. This represents the next step in the Public Private Partnership for defence research, which was first announced in 1998 as part of the Strategic Defence Review. It is a significant achievement to have reached this stage five years after QinetiQ was first vested as a Government-owned company, and three years after the Carlyle Group became, through its minority stake, our strategic partner.

The aims of the Public Private Partnership were to strengthen the linkages between defence and civil technologies, encourage the commercial exploitation of taxpayers' investment in science and technology and create a sustainable future for DERA and its staff, while retaining within Government those functions not appropriate to the private sector.

Carlyle became our strategic partner in February 2003, following a competitive process that achieved the best possible deal for the taxpayer at that time. Through the introduction of private sector investment and expertise into the company, this partnership has enabled QinetiQ to build on its remarkable heritage to produce a strong trading performance, exploit its capabilities in the civil sector and develop a significant business in the US through its successful strategy of US acquisitions, while continuing to be a key supplier of cutting edge technology and services for our Armed Forces. For example, QinetiQ's rapid development of a new system to provide fast and safe ways of clearing mines from shallow waterways through the fitting of remote control technology to unmanned combat support boats has added to the capability of UK forces operating in Iraq. Its runway hazard detection system, Tarsier, developed from advanced radar research in the wake of the Concorde tragedy, has been trialled at some of the world's busiest airports and will shortly be protecting air travellers at Vancouver International Airport. The growth and development of the company, both in the UK and on a global level since our strategic partnership with Carlyle, has significantly increased its value and therefore the benefit to the taxpayer as its majority shareholder.

Against this background, and informed by the advice of our joint financial advisors, the Government, Carlyle and the company itself judge that QinetiQ is now ready for the next stage in the process: an initial public offering (IPO). The Government believe that an IPO provides the best route for QinetiQ further to develop its excellence as a supplier of battle-winning technology to our armed forces while also creating new opportunities to exploit British technology in a global market. Subject to market conditions, our current intention is to complete the IPO during February.

Following the IPO, both the Government and Carlyle will continue to retain a significant stake in the company reflecting our confidence in its future. The Government will also retain a special share in QinetiQ to protect the United Kingdom's defence and security interests.

Merlin Capability Sustainment Programme

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am announcing today the award of a contract to Lockheed Martin UK for the upgrade of the Royal Navy's Merlin Mk 1 helicopters. This upgrade, known as the Merlin Capability Sustainment Programme, is vital in keeping the Merlin Mk 1 effective until its planned out-of-service date in 2029. The contract, which includes upgrading the Merlin MK1 Training System, is valued at some £750 million and the first squadron of MCSP aircraft will enter service by September 2014. This contract award will help sustain some 1,400 high technology jobs across the UK mainly at Lockheed Martin in Havant and Agusta Westlands in Yeovil as well as in Smiths Industries, Thales UK, Selex and Ael.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Jim Fitzpatrick): The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (SI 2005 No 1541) was made on 7 June 2005.

During the passage of the Order it was of concern to the House that business and enforcers should have adequate time to familiarise themselves with the new regime and the guidance that will accompany it and that the coming into force date should, so far as practicable, be timed to coincide as closely as possible with reform of fire safety laws in Scotland.

Despite extensive work with stakeholders it is clear that all the guidance documents will not be ready for a full 12 week gap between publication and coming into force on 1 April 2006.

In the light of the commitments we have given to the House and our commitment to ensuring this reform is properly backed, we have therefore concluded that the coming into force of the substantive provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order should be put back. We will therefore bring an Order, under article 52 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, to amend the coming into force date of the new regime before the House as quickly as possible.

Hon. Members will also wish to note that the Scottish Authorities have determined that more time should be allowed for reform north of the border. The reform in Scotland is now expected to come into force in October 2006 at the earliest.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Applications

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Home Office (IND) have requested that a pilot scheme be undertaken by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to evaluate the effects that increased reintegration assistance may have on incentivising failed asylum seekers, and those who wish to withdraw any outstanding asylum applications or appeals, to return to their country of origin. Voluntary returns are always preferable to enforced returns. The pilot which began on 1 January will run for a period of six months.

VARRP (Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme) is the generic programme through which those who have made an asylum application can return to their country of origin with assistance. During 2004–05 there were 2,678 returns under VARRP. Between 1 April and 30 November 2005 there have been 2,236 returns and we are projecting returns in the region of 3,500 for 2005–06. The recent NAO report on failed asylum seekers recommended that more should be done to promote voluntary returns. IND and IOM have undertaken a significant amount of work to promote voluntary returns over the last 18 months, and this exercise will look at the levels of incentive required to stimulate return. It will also assist in developing the most appropriate level of incentive in future voluntary return programmes.

Currently, VARRP provides all returnees with reintegration assistance to the value of £1,000. This assistance is provided in kind. This means that returnees are not provided with cash grants but are given help with starting up a small business, vocational training or education. All those who leave the UK under this scheme will be offered an additional £2,000 which they can choose to take as either additional re-integration assistance or cash grants. This offer will be available only to those who leave the UK between 1 January and 30 June 2006 and no-one who made an application for asylum after 31 December 2005 will be eligible for this. It is anticipated that such an offer could increase the number of predicted returns from about 1,950 to over 3,000 for the six month period.

In order to promote this exercise the Home Office has undertaken a mailshot to all those currently on National Asylum Support Service support and is publicising the scheme to those who attend reporting centres and to those who are eligible in detention. IOM will also advertise the scheme through posters and advertisements.

The additional cost of this scheme will be £6.2 million over six months if the increased assistance is paid to 3,000 volunteers.

These additional costs represent good value for money against the cost of enforced returns which the NAO has calculated to cost £11,000 each on average. There are also significant potential savings in the provision of NASS accommodation, support costs and detention expenditure.

Private Security Industry (Approved Contractor Scheme)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): Following public consultation during the autumn, the Government have decided to introduce an Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) for the private security industry.

The ACS will include elements from two of the options in the consultation paper: Option 3, which would require companies to possess one or more of a list of specified existing standards, and Option 4 which would introduce a new standard defined by the Security Industry Authority. These two options were the most popular in the consultation, with over 90 per cent. of respondents expressing a preference for one of them. By adopting a mixture of the two, we will enable those firms that have already achieved an existing standard to take credit for that, without requiring smaller firms, in particular, to go through the same procedure.

There is still a lot of detail to be worked through. The detail of the scheme, including the fee structure, will be announced as soon as possible, so that companies are able to plan and prepare for the implementation date. The detail of the ACS will be subject to annual review. Companies approved under the scheme will be permitted to deploy a small proportion of their security personnel who are not yet licensed but have completed training and have an application pending. They will not be able to deploy unlicensed personnel on assignments that involve contact with children or vulnerable adults. This will ensure that those dealing with this particularly sensitive group have undergone, and satisfied any SIA requirements relating to a Criminal Records Bureau check.

The date on which it will become mandatory for manned guards to be licensed remains 20 March 2006. Licensing for door supervisors and vehicle immobilisers is already mandatory.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Buncefield Oil Depot Fire

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) is today announcing the appointment of the right hon. Lord Newton of Braintree as the independent chairman of the board supervising the investigation into the incident at the Buncefield oil depot on 11 December 2005.

The investigation board, set up by the HSC under powers set out in Section 14(2)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, will report to both HSC and the Environment Agency. As well as the board chair, it also includes two other independent members

with relevant expertise: Professor Dougal Drysdale, one of the leading international authorities in Fire Safety Engineering and Dr. Peter Baxter, a consultant physician in occupational and environmental medicine. The board will also include three members of staff from the Environment Agency and HSE.

The Commission will publish the special report produced by the Investigation Board.

The HSC's decision to establish an investigation board highlights the severity of the incident and the degree of concern for people living close to the Buncefield site and to the local business community. It is determined to ensure the investigation is carried out thoroughly, objectively, transparently and concluded in a timely manner with its findings made public as soon as possible, subject to legal considerations.

HSC is an independent body of 10 people, appointed by the Secretary of State for Department for Work and Pensions, after consultation with organisations representing employers, employees, local authorities and others. HSC's primary function is to make arrangements to secure the health and safety of workers and the public in the way work activities are conducted; including proposing new law and standards, conducting research and providing information and advice.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 16 January 2006

DEFENCE

UK Gulf Veterans (Mortality Data)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): As part of the Government's continuing commitment to investigate Gulf veterans' illnesses openly and honestly, data on the mortality of veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict are published regularly. The most recent figures for the period 1 April 1991 to 31 December 2005, are published today as a National Statistic on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website.

The data for Gulf veterans are compared to that of a control group known as the "Era cohort" which is made up of armed forces personnel of a similar profile in terms of gender, service, regular/reservists status and rank, who were not deployed to the Gulf. As in the previous release, the "Era" group has been adjusted for a small difference in the age-profile of those aged 40 years and over, to ensure appropriate comparisons.

Key points to note in the data are:

There have been 755 deaths among the Gulf veterans and 765 in the age-adjusted era comparison group.

The 755 deaths among Gulf veterans compare with approximately 1,206 deaths which would have been expected in a similar sized cohort taken from the general population of the UK with the same age and gender profile. This reflects the strong emphasis on fitness when recruiting and retaining service personnel.

These statistics continue to confirm that UK veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict do not suffer an excess of overall mortality compared with service personnel that did not deploy.

The full notice can be viewed at www.dasa.mod.uk

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Nicaragua (British Embassy)

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): Copies of the reply to a freedom of information request relating to the decision to close the British Embassy in Nicaragua in 2003 have been placed in the Library of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Hydebank Wood Prison

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): I wish to announce that with effect from 23 January 2006, in accordance with the powers conferred on me by Rule 5(1) of the Prisons and Young Offenders Centre Rules (Northern Ireland) 1995, that the boundaries of Hydebank Wood Prison are hereby altered to include that part of Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre known as Beech House. The area to be included is indicated on the site map, which I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses, by the words 'Beech House'.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Construction Industry

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): I am pleased to announce that today, with Edwina Hart AM MBE, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration, I am publishing the analysis of our consultation, held last year, on "Improving Payment Practices in the Construction Industry".

The consultation proposed a number of amendments to Part II of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Scheme for Construction Contracts (England and Wales) Regulations 1998. In the light of the consultation response I am proposing to:

introduce a requirement that certification of the sum due, by one of the contracting parties or a third party, becomes an essential feature of contractual payment mechanisms;

remove the section 110(2) requirement for a payer notice;

introduce a right to apply for payment where a certificate is not issued by the due date;

make certain payment mechanisms including pay-when-certified clauses ineffective;

enhance the existing right of suspension under the Construction Act to allow the suspending party to claim for loss and expense;

prohibit the use of trustee stakeholder accounts for awards made by adjudicators;

make "final and conclusive" clauses unenforceable where they apply to decisions under the contract that are of substance to interim payments only;

take forward the Government's existing commitment to make contractual agreements on adjudication costs unenforceable and to provide a statutory framework for allocating them, including cases where adjudicators resign in response to a challenge to jurisdiction.

Our aim is to improve upon the existing legislative framework, which is generally recognised as making a valuable contribution to fairness in the way construction contracts are agreed and operated. The legislation is largely working as was intended, thanks to the willingness of the construction industry and its clients to develop their culture in the light of a changed legal framework. This is in the context of an ongoing process of change and improvement in the construction industry.

The consultation has demonstrated strong support for continued regulation of construction contracts and the current process improving the current framework. We have received 356 consultation responses—a startling demonstration of the level of interest in these issues in the construction industry and among its stakeholders. We are very grateful to all those who responded. They have had to consider some difficult and complex issues, which have required careful analysis and innovative solutions. Launching this consultation last year, my predecessor as construction Minister, my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, South

(Nigel Griffiths), observed that "*Fair payment practice is something everyone agrees with and a fair payment culture underpins any progressive and modern industry*". That is something all the responses have recognised.

The analysis also sets out the next steps we intend to take, working with the construction industry over the coming months, to ensure the package of amendments is based upon a clear and thorough understanding of all the issues, when it is published for further consultation. The DTI has already asked a sounding board of key figures in the industry to assist in the development of the proposals to ensure they match the needs of the construction industry and its clients, as well the strict requirements of the Regulatory Reform Order framework. The sounding board members are:

Richard Bayfield—Immediate past chairman of the Society of Construction Law, a Chartered Civil Engineer and project management consultant on dispute avoidance and resolution. He is an adviser on the DTI sponsored Constructing Excellence programme.

Chris Dancaster—Chairman of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' Dispute Resolution Faculty Board and an adjudicator, arbitrator and mediator. Both he and Richard Bayfield were members of the adjudication group during Sir Michael Latham's review of the Construction Act.

Richard Haryott—Chaired the payment working group during Sir Michael Latham's review of the Construction Act. He is chairman of the Ove Arup Foundation, having been a Director of Arup for over 20 years with extensive experience of the design and implementation of major projects.

Sir Michael Latham—Chaired the review of the Construction Act, which led to the DTI/Welsh Assembly Government consultation last year. Author of the 1994 report "Constructing the Team".

His Honour Humphrey Lloyd QC—Barrister and arbitrator specialising in construction law until he became a judge of the Technology and Construction Court in 1993. Having retired from the bench in 2005, he continues to act as an arbitrator.

Peter Rogers—Director and Co-founder of Stanhope plc and Chairman of Constructing Excellence. He has recently stepped down as chairman of the Strategic Forum for Construction and is chairing the taskforce on the construction industry's contribution to the 2012 Olympics.

The sounding board will advise Ministers as the DTI develops the proposals in detail and improves its understanding of their potential impacts. The members are not intended to represent specific sectors within the construction industry.

I am looking forward to involving the sounding board in a process of dialogue over the coming months with the construction industry and its stakeholders. This will include a post-consultation event, which I will be hosting on 14 February. Assuming it is possible to implement these measures via a Regulatory Reform Order, the DTI then intends to issue a further consultation on a final package of amendments in the Spring.

The analysis is available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/construction/hgcra/hgcralead.htm

UK Gas Quality Exercise

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): On 8 January 2004, in a written ministerial statement, *Official Report*, columns 13–14WS, the then Energy Minister launched the second phase of a three-phase strategy addressing the issue of future changes to the quality of gas imports to Great Britain. I can now inform the House that assessment of the available policy options, under phase two of the exercise, is complete. All of the available evidence points to a strong case for retaining the current gas quality specifications, and during the Christmas recess the Government launched a public consultation on this basis.

Phase 1 of this exercise, an independent scoping report commissioned by Government, was completed in November 2003. It confirmed that the Wobbe Index specification of certain anticipated gas imports is, before processing, likely to fall outside the current limits of the Health and Safety Executive's Gas Safety (Management) Regulations (GS(M)R). In light of Great Britain's increasing dependence on imported gas, phase 2 of the exercise was launched to identify an appropriate policy response.

As stated in previous announcements, our broad policy options appear to be: to retain the current specifications, requiring off-specification imports to be blended or processed so that the gas composition complies with existing limits, or to amend the current specifications to reflect more closely the expected quality of future gas supplies.

During the course of phase 2 the Department has let a variety of independent technical research contracts, and officials have worked closely with key stakeholders, to evaluate these options. The results show that treating off-specification imports is technically feasible and relatively cost-effective, but that the investment required risks deterring certain supplies at the gas quality margins. Alternatively, amending Great Britain's gas quality specifications could improve access to more diverse sources of supply, thus safeguarding against supply shortfalls and maintaining competition in the British gas supply market. However, introducing such changes would pose a potential threat to the safety of many gas appliances, and would risk increasing environmental emissions. Changes to Great Britain's gas quality regulations could not therefore be implemented without first undertaking a nation-wide programme to manage at-risk appliances. This would be extremely expensive. The Government therefore propose to retain the current gas quality specifications and have moved to public consultation on this basis.

During the consultation period the Department plans to hold a workshop, to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to register their interest, and to brief them.

I shall report to the House in due course on the outcome of this consultation, and on the timetable for the remainder of the exercise.

This exercise has been developed by the DTI as a member of the Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN) which is working to deliver the Energy White Paper "Our Energy Future—creating a low carbon economy".

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (Bromsgrove District Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Bromsgrove district council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2004–05, Bromsgrove district council administered some £10.5 million in housing benefits, about 33 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. There had been sustained improvement in the reported time taken to process new claims, from an average of 50 days in 2003–04 to 44 days in 2004–05 and 42 days for the first quarter of 2005–06. However, this performance was still below the Department's standard of 36 days.

BFI found that a lack of prioritisation and inefficient practices were creating unnecessary delays at each stage of the claims process. This was compounded by a failure to ensure that the evidence provided by its customers met the minimum requirements of the Department's Verification Framework.

Members and senior officers were not aware of very poor performance in preventing and recovering benefit overpayments and overpayment debt had increased by almost 400 per cent. between 2002–03 and 2004–05. Very little action was being taken to minimise avoidable overpayments.

Performance in the application of sanctions against benefit fraudsters was found to have improved. The council applied 11 sanctions in 2002–03, increasing to 37 in 2004–05. However, it had failed to prosecute offenders in nine instances where fraud had been proven. This was due to delays within its Legal Services Department.

The inspection revealed that management information provided to Members, senior officers and the Department was often inaccurate with performance being overstated in some instances. Inspectors found minimal management checks being carried out, inadequate audit coverage and a failure to act on audit recommendations.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (Falkirk Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Falkirk Council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2004–05 Falkirk council administered some £37.7 million in housing benefits, about 10 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The inspection focused on the council's counter-fraud arrangements, as it reported to the Department that it had not applied any sanctions between April 2003 and March 2005.

BFI found that the council had strengths in its processes to limit the opportunities for fraud and error to enter the benefit system. In particular, claims were consistently verified to the standard of the Department's verification framework and effective arrangements were in place to carry out claim reviews and data matches.

However, while the council had a prosecution policy, the inspection found that it did not apply it in practice. Its failure to administer any form of counter-fraud sanction had undermined the council's ability to create an anti-fraud culture and send a clear message to benefit fraudsters.

The inspection also revealed that the council lacked key management controls over its counter-fraud activities. Its investigation work and file management were ineffective and there was a need to improve the monitoring of performance and analysis of casework within the fraud team.

Falkirk council has acknowledged its shortcomings in this area and there is a commitment to improve performance, which includes developing an action plan to address the recommendations made in BFI's report.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (South Northamptonshire Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on South Northamptonshire council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2004–05 South Northamptonshire council administered some £8.7 million in housing benefits, about 20 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The inspection focused on the council's arrangements for processing claims, as it was taking an average of 104 days to process new claims for housing benefit in 2003–04.

BFI found that the council's performance in processing new claims had significantly improved. The average time taken had reduced from 104 days in 2003–04 to 81.5 days in 2004–05, and 43.5 days in the first quarter of 2005–06. While this remained longer than the Department's Standard of 36 days, there had clearly been a considerable improvement in the council's performance.

The inspection revealed a similar situation in the time taken to process changes of circumstances, which had improved from an average of 44 days in 2003–04, to 19.7 days in 2004–05, and 18.7 days in the first quarter of 2005–06. Again, this performance was below the Department's Standard of nine days, but represented a significant improvement.

The council's lack of workload prioritisation and forward planning was causing unnecessary delays. In particular, it had not set any internal targets for Benefits staff. This was compounded by a lack of procedural guidance throughout the Benefits service, leading to inconsistent working practices. Inspectors found that this was one of a number of internal audit recommendations that the council had failed to act upon.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (Bridgend County Borough Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Bridgend county borough council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2004–05 Bridgend county borough council administered some £33.3 million in housing benefits, about 14.8 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The inspection focused on the council's arrangements for processing claims, as it was taking an average of 58 days to process new claims for housing benefit in 2004–05.

The council introduced a new benefits IT system in April 2004. The subsequent transfer of data and issues with installation resulted in the IT system being inaccessible for six weeks. This led to backlogs of work. Senior management and Members were supportive of the need to address this and employed temporary staff to clear the work.

BFI found that the outstanding work on new claims had been cleared by April 2005 and that processing performance in this area had since improved to 30 days. The inspection identified no other backlogs of work.

Inspectors found that the council had largely overcome difficulties with the implementation of the new benefits IT system and had many good practices in place. The main aspect of performance that required attention related to processing changes of circumstances, which remained below the Department's standard.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 17 January 2006

DEFENCE

RAF Communications Hub

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Air Combat Service Support Units provide logistics and communications support to RAF aircraft and units on deployed operations. In July 2004 we announced that we had decided to form these units into two hubs: a logistics hub and a communications hub, to enable the more effective use of defence resources. Accordingly, logistics units would move to RAF Wittering (Cambridgeshire); and communications units would move to RAF Scampton (Lincolnshire) alongside Air Surveillance and Control System (ASACS) units.

The build up of the logistics hub at RAF Wittering has proceeded well and is scheduled to be completed by April 2006. Increased site preparation cost estimates at RAF Scampton have caused us to review whether this location remained the best value for money option for a communications hub. This work has now concluded and, subject to Trades Unions consultation, I have decided that the RAF communications hub will be formed at RAF Leeming (North Yorkshire) instead of RAF Scampton as this will be significantly more cost effective.

This means that communications personnel would move from RAF Sealand to RAF Leeming by April 2006. Communications personnel from RAF Brize Norton and RAF High Wycombe would move to RAF Leeming in 2007. The future location of ASACS units, currently at RAF Scampton, RAF Kirton-in-Lindsey and RAF Boulmer, will be the subject of further work.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I chaired the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 20 December for the agriculture items on the agenda. The Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Exeter (Mr. Bradshaw) chaired the fisheries items and the Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for South Dorset (Jim Knight) represented the United Kingdom. The Scottish Environment and Rural Affairs Minister (Ross Finnie), also attended.

The Council unanimously adopted a revised directive on measures to control and eradicate avian influenza and reached unanimous political agreement on funding for avian influenza controls.

In the absence of a qualified majority in favour or against, the Council was unable to reach decisions on the Commission's proposal to authorise the placing on the market of food produced from genetically modified maize variety 1507. In the absence of Council decisions, therefore, the Commission is now free to implement its proposal under its own competence.

The Council adopted conclusions on the Commission's Communication on Simplification and Better Regulation for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), stressing actions to deliver real reductions in administrative burdens in the agriculture sector.

The Council adopted the first stage of the European Community and United States agreement on trade in wine, a major achievement after 20 years of negotiation with the EU's biggest export market.

At the request of Germany, the Council discussed the implementation of cross compliance rules under the CAP single payment scheme. In response to concerns from member states the Commission recommended the problem be looked at during the review of cross compliance in 2007.

The Council reached agreement on total allowable catches and quotas for fishing in the Baltic sea and on total allowable catches (TACS) and quotas and related measures in waters outside the Baltic (the latter regulation covers the waters in which the UK has a fishing interest).

The Baltic regulation also included effort control measures, mainly in the form of seasonal closures of parts of the Baltic to protect cod.

The wider regulation included further action to protect cod stocks including modest cuts in days for the whitefish fleet and larger cuts for the smaller mesh sectors which have high levels of discards (mainly beam trawlers and nephrops trawlers). There were also 15 per cent. cuts in cod TACs. Among the other significant changes were large increases in TACs for the important nephrops fisheries and severe restrictions on the industrial fishery for North sea sandeels. The regulation imposes a cut in effort on deep sea stocks and a ban on the use of fixed nets in deep waters to the west of Ireland. All member states agreed the two regulations apart from Sweden who voted against the Baltic regulation and abstained on the general TACs and quota regulation.

Prior to the Council an agreement—after six years of negotiation—had been reached between the EU, Norway, Iceland and the Faroes on a total allowable catch and split of the TAC for blue whiting. The Council agreed a split of the agreed EU share between the interested countries.

The council reached unanimous political agreement on recovery measures for Bay of Biscay sole.

Under "Any Other Business", the Fisheries Commissioner presented an action plan for simplifying and improving the Common Fisheries Policy in 2006-08.

The Health and Consumer Affairs Commissioner updated the Council on the recent outbreaks of avian influenza in Ukraine and Romania. He also gave an update on the development of the Commission's action plan on animal welfare which will be published in January.

Spain, supported by Portugal and Greece called on the Commission to provide assistance to neighbouring third countries, particularly those in North Africa, to combat animal diseases particularly bluetongue and rabies. Discussions would continue in 2006.

Italy, supported by Spain, Germany, The Netherlands, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, Latvia and Malta, asked the Commission to act to improve the state of the poultrymeat market, following a drop in sales after the avian influenza outbreak. The Commission said it had increased both the level and the product coverage of export refunds for poultry.

The Commission issued a press release, before the Council meeting saying it had decided to end export subsidies on live animal exports to third countries and would put the relevant proposal to Management Committee on 23 December.

The Agriculture Commission decided not to give the planned update on the WTO agriculture negotiations in Hong Kong since all delegations had been represented there, many at ministerial level.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan: London Conference

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): The UK will host an international conference on Afghanistan in London on 31 January and 1 February. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will open the conference with His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. My right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Secretary of State for International Development and I will represent the UK at different sessions.

The conference has three aims:

(a) to launch the Afghanistan Compact, which is the successor to the Bonn Agreement, and will provide a framework for international community engagement in Afghanistan for the next five years. The Compact will also establish a new coordination and monitoring mechanism to achieve greater coherence of effort between the Afghan Government and the international community, led for the latter by the UN.

(b) to provide an opportunity for the Government of Afghanistan to present its interim Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) to the international community. The strategy will set out the Afghan Government's priorities for accelerating development, increasing security, tackling the drugs trade, and strengthening governance. The Government of Afghanistan will also launch its updated National Drugs Control Strategy (NDCS) at the London conference.

(c) to ensure that the Government of Afghanistan has adequate resources to meet its domestic ambitions and international commitments. The conference will review existing aid flows and future plans, and agree ways to improve the co-ordination, predictability and effective use of development assistance better to support the Afghan Government's priorities.

While the main conference focus will be the launch of the Afghanistan Compact, there will also be an opportunity to make new pledges in support of the aims outlined in the interim ANDS and the NDCS. Following the opening session and the launch of the Compact, there will be further sessions on political perspectives, security, counter-narcotics, governance and on reconstruction and development. The conference will be co-chaired throughout by the Afghan Government, UK and UN.

HEALTH

Health and Social Care Information (PPP)

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): A new public-private partnership is to be formed through a joint venture between the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), (a special health authority established on 1 April 2005 with responsibility for managing and developing NHS and social care data resources) and Dr Foster Ltd, a commercial provider of healthcare information.

The joint venture takes the form of a new company, to be called Dr Foster Intelligence; 50 per cent. of the company will be owned by the HSCIC, 50 per cent. by a new private company Dr Foster Holdings LLP. All the existing health service related business of Dr Foster will migrate to the joint venture, together with some of HSCIC's existing services. The HSCIC is investing £12 million in the joint venture: a direct injection of £4.4 million equity into Dr Foster Intelligence Ltd to fund working capital requirements and a payment of £7.6 million to Dr Foster as a further contribution to working capital in Dr Foster Intelligence Ltd and to compensate the shareholders of Dr Foster Ltd.

The aim of the joint venture is to improve use and accessibility of information across the health and care system, in support of the overall aim of giving people more choice and control over health and social care. It will compete with other providers of management information solutions to support better commissioning, choice, quality and efficiency: all areas of the reform programme where better use of information by patients, users, professionals and managers is vital.

Dr Foster Intelligence Ltd will be managed as a private company, with a board of six members: three from HSCIC and three from Dr Foster Holdings LLP. It will compete for business on the open market in the health and care system; and it will have no privileged access to data provided by HSCIC. It will be launched officially on 13 February.

The statutory functions of the HSCIC are unchanged. It will retain responsibility for data collection and for ensuring equitable access to public information and will continue to manage national statistics. It will be a principal shareholder in Dr Foster Intelligence Ltd; but it will be free to work with other organisations in the development of data services and products. It will establish an information suppliers forum and will be transparent in the rules governing access to and use of information from the health and care system. A consultation document setting out the details of this approach will be issued in February. This is a positive and welcome example of the public and private sectors combining to work in partnership in support of better services for patients and the public.

HOME DEPARTMENT

A Co-ordinated Strategy for Prostitution

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, (Fiona Mactaggart): The summary of responses to "Paying the Price: A Public Consultation Paper on Prostitution" and a co-ordinated strategy for prostitution have been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library and are available from the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/cons-paying-the-price.

The consultation exercise was the starting point for the development of a realistic and coherent strategy to deal with prostitution and its serious detrimental consequences for individuals and communities. The Government have considered in detail the arguments for and against managed areas and have concluded that they would create misery for the communities in which they were located, could attract other criminal activity and would not necessarily improve safety or conditions for those involved in prostitution. They would also imply an acceptance of street prostitution. Instead the Government's approach is to address all aspects of the street sex market to significantly reduce the numbers of those involved and to restore respect and safety to local communities.

The strategy provides a framework for local areas to disrupt street markets and to crack down on commercial sexual exploitation. It aims to reduce the numbers of those selling sex through preventive measures which will safeguard children and young people at risk of commercial sexual exploitation, and through the development of routes out for those already trapped in prostitution. It aims to reduce the demand for sex markets by sustained enforcement of the law against kerb crawlers. The strategy also focuses on the need to crack down on the groomers, the traffickers and others who control prostitution through the robust legal framework laid down in the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Written Ministerial Statements

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Oral Answer (Correction)

The Minister for Trade (Ian Pearson): During Foreign and Commonwealth Office oral questions on Tuesday 10 January, in response to a supplementary question from my hon. Friend for Northampton, North (Ms. Keeble), I said that "the United Kingdom is providing £10 million in support for the emergency housing programme"—*Official Report*, column 144. I should have said that the United Kingdom has disbursed over £1 million in support to the international response to Operation Murambatsvina, which has included support for basic supplies, water and sanitation. The £10 million figure actually refers to HMG's commitment to the UN World Food Programme for food distribution. I apologise to my hon. Friend and to the House for this inadvertent error.

HEALTH

Foundation Trusts

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Section 4(1) of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 provides that a National Health Service trust may make an application to Monitor (the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts) for authorisation to become an NHS foundation trust, if the application is supported by the Secretary of State for Health.

I am today announcing that I support the following 18 NHS trusts in their bids to become NHS foundation trusts as part of wave 2 of NHS foundation trust applications:

Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust

Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust

Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Trust

Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust

James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust

Nothumbria Health Care NHS Trust

Oxleas NHS Trust

Royal Berkshire and Battle NHS Trust

Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust

Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust

Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS Trust

Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust

South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust

South Essex Partnership NHS Trust

South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust

York Healthcare Services NHS Trust

I can also announce that Monitor will be reviewing the applications of six national health service trusts that have previously received the support of the Secretary of State for Health. The trusts are:

Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust

Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust

East Somerset NHS Trust

King's College Hospital NHS Trust

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust

Southend Hospitals NHS Trust

Section 6 of the 2003 Act sets out the matters to be taken into account by Monitor and the terms under which authorisation of NHS foundation trust status can be given.

I understand from the Chairman of Monitor that it would expect successful applicant NHS trusts to be authorised as NHS foundation trusts in two batches on either 1 April 2006 or 1 July 2006.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): As a result of intelligence received in 2001 and July 2004 suggesting systematic fraud in applications for UK Ancestry from Zimbabwean nationals, consideration of such applications was suspended pending further investigation.

In the light of continued evidence of fraudulent Zimbabwean applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK on grounds of UK ancestry lodged prior to 25 October 2004, I have made an authorisation under section 19D of the Race Relations Act 1976 of six months' duration. This authorisation enables staff in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to subject these applications to more rigorous investigation than applications from persons of other nationalities, for the purpose of detecting fraudulent applications.

We will review the continued need for this authorisation before its expiry. In addition, the Independent Race Monitor appointed under section 19E of the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended) will submit a report to the Home Secretary for submission to Parliament on the likely effect of authorisations made by Ministers and on how they are operated in practice by officials.

A copy of the authorisation has been placed in the Library of both Houses of Parliament.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects (Annual Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Shaun Woodward): Copies of Dr Bill Norris's annual report for 2005 have been placed in the Library of both Houses. This is the final report to be submitted by the Commissioner and I am grateful to him for all the hard work he has carried out in this post.

I welcome Dr Norris's report and will consider it carefully. I will respond as soon as possible.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 19 January 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Mental Capacity Act

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton, has made the following written ministerial statement:

"The Department for Constitutional Affairs will publish a consultation paper on the forms and guidance to be used when making a Lasting Power of Attorney tomorrow. The Act provides a statutory framework to empower people to make decisions for themselves as far as possible and protect vulnerable people who are not able to make their own decisions. It enables people to plan ahead for a time when they may lack capacity. A key element of this is the new Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). The Department is seeking views on the content of the prescribed forms, the prescribed information and the draft guidance to accompany the forms. Copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses".

HEALTH

Ofcom Investigation (Telephone Charges)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): The Office of Communications (Ofcom) published its investigation into the price of telephone calls to hospital patients yesterday. A copy has been placed in the Library.

In response, the Department will set up a review group, as originally intended and as recommended by Ofcom, to explore how communication services can be offered to hospital patients without charging as high a price for incoming calls. The group will consist of Department of Health officials, the providers of bedside communications and entertainment services and representation from National Health Service trusts.

The Department has worked closely with Ofcom during its investigation and will continue to do so in taking forward the work of the review group.

The membership and terms of reference of the review group will be agreed as soon as possible and an update will be provided in due course.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Bichard Inquiry

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The Government have been working hard over a number of years to ensure that those who have either been convicted of sexual offences or who are believed to have been engaged in them are not permitted to work with children.

We set up the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) in 2002, which has significantly improved the vetting of people working with children and vulnerable adults. It has carried out 8 million disclosures since its inception and in 2005 over 20,000 people in total were refused employment as the result of a CRB check. Since September 1997, we have required individuals convicted of or cautioned for certain sexual offences to notify the police of their personal details and to update them regularly, placing them on what is commonly known as the sex offenders register. That has ensured the police know of their whereabouts. In 2003, we revised these requirements and overhauled the legislation covering sexual offending and last year we launched the violent and sex offenders register, which now contains information on around 50,000 people, of whom the vast majority are convicted offenders.

Sir Michael Bichard produced his report on the Soham murders in June 2004. Since then, we have been driving forward a complex and ambitious programme of work to implement all of his 31 recommendations. So far, 13 have been implemented in full or in part and work is progressing on giving effect to the rest, as set out in the progress report I gave to the House on 7 November 2005. For example, we are taking forward a substantial programme to enhance information management handling capabilities across the police service. This includes:

ensuring since February last year that the Criminal Records Bureau has had access to the Interim Police Local Cross-Check System (I-PLX);

extending this facility to all 43 forces' Child Abuse Investigation Units through the IMPACT nominal index, enabling them to identify which other forces hold information about a specific individual;

improving police information management nationally by bringing a new statutory code of practice into effect in November 2005. That will ensure best practice and consistency of standards across England and Wales and implementation will be underpinned by detailed operational guidance, which will come into effect this spring;

improving the quality of data on the police national computer, as Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary have embedded the monitoring of the timely input and quality of all forces' data into their baseline assessments.

We have also made improvements to the Criminal Records Bureau's vetting procedures. These include:

implementing a quality assurance framework in partnership with the police service which standardises disclosure processes across all forces;

the CRB's issue of revised guidance to all registered bodies, strengthening the disclosure application processes;

enabling the CRB to access information from a wider range of appropriate data sources to strengthen further the vetting regime.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills is driving forward the recommendations which fall to her Department, in consultation with others, as appropriate. These include:

establishing a new integrated vetting and barring scheme, together with the enabling legislative framework;

rolling out on-line training of head teachers and governors in those child protection issues which arise as part of recruitment and selection procedures.

In the light of recent events, the Home Office has discussed with the Association of Chief Police Officers what more might be done to ensure the Department for Education and Skills are informed as soon as information linking an individual to a sexual offence comes to light, if that individual is thought to be working with children. I am writing today to all chief constables, to the Prison and Probation Services and to the Youth Justice Board, to restate how the current system works, the way in which it is changing and the priority the Government attach to the protection of children.

However, the key to avoiding the risk of recruiting unsuitable individuals to work with children lies in the employer undertaking the appropriate checks through the CRB, whose disclosure service will reveal any criminal conviction, caution or reprimand which has led to the person being made subject to sex offenders registration. It will also allow chief constables the opportunity to disclose that someone is on the sex offenders register in appropriate cases. That is why my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills is today announcing that those checks will in future be a mandatory requirement.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Fifth Report by Justice Oversight Commissioner

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): The Government have received and welcomed the fifth report from the Justice Oversight Commissioner, the right hon. Lord Clyde, on the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations of the Review of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland. Consistent with his terms of reference, the report was submitted to the Attorney-General and as in the Secretary of State's statement.

Lord Clyde concludes that the last six months has been a period of consolidation and general steady progress. He acknowledges that progress has continued on a number of fronts with some important developments including: the signing of an Intergovernmental Agreement on co-operation on criminal justice matters; the bringing of 17-year-olds within the ambit of the youth court; the introduction of a criminal justice module as part of the post primary school citizenship agenda; and the launch of the Probation Board's Victims' Information Scheme. He concludes that the implementation of the recommendations is now generally far advanced. The Government warmly endorse these conclusions.

Copies of the Commissioner's report have been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 20 January 2006

TREASURY

Finance Bill Measures

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): Legislation will be included in the next Finance Bill to stop financial institutions and share dealers claiming wholly artificial losses by buying and selling the right to a dividend on shares and claiming that the sale proceeds are exempt from tax.

Schemes have been disclosed to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) under the legislation in Part 7 Finance Act 2004 which seek to exploit a perceived weakness in section 730 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act. HMRC believes that the schemes may not work, but to put the matter beyond doubt, subsection (3) of section 730 will be repealed.

The repeal will be effective in relation to any sale, transfer or other realisation of a right to receive a dividend taking place on or after today.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Grey Squirrels

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Jim Knight): I am pleased to advise that we will, on Sunday 22 January, publish a Policy and Action Statement for the management of the Grey Squirrel in England's Woodlands. This has been prepared jointly by the Forestry Commission England and Defra.

The grey squirrel was introduced into this country in the 19th century and has spread widely. Grey squirrels are enjoyed by many as part of our wildlife but also represent a serious and growing threat to our native woodland and priority species.

This policy will set out the rationale and actions for the control of grey squirrels.

The Forestry Commission will continue to provide best practice guidance on the control of grey squirrel populations and will be targeting support where it will be most beneficial.

Copies of the Policy and Action Statement will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses on Monday and will also be available on Sunday from 7.30 am on the Forestry Commission website at: http://www.forestry.gov.uk/greysquirrel.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Rendition Allegations (Inquiries)

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): Some media reports over the last 48 hours, based on a leaked Government document, have suggested that the Government may be aware that there have been cases of "extraordinary rendition" through UK territory or airspace about which it has not informed Parliament.

This is not the case. I have given Parliament clear answers, updated as information has become available to me. The following chronology makes this clear:

7 December: the leaked document was sent by my office to the Prime Minister's Office, setting out our understanding at that time.

12 December: after continuing searches of official records over the following few days, my written answer to the right hon. Member for North East Fife, (Sir Menzies Campbell), Official Report, Column 1652W,set out the facts as they had then been established: there had been three instances in 1998 where the US authorities had requested permission to render a detainee through UK territory or airspace; and in two of these cases, where the detainee was to be transferred to the US for trial, the US request had been granted. In the other case, it had been refused. I added that officials continued to search the records.

13 December: I discussed these issues at length in my public evidence session with the Foreign Affairs Committee.

10 January: I issued a written ministerial statement saying that Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials had now completed a search of their records back to May 1997. This search had turned up one further case, also in 1998: the Government had declined a US request to refuel a flight carrying two detainees en route to the US.

To summarise the position:

We have found no evidence of detainees being rendered through the UK or Overseas Territories since 11 September 2001.

We have found no evidence of detainees being rendered through the UK or Overseas Territories since 1997 where there were substantial grounds to believe there was a real arisk of torture.

There were four cases in 1998 where the US requested permission to render one or more detainees through the UK or Overseas Territories. In two of these cases, records show the Government granted the US request, and refused two others.

Since before September 2001 we have worked closely with the US to achieve our shared goal of fighting terrorism. As part of that close co-operation, we have made clear to the US authorities, including in recent months:

that we expect them to seek permission to render detainees via UK territory and airspace (including Overseas Territories);

that we will grant permission only if we are satisfied that the rendition would accord with UK law and our international obligations, and

how we understand our obligations under the UN Convention Against Torture.

We are also clear that the US would not render a detainee through UK territory or airspace (including Overseas Territories) without our permission. As noted above, the US has sought such permission in the past.

The Government are committed to fulfilling their obligations under United Kingdom and international law. I have sought throughout to keep the House informed of developments. And shall do so again if new information comes to light.

Military-listed Exports (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): In December 2005, the Government issued one licence for the export of 20 units of body armour to the Ministry of Justice, Judicial Police in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The equipment will be used by the Judicial Police in operations to protect against crime and preserve the safety of the civilian community or for humanitarian activities.

An EU arms embargo has been in place against Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1996. The purpose of the embargo was to aid the establishment of peace and stability for the people of the region, taking into account in particular the need to ensure the safety of international troops and civilian personnel deployed. The embargo was amended in 1999 to exclude demining equipment and the transfer of small arms to the police.

We fully support the EU embargo. However, we are, in limited circumstances, prepared to make exceptions where denying an export would frustrate the purposes of the embargo. The UK has been active in encouraging Bosnia and Herzegovina to take greater responsibility for maintaining the rule of law and strengthening civilian policing. I am confident that granting this exception is fully consistent with this responsible approach of supporting the development of civilian policing whilst respecting the aims of the embargo.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 23 January 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): Items on the agenda are as follows:

Presidency Work Programme—The Austrian Presidency will give a presentation on its major priorities for the next six months;

Stability and Growth Pact—ECOFIN will adopt Council Opinions on the Stability and Programme of Finland and the Convergence Programmes of Denmark, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia; and a Council Decision under Article 104(6) and Recommendation under Article 104(7) of the EC Treaty with regard to the UK;

Preparation of the European Council—Council will discuss the forthcoming Commission Annual Progress Report in the run up to the Spring European Council. Council will also adopt conclusions on the Economic Policy Committee Report regarding the quality of EU public finances;

Taxation: VAT Reduced rates—ECOFIN will seek political agreement on the VAT Reduced Rates dossier;

Energy Issues—ECOFIN will discuss energy issues following on from its December meeting.

Identity Fraud

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Leigh (Andy Burnham), and I are today meeting the banking industry to discuss the application of the Government's identity fraud strategy.

The Home Office is today making a statement about the national strategy for tackling ID fraud. Within this strategy, the Treasury and the FSA are working with the financial services industry to ensure it has in place the most effective systems to fight financial crime. New industry guidance to be published shortly will strengthen the system of ID checks while reducing the inconvenience for the consumer.

HMRC will carry out an assessment of the typical profile of frauds committed against it, to assist the banks in identifying suspect payments and accounts, enabling them to make timely suspicious activity reports to the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS). HMRC will contact any firms that have been party to these frauds.

The Chancellor and the Home Secretary recently asked Sir Stephen Lander, chair-designate of the forthcoming new Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), to undertake a review of the suspicious activity reporting regime. Sir Stephen is to report by the end of March 2006.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Constitutional Reform Act

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has made the following written ministerial statement.

"The Government announced plans for significant constitutional reform on 12 June 2003, designed to enhance the independence of the judiciary and to ensure clarity in the relationship between the Executive and the judiciary. I plan shortly to introduce the required statutory instruments to bring into force those parts of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 that will deliver the central aspects of those reforms. As of 3 April 2006, I intend to bring the new Judicial Appointments Commission into being and commence those aspects of the Act that give statutory effect to the provisions of the concordat I agreed with the Lord Chief Justice.

Roles of the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice

As of 3 April, the Lord Chancellor's role as a judge will cease. The Lord Chief Justice will hold the additional title of President of the Courts of England and Wales and be legally recognised as the head of the judiciary in England and Wales. As set out in the Concordat, the role of the Lord Chief Justice will be significantly reformed and strengthened. To support the Lord Chief Justice, the Judicial Office for England and Wales has been established and the new head of that office has recently been appointed and taken up post.

"In addition, to give effect to the new arrangements for the handling of judicial disciplinary matters, a new office for judicial complaints will be established. The arrangements relating to judicial complaints and discipline will be published shortly".

Judicial Independence and Rule of Law

As of 3 April, for the first time there will be a guarantee of continued judicial independence enshrined in statute, underpinned by particular duties binding on the Lord Chancellor and Ministers of the Crown to uphold judicial independence. The Act also formally recognises the constitutional principle of the rule of law and the Lord Chancellor's role in relation to that principle.

Judicial Appointments Commission

As of 3 April 2006, the Judicial Appointments Commission will be formally launched. The appointment of Baroness Prashar as the inaugural Chair of the new Commission was announced on 6 October 2005. The Queen has given effect to the following appointments:

Judicial members

Lord Justice Sir Robin Ernest Auld

Lady Justice Heather Hallett DBE

Her Honour Judge Frances Margaret Kirkham

District Judge Charles William Frank Newman

Tribunal member

His Honour Judge David Stephen Pearl

Lay Justice Member

Lorna May Boreland-Kelly DBE JP

Professional Members

Mr Jonathan Philip Chadwick Sumption QBE QC

Mr Edward Nally

Lay Members

Professor Hazel Gillian Genn CBE

Sir Geoffrey David Inkin QBE

Mr Francis John Plowden

Ms Harriet Greville Spicer

Ms Sara Catherine Nathan

The appointment of the final judicial member will be announced shortly.

The Judicial Appointments Commission will have responsibility for making selections for the appointment of all judicial office-holders (as provided for in schedule 14 to the Constitutional Reform Act 2005). Baroness Prashar, the Lord Chief Justice and I have considered the arrangements necessary to ensure that the Commission can make the decisive and confident start that we are all agreed is essential. Details of these agreed arrangements have been published today on my Department's website at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/pubs/statements/st060123.htm. They will ensure that the transitional period is as short as possible, while bringing about a smooth and effective handover of business to the new Commission."

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

TV Licence

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): The television licence fee settlement announced by the Government in February 2000 provides for changes in the licence fee of RPI plus 1.5 per cent. for each year from 2000–01 to 2006–07. This settlement is designed to enable the BBC to provide a strong and distinctive schedule of high quality programmes and remain at the forefront of broadcasting technology. The settlement includes a requirement for the corporation to raise over £1 billion through efficiency savings and increased income over the period.

Application of the RPI figure of 2.7 per cent. for the year to September 2005, plus 1.5 per cent., to the current un-rounded licence fees produces new rounded totals of £131.50 for a colour licence and £44.00 for a black and white licence. The necessary regulations to bring these fees into force will be laid before the House in due course. The changes will come into effect from the 1 April this year.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Fire Prevention Grants

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Jim Fitzpatrick): I have today announced £11.4 million grant funding for fire and rescue authorities in England over the period April 2006 to March 2008 to support fire prevention work, including community fire safety, arson reduction and work with children and young people. This single grant to all fire and rescue authorities will replace the grants paid to some authorities under the Community Fire Safety Innovation Fund and the Arson Control Forum Implementation Fund in 2003–06, and provide revenue funding to complement the capital grants paid to all fire and rescue authorities under the Home Fire Risk Check Initiative in 2004–08.

Our substantial investment will support fire and rescue authorities, in partnership with others, to make continuing reductions in accidental fire deaths in the home and deliberate fires and to reduce inequality in the impact of fire by reaching the deprived households and communities most at risk. The additional funding will also assist the Government's wider neighbourhood renewal plans and complements our antisocial behaviour action plan launched recently. Copies of a table summarising the successful bids are available in the Library of the House.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I will be representing the United Kingdom at this month's Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

This being the first Council of the Austrian Presidency, the new Chairman of the Council will start by setting out his Presidency work programme.

The Energy Commissioner and the Agriculture Commissioner will then jointly present the Commission's Communication on a Biomass action plan. It covers four broad areas: use of biomass in heating and electricity generation; use of biofuels for transport; cross-cutting issues such as information campaigns; and research. There will also be an exchange of views on the action plan, during which I will intervene to welcome the initiative.

The Agriculture Commissioner will then present her proposal on organic farming, which aims to simplify and improve the structure of current regulations, setting out the scope of organic production and definitions for organic food. She will also present a proposal on changes to the rules for protected geographical indications and traditional specialties for agriculture products, which need changing to comply with a WTO ruling. These are simply presentations of the proposals to the Council with no discussion likely at this stage.

Cyprus will seek Council approval for a national state aid which it wishes to pay farmers and others as compensation for debts arising following the Turkish military intervention there.

In the afternoon, the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection will present the Commission's action plan on animal welfare. He will also update the Council on the Avian Influenza outbreak including the outcome of the Donor Pledging Conference in Beijing and the situation in Romania and Turkey.

There will be a lunch at which the Agriculture Commissioner will update the Council on the outcome of the WTO agricultural negotiations in Hong Kong and the next steps.

HEALTH

Strategic Health Authorities

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): In my statements of 18 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 49–50WS, and 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 36–37WS, I set out the need to streamline strategic health authorities (SHAs) and strengthen primary care trusts (PCTs) and the timetable and process for local consultations on these changes. Local consultations on changes to the boundaries of SHA began on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 151–153WS.

The NHS Chief Executive, Sir Nigel Crisp, has now announced the appointment of 11 people who will lead the transition between current and future SHAs. The transition leads will take on this responsibility from 1 February until, subject to the final results of the consultation, new SHAs are created. Their task will be to oversee the creation of the new system over the next six months and specifically to:

oversee planning for next year

the development programme for existing and new PCTs

communications.

These arrangements are being made for essential business continuity purposes. They do not prejudice the outcome of the consultation on the future shape of SHAs and each current SHA Board will remain accountable to the Department of Health for their part of the NHS until Ministers determine whether, following the consultation, to establish new SHAs. Existing SHAs will remain responsible for managing the consultation process following Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS.

The transition leads will ensure consistent management of the outcome of the consultation process across the cluster. Following the consultation process, if Ministers decide to establish new SHAs, the transition leads will be responsible for oversight of the process for establishing the new SHA, until permanent appointments are made. We expect to make permanent appointments to any new SHAs, if necessary, in the summer.

We have emphasised that it is essential to ensure that the transition leads are creating a new system locally which works effectively with all our partners and stakeholders and, particularly, promotes joint working between health and social care and in the field of public health.

The following have agreed to be SHA transition leaders:

John Bacon—London

Mike Farrar—Yorkshire

David Flory—North East

Neil Goodwin—North West

Terry Hanafin—Eastern

Thelma Holland—South West (South West Peninsula and Dorset/Somerset)

Trevor Jones—South West (Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire)

Candy Morris—South East (Kent and Medway, Surrey and Sussex)

David Nicholson—West Midlands

Nick Relph—South East (Thames Valley/Hampshire and Isle of Wight)

David Sissling—East Midlands

HOME DEPARTMENT

Identity Fraud

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): Further to Baroness Scotland's statement of Wednesday 18 January, the Paymaster General and I are this afternoon meeting senior figures in law enforcement and the banking sector to discuss action against ID fraud. The significance of ID fraud has been further emphasised by recent attempts by organised criminals to defraud the tax credit system.

The meeting will discuss further ways of improving joint working on ID fraud, in particular through developing the work of public-private groups like the Home Office-led Identity Fraud Steering Committee (IFSC). Criminals who target the public sector are also likely to target the private sector. The meeting will also be discussing ways of ensuring the maximum appropriate sharing of information to protect public and private sector organisations from ID fraud.

As Baroness Scotland set out in her statement, the introduction of a secure national identity scheme/ identity cards scheme using biometric information will make a step change in protecting people from identity fraud. As part of the work of the Ministerial Committee on ID cards, HMRC and the Home Office continue to evaluate the role of the national identity register in combating identity fraud.

At the meeting, the Paymaster General and I will be proposing a four step action programme to be taken forward urgently over the next few months under the Identity Fraud Steering Committee:

First, Government will explore with CIFAS—the UK's Fraud Prevention Service—the procedures for notifying them of the details of employees whose identities have been compromised as a result of large scale ID theft. This will help ensure that employees whose records have been stolen will not suffer adverse impact on their credit ratings and protect their identities from further abuse.

Secondly, the IFSC will take forward urgently plans to encourage credit reference agencies and CIFAS to share information with the public sector, for example by welcoming public sector organisations into the CIFAS membership. It will also work to ensure public sector organisations take full advantage of these new opportunities, for example by becoming full members of the CIFAS network. This will ensure that the details of criminals who defraud, for example, the tax credit system are shared in the same way as those criminals who attack private sector organisations. This will enable partners in both the public and private sector to detect and prevent identity related crime.

Thirdly, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will carry out a strategic review of all suspicious activity reports relating to tax credit and identity fraud to inform the strategy to tackle this threat.

Fourthly, HMRC will produce an assessment of the typical profile of frauds committed to assist the banks in identifying suspect payments and accounts, enabling them to make timely suspicious activity reports to NCIS and SOCA.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Energy Review

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): Further to the statement made, by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 29 November 2005 launching the Energy Review, I am pleased to inform the House that the Government have today launched the public phase of this Review, and that I have written to all MPs to inform them of the launch.

The consultation has a broad scope and will consider both energy supply and demand. The consultation reinforces the Government's commitment to the four main policy goals as set out in the 2003 Energy White Paper:

- to put ourselves on a path to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions—the main contributor to global warming—by some 60 per cent. by about 2050 with real progress by 2020;
- to maintain the reliability of energy supplies;
- to promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve our productivity; and
- to ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated.

The consultation document sets out the energy challenges we are currently facing, and invites responses to the evidence presented as well as asking what more should be done to secure clean, affordable energy for the long term, I am keen to stimulate a wide-ranging and informed debate on energy policy issues.

I have made copies of the consultation document, "Our Energy Challenge: securing clean, affordable energy for the long term" available in the Vote Office and the Libraries of the House. Copies and further information are also available on the Internet at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/review.

The key questions posed by the consultation document are:

- What more could the Government do on the demand or supply side to ensure that the UK's long-term goal of reducing carbon emissions is met?
- With the UK becoming a net energy importer and with big investments to be made over the next 20 years in generating capacity and networks, what further steps, if any, should the Government take to develop our market framework for delivering reliable energy supplies? In particular, we invite views on the implications of increased dependence on gas imports.
- The Energy White Paper left open the option of nuclear new build. Are there particular considerations that should apply to nuclear, as the Government re-examine the issues bearing on new build? If so, what are these, and how should the Government address them?
- Are there particular considerations that should apply to carbon abatement and other low-carbon technologies in the context of electricity generation?
- What further steps should be taken towards meeting the Government's goals for ensuring that every home is adequately and affordably heated?

Comments are also invited on:

- The long term potential of energy efficiency measures in the transport, residential business and public sectors, and how best to achieve that potential
- Implications in the medium and long term for the transmission and network networks of significant new build in gas and electricity generation infrastructure
- Opportunities for more joint working with other countries on our energy policy goals
- Potential measures to help bring forward technologies to replace fossil fuels in transport and heat generation in the medium and long term.

The Government have a genuinely open mind on solutions. However, it is clear that there are no simple "one-technology" answers. The Review will take account of the evidence gathered during the consultation when developing its proposals.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 24 January 2006

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ethiopia

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I visited Ethiopia on 18 January and met Prime Minister Meles, leaders of the Opposition, family members of detainees and international NGOs in Addis Ababa. I expressed our deep concern over recent political events and told the Prime Minister that the UK will not at present provide general budget support to Ethiopia under current circumstances. This is because the provision of budget support is based upon shared commitments between partners, one of which is upholding human rights. Recent political events represent a breach of trust.

All donors who have been giving budget support have now reached the same conclusion to withhold this form of support in the current circumstances and wrote to the Minister of Finance in December of last year to explain the decision.

However, the UK remains committed to supporting poor people in Ethiopia in their fight against poverty. Ethiopia is desperately poor and already receives less aid per head than any other country in sub-Saharan Africa. It would be wrong therefore to reduce our aid programme, and thereby punish the poor in Ethiopia for recent political events in the country.

We are therefore working with other donors and the Government to try to design a new mechanism for providing funds in a more transparent and accountable way. This is so that basic services such as health, education and water can continue to be provided throughout the country and that we can be sure that aid is reaching those in need. We are also looking at providing additional assistance to the Productive Safety Nets Programme. This is a programme which the UK is already supporting and which, as I was able to see for myself in Ethiopia, is enabling the poorest to earn or receive small amounts of money to invest in assets like clothes, chicken and goats and for communities to improve their conditions, for example by building roads, water springs and classrooms.

Southern Africa

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Since my statement of 8 December, the number of people assessed to be at risk of food shortages in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland has remained at around 11.4 million.

The Scale of the Problem

Rains started late across the region. During the past few weeks, however, very heavy rains have flooded parts of Malawi and Mozambique, leading to loss of lives, crops and homes. The Governments of Malawi and Mozambique do not think that additional emergency assistance is needed at the moment. But we are monitoring the situation closely, especially in Mozambique, as the cyclone season approaches and the risk of further flooding increases.

The period between January and the end of March/April, when harvests start to come in and the price of staple food crops begins to fall, is particularly difficult. At the moment, food shortages are worst in Zimbabwe, southern Malawi, and southern Mozambique.

The breakdown by country is as follows:

Zimbabwe: The national assessment was formally released on 17 November and indicates that 2.88 million people will face food shortages, assuming stable maize prices. However, maize prices have risen significantly and, while hyperinflation in Zimbabwe makes it difficult to assess affordability, it is possible that as many as 5 million people face food shortages. Despite this, widespread starvation is unlikely. Recent nutritional data shows that malnutrition is below emergency levels. The underlying causes of food shortages are a combination of erratic rains, HIV/AIDS and bad governance. WFP has expanded operations in the country, helped by a £10.5 million contribution from DFID. They are providing rations to 3.4 million vulnerable people during the peak months until the harvest comes in at the end of March. In addition, approximately 1 million schoolchildren, orphans and people affected by HIV/AIDS are benefiting from supplementary feeding programmes. WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Zimbabwe on 1 December which guarantees WFP and their implementing partners humanitarian access and freedom from political interference in their operations. Only a few minor attempts to politically interfere with the food aid operation have been reported. These have been dealt with appropriately.

The UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, recently visited Zimbabwe. He urged the Government to allow NGOs free access to assist the affected population. It is regrettable that the Zimbabwe Government continue to delay and obstruct UN Agencies in their attempts to provide shelter to displaced people. Despite these problems, the UN and NGOs continue to operate relief programmes reaching 40,000 affected households, including those affected by HIV and AIDS, providing food, blankets, medical care and other essential items. DFID's most recent commitments are helping tackle problems of overcrowding and access to basic services for the worst affected people in urban areas.

Malawi: The numbers at risk of experiencing some food shortages before the next harvest has not changed since my last statement. Around 4.9 million people are affected. The Government and WFP are implementing a coordinated emergency response across affected areas of the country. We are supporting these efforts. Plans are in place to reach all of those facing food shortages in the period leading up to the harvest in March/April 2006. Total aid pledged so far to the Government and to WFP's humanitarian operation is $116 million.

Zambia: The numbers of people in Zambia facing food shortages before the next harvest in March/April remains at around 1.4 million people. Most of them live in the Southern, Western and Eastern Provinces of the

country. The Government have appealed for assistance and have declared a national disaster. WFP, the Government of Zambia and an NGO consortium are leading the response. Priority concerns over the next few weeks are in ensuring that food aid reaches those most in need—supplies have been limited due to transport bottlenecks—and that the nutritional situation does not deteriorate.

Mozambique: A total of about 800,000 people face some degree of food shortage until the end of April. WFP continues to scale up its distribution of food aid and plans to feed 75 per cent. of the worst affected populations between now and the end of the hunger season. The cereals pipeline is healthy until the end of April. Flooding has affected parts of central and southern districts of the country. Although this has not yet increased the numbers of people who face food shortages, further flooding and cyclones could increase the numbers in need of assistance. A national contingency plan is in operation to monitor flooding risks.

Lesotho: Assessments in Lesotho have not changed. About 440,000 people could face food shortages until the end of March. WFP have adequate supplies until the end of April. Commercial imports of maize from South Africa have been good this year and these have helped to keep prices stable. The Government of Lesotho are responding through safety nets, including a recently introduced pension for those over 70 years of age. With support from DFID and FAO, implementing partners are promoting seeds distribution and livestock programmes in the worst affected areas.

Swaziland: Assessments in Swaziland have also not changed. About 225,000 people could face food shortages until the end of the hunger season. As in Lesotho, other responses to chronic hunger, apart from food aid, are being encouraged. These include providing seeds and fertiliser to poorer households. Late rains in Swaziland have created problems for the maize crop, which is planted earlier in the year. The Ministry of Agriculture and co-operatives will undertake a rapid assessment at the end of the month to check the latest situation. We will closely monitor the situation through our links to the VAC system.

What are the UK Government doing?

In response to this crisis, the UK Government have now allocated over £65 million in humanitarian assistance for the region this year. Some of this has been channelled through UN agencies and some has gone through Governments or NGOs. The breakdown of our commitments so far this year is as follows:

Zimbabwe: £40 million covering relief programmes for up to 3 million people provided through non-Government channels, including contributions to WFP and HIV/AIDS programmes. DFID has also committed over £1 million in response to the Government of Zimbabwe's forced clearance of unauthorised dwellings earlier this year, under Operation Murambatsvina ("Clean Up"), which displaced or destroyed the livelihoods of 700,000 people.

Malawi: DFID has contributed £19.7 million (equivalent to US$35 million) or about 30 per cent. of total food needs. This makes DFID the largest contributor to the relief effort this year. Our support has been used largely to purchase food for distribution in affected districts in the centre and northern areas of the country. It has also provided logistical support, and money for seeds and other inputs. It has also allowed for an expansion of nutritional programmes across the country. Planning for the emergency began in March with help from early pledges from the UK.

Zambia: DFID has provided a range of assistance to help people facing food shortages this year. We have given £2.43 million to WFP for food aid programmes to cover the needs of approximately 150,000 people. In addition, we have also provided £1 million to Oxfam for a programme of cash transfers to provide emergency relief to approximately 81,000 people in need. We have also provided £500,000 for emergency seed distribution to 20,000 vulnerable households. To stem the risk of worsening malnutrition in Zambia, we are providing £500,000 for nutrition programmes, targeting vulnerable groups.

Mozambique: We have already provided £235,000 to provide seeds to drought-affected farmers, using the Ministry of Agriculture's drought mitigation plan. WFP's cereals pipeline is currently healthy until the end of the hunger season. We are working with WFP to see how we can help fill funding gaps in the vegetable, oil and pulses pipelines between now and the end of the hunger season. This will improve the protein content of rations distributed by WFP. We are also carefully monitoring flooding and cyclone risks.

Lesotho: We have provided FAO with £350,000 for distribution of seeds, fertilisers and small-scale livestock interventions for affected households in Lesotho.

Swaziland: We have provided £300,000 for distribution of seeds and fertilisers to help vulnerable households. In both Lesotho and Swaziland, we have supported programmes that help diversify production towards more drought-resistant crops.

I am once more urging EU partners to review their response to current needs in the region and to co-ordinate closely with the UN in the international community's response. I also urge them to consider support for strengthened early warning systems and better vulnerability assessments in the region. Improvements in this are needed to ensure better responses to hunger.

The Wider Challenge

As I said in my last statement, we must address the high levels of chronic hunger in southern Africa more effectively and take action to reduce the risk of repeated crises affecting the region.

In addition to the short-term responses I have outlined, and as we have done in previous years, DFID will work with SADC as part of a wider effort to improve vulnerability assessment and analysis in the region. This is needed to improve the effectiveness of our response to hunger. We will be providing funds to allow the VAC system in southern Africa to undertake further needs assessments later this year.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regional Development Agencies

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): I am publishing today the reported mid-year output results for 2005–06 for England's regional development agencies.

The data show the progress made by the regional development agencies between April and September 2005 in delivering against the core output targets set in RDA corporate plans for 2005–08. The figures cover employment creation and support, business creation and support, leverage of reclamation/redevelopment, and skills development.

Copies of the mid-year output results have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and the results have also been placed on the DTI website at: www.dti.gov.uk/rda/info.

TRANSPORT

Disability Rights Commission (Transport Vehicles)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Ms Karen Buck): I have today laid copies of the Disability Rights Commission's (DRC's) draft Code of Practice on the provision and use of transport vehicles before the House.

The Code, which has been developed in consultation with major stakeholders including industry representatives and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and been subject to public consultation, is a supplement to the DRC's existing Code of Practice: Rights of Access to Services and Premises for all other service providers, and it is intended to be read in conjunction with that publication.

It is designed to assist the operators of rail vehicles (including light rail, underground and trams), buses, coaches, taxis, private hire vehicles, vehicle hire, breakdown services and vehicles used on leisure and tourism transport services in meeting their new duties under Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 as amended by the DDA 2005.

The new duties, which stem from the Disability Discrimination (Transport Vehicles) Regulations 2005, will come into force on 4 December 2006.

When the regulations are in force, disabled people will have certain rights to transport services in the same way as they do to other services such as shops and banks.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 25 January 2006

DEFENCE

Historic Medals

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): I am announcing today that I have approved significant additional resources for the Ministry of Defence medal office in order that it may further improve the delivery of existing medals and reduce the existing backlog of applications for historic medals.

When the Ministry of Defence medal office was formed last February there were some 50,000 medal applications of all kinds awaiting action. This total has been reduced to 24,000 against a background of an enormous and unprecedented demand for medals arising from current operations such as Iraq and for historic campaigns such as Suez and World War II. There are currently some 9,000 World War II medal applications outstanding, with a further 780 applications on average a month.

The 60th anniversary celebrations to mark the end of World War II have led to a resurgence of interest in historic medals. In particular, applications received from second and subsequent generations, claiming on strength of their next of kin status, have increased significantly, and this has resulted in an average application taking up to 14 months to process because of the onerous nature of the research of historic files involved.

I have therefore decided to re-prioritise applications to give precedence to veterans and spouses ahead of second and subsequent generation applications. I understand that for some it may result in a slightly longer wait initially. However, in order to ensure both veterans and spouses receive the medals to which they are entitled, we must also consider their age, and this means they should not have to wait any longer than is absolutely necessary.

In addition I have directed that the team processing World War II medal applications should be expanded by an additional 21 staff—the maximum we can train in this specialist task without total diversion of our current experts. Six of these posts have already been filled and further recruitment action is already under way. With successful recruitment, I expect the backlog of applications for veterans and spouses to be cleared by the end of July 2006, and later generation applications by the end of October 2006.

Thereafter, I would expect to see all new applications for historic medals being processed within four months of receipt of the application.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Entry Clearance Refusals

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I have pleasure in announcing the appointment of Mrs. Linda Costelloe Baker as independent monitor for entry clearance refusals without the right of appeal. Mrs. Costelloe Baker succeeds Ms Fiona Lindsley whose appointment ended on 30 November 2005.

Mrs. Costelloe Baker is the fourth independent monitor. The position is full-time and the monitor will be expected to submit two reports a year to lay before the House.

HEALTH

NHS Finance

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Further to my statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, I am today publishing a report showing the action that my Department is taking to achieve financial turnaround in the national health service. The report has been placed in the Library.

On 1 December I published unaudited in-year financial forecasts for each NHS trust, primary care trust and strategic health authority. Those figures showed that halfway through the financial year NHS bodies were forecasting a net deficit by year-end of around £620 million.

Today Mr. Richard Douglas, finance director at the Department of Health, has produced a report on the organisations that are currently overspending and the conditions required to deliver a sustainable financial position for all organisations.

The majority of NHS organisations are successfully managing their finances, delivering balance or better, as well as cutting waiting times and generally improving services. A minority of organisstions are overspending by significant amounts.

The focus is on the organisations with the largest financial challenges and the Department and the NHS are employing turnaround techniques that are more widely used in the private sector. These focus on delivering organisational turnaround covering both finance and patient care. We will never compromise patient care.

Initial analysis, supported by KPMG, of the 62 organisations with the largest financial problems suggests that 18 require urgent intervention. Where this is not already being provided it is being commissioned centrally. Although turnaround will not be achieved overnight, in most cases it will be delivered by getting the basic systems and controls in place and implementing known good practice, not through any single action. The Department also needs to provide the right focus on sustainable financial health across the NHS through the way it manages the system and the incentives offered in 2006–07.

National Health Research Strategy

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): Over the course of the last six months, the Government have consulted formally and have had other extensive discussions with those directly concerned in industry, universities, the research councils, research charities and the national health service (NHS) about the NHS contribution to health research in England. Widespread agreement has been reached with these stakeholders on the means by which the NHS can best contribute to our aim to improve the nation's health and increase the nation's wealth as proposed in the Government's 10-year science and investment framework.

The new national health research strategy "Best Research for Best Health", published today, sets out how, working with our research partners, this aim will be achieved. The strategy is designed to place people at the centre of a system founded on quality, transparency and value for money; it recognises and responds to changes in society and the environment; and it responds to the challenges inherent in the current arrangements.

Over the last 15 years there have been significant developments in the contribution the NHS makes to applied research and to the evidence base on which advances in health care depend. The changes proposed in "Best Research for Best Health" build on that experience, and will ensure that we establish the NHS as an internationally recognised centre of research excellence. Further, they will ensure that we attract, develop and retain the best research professionals to conduct people-based research, that we commission research focused on improving health and care, that we strengthen and streamline systems for research management and governance, and that we act as sound custodians of public money for public good.

Separate implementation plans covering each of the main components of the strategy will be published today on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/researchstrategy. The plans will be reviewed and updated regularly during the course of the implementation process.

Copies of the strategy document have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Counter Terrorism Funding

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The tragic events of July last year have demonstrated that the threat from international terrorism remains real and serious. The police service and our security and intelligence agencies are at the frontline of our efforts to counter these threats and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Last December my right hon. Friend the Chancellor, in his pre-Budget report, was able to announce an additional £85 million to advance the ongoing expansion of the security and intelligence agencies. The Government remain absolutely committed to ensuring that the police service has the necessary resources to meet its CT commitments. Alongside the additional money for the security and intelligence agencies we are now able to announce additional counter-terrorism funding for the police service.

The total police specific counter terrorism funding is shown in the tables:

Resource, £ million	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
Existing MPS Specific CT Grant	61	61
Existing Local and Regional Policing outside of London	35	35
New MPS Specific Grant	30	45
New Local and Regional Policing outside of London	33	65
Total Specific CT Grant	159	206

Capital, £ million	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
Existing Police CT Capital Grant	8	8
New Police CT Capital Grant	30	35
Total Police CT Capital Grant	38	43

This additional funding will strengthen the police service's intelligence and investigative capability both in the capital and across the rest of the service and will complement the additional funding provided for the intelligence and security agencies already announced. In total, over the two years, the police service will receive £446 million specifically for countering the international terrorist threat and domestic extremism.

We have also made available £213 million for the provision of dedicated security posts for the police service and which is in addition to the funding announced above.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Horn of Africa (Drought)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Last week I visited the Horn of Africa. In Kenya I saw at first hand the devastating effects that drought is having on people's lives in the arid north of the country. In Ethiopia I saw the benefits being gained from work we are supporting through a "productive safety nets programme" to protect poor people from drought and food shortages.

Precise data on the severity of the current crisis in the region are difficult to obtain, but our analysis suggests that this could be the worst drought in the Horn of Africa for at least a decade. The UN estimates that as many as 5.4 million people are severely affected. Of these, 1.7 million are in southern Ethiopia, 1.4 million in southern Somalia, and 2.3 million in northern Kenya. Malnutrition rates are exceptionally high in these areas, affecting between one in three and one in five children. As many as half a million children are in need of emergency help.

A swift response from Governments and international community is required to get this situation under control. So far, in the current financial year, we have committed more than £12 million to tackle this crisis, and stand ready to do more. Of this, in Kenya, DFID has already committed £5.3 million (making a total of £9.7 million since mid-2004) to humanitarian relief and I pledged a further £3 million during my visit.

This will help provide much needed food, health and nutrition support, and will also enable urgent action to be taken to provide water supplies to the worst affected places.

One of DFID's humanitarian advisers has just returned from an assessment visit to southern Somalia. I will now be looking at options for significantly increasing our current contribution of £1.5 million to ensure that a disaster is avoided. The UN issued an appeal for Somalia last month, and we were one of the first to respond.

In Ethiopia we are major investors in the productive safety nets programme and have made additional contributions to provide help in drought affected areas. The Government of Ethiopia have just issued their annual humanitarian appeal and we will be considering further funding. Ethiopia has sufficient food stocks to meet anticipated needs for the next few months. The most important thing now is to ensure that relief is taken swiftly to the worst affected areas in the south. We will continue to monitor the situation and will be providing further funding.

As well as dealing with the current crisis, it is clear that much more can be done over the long term to reduce the vulnerability of people living in these areas so that when there are droughts and other types of shocks, they are better able to cope. It is also critically important that we press ahead quickly with the reforms of the international humanitarian system to ensure a swift and effective response when crises like this occur.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Criminal Justice System

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): The Government have received a thematic review report from the chief inspector of criminal justice in Northern Ireland, Mr. Kit Chivers. The report, "Target Setting and Performance Management in the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland", has today been published.

The Government warmly welcome this report, and thank the chief inspector and his team for the evident care and reflection that has gone into producing this work. The Criminal Justice Board are actively considering the review and have already taken some actions in line with the recommendations.

Copies of the chief inspector's report have been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 26 January 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Service Code

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Jim Murphy): The Cabinet Secretary and the First Civil Service Commissioner will tomorrow launch consultation on a new Civil Service Code. The Civil Service Code, which was introduced in 1996, sets out the duties and responsibilities of civil servants. Copies are available in the Library of the House.

The new Code is the result of work between the Government and the Civil Service Commissioners to ensure that the Code is relevant and accessible to all civil servants. The Code sets out the core values of the Civil Service and the standards of behaviour expected of all civil servants in their dealings with Ministers, the public, other organisations the Civil Service works with and its many customers.

In publishing the new Code for consultation, the Government wish to place on record its appreciation to the former First Civil Service Commissioner, Baroness Usha Prashar, for her contribution in taking forward work on the new Code.

Comments are invited on the new Code. The consultation period will run until Friday 21 April 2006.

Copies of the new Code will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today:

> "I am pleased to announce that Her Majesty The Queen has appointed Sir John Brigstocke KCB as the inaugural Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman. The appointment is for a period of five years in the first instance, and will expire in January 2011.
>
> Sir John Brigstocke has a distinguished record of achievement in the Royal Navy, and I am sure his appointment will be widely welcomed."

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Government Indemnity Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Mr. David Lammy): The provision for the Government Indemnity Scheme is made by the National Heritage Act 1980. The scheme facilitates public access to loans of works of art and other objects for public display made to museums, galleries and other such institutions by private owners and non-national institutions. It does this by indemnifying lenders against loss or damage to objects they loan. Loans covered by the scheme must be for public benefit. The scheme also covers loans of such objects for study purposes within borrowing institutions where this would contribute materially to the public's understanding or appreciation of the object loaned. Examples of this are enhancing interpretation or explanation to the public of objects, or bringing into the public domain the conclusions of any study.

In the six month period ended 30 September 2005, a total of 854 undertakings were given to indemnify objects on loan to national and non-national institutions under section 16 by the relevant Departments. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), which manages the scheme on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, issued a total of 666 undertakings to national museums and 73 undertakings to non-national museums in England, the Scottish Executive Education Department issued two undertakings and the National Assembly for Wales issued one.

Finally, the Government Art Collection issued 112 in the same period.

The value of contingent liabilities in respect of undertakings given at any time under section 16 and which remained outstanding as at 30 September 2005 for national museums are £2,038,824,046 and are £1,286,220,079 for non-nationals in England. The value of section 16 contingent liabilities as at 30 September 2005 for the Scottish Executive Education Department are £22,035,000; £34,009,500 for the National Assembly for Wales, and £4,750,000 for the Government Art Collection.

The value of non-statutory undertakings given to Her Majesty in respect of loans from the Royal Collection and which remained outstanding as at 30 September 2005 are £198,160,725; £259,000 for non-national museums issued by the MLA, and £25,000 issued by the Government Art Collections.

The total value of loans out by national institutions as remained outstanding at 30 September 2005 is £378,260,895.

The limit on the contingent liabilities which may be incurred in relation to the Government Indemnity Scheme for non-national museums and galleries in England approved by the Treasury in May 2004 was £1,200,000,000. As a result of an increase in the number of temporary exhibitions put on by the non-national museums and galleries, and in the value of the objects included in such exhibitions it has proved necessary for this limit to be temporarily increased to £1,287,000,000 effective until May 2006. The Government Indemnity Scheme will be reviewed in 2006 to see if a permanent increase of the limits on the contingent liabilities which may be incurred under the scheme is justified.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Finance Settlement 2006–07

The Minister for Local Government (Mr. Phil Woolas): On 5 December 2005, I informed the House that I had issued for consultation a provisional local government finance settlement for 2006–07 giving indicative grant increases for that year and for 2007–08. The consultation period closed on 11 January. I intend to lay before the House shortly the Local Government Finance Report (England) 2006–07 which will establish the amounts of revenue support grant and non-domestic rates to be paid to local authorities in 2006–07 and the basis of their distribution.

"A Sure Start to Later Life"

The Minister for Local Government (Mr. Phil Woolas): Today the Social Exclusion Unit in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is publishing a major report entitled "A Sure Start to Later Life: Ending Inequalities for Older People".

The report highlights:

that significant progress has been made in tackling social exclusion among older people. Pensioner poverty is down from 28 per cent. in 1996 to 20 per cent. in 2004. The numbers experiencing multiple disadvantage has dropped from 23 per cent. to 17 per cent. since 1997. But, there is a need to make further improvements for the most excluded;

there is a need for a concerted effort to the tackle social exclusion, disadvantage and deprivation facing some older people. As the population is ageing it is important to tackle exclusion now to avoid greater problems in the future; and

that we need to change the way we view older people. Poverty, decline and exclusion are not an inevitable part of ageing. We need to get services right so that all older people have the opportunities to participate in their local communities.

That tackling the exclusion facing older people requires:

A move from crisis management to prevention

Joining up services around users

Individual and community empowerment

The report sets out proposals for a more responsive model of services for older people that addresses these issues, and which builds on the approach of Sure Start in galvanising communities and reshaping children's services. The Sure Start to later life approach will use the same methods as the children's model to bring together services around older people, and to provide a single, accessible gateway to a wide range of services in the community. A pilot programme called "Link-Age Plus" will test out the Sure Start approach for older people.

The report contains 30 action points to be taken forward by Government Departments, which as a whole represent a comprehensive plan to tackle social exclusion among older people. The Implementation Team in the Social Exclusion Unit will monitor the progress made by the Departments on individual action points and will work to ensure that the overarching goals contained within the report are pursued across Government.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. Further copies can be downloaded from http://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/page.asp?id = 573

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Dental Training

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): In July 2004 we announced that we were to fund an additional 170 training places for dentists. A Joint Implementation Group (JIG) comprising representatives of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Department of Health and the National Health Service was established to manage the expansion programme. Of the 170 places, the JIG allocated 89 on a permanent basis to the nine universities with existing undergraduate dental schools enabling each of them to increase their annual intake to 75 new students. There are currently two dental schools in London, with the remaining schools located in Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Newcastle upon Tyne.

The JIG then allocated the remaining 91 places to the existing schools on a temporary basis in order to hold a competition for the permanent allocation of these places. In response to an invitation to all higher education institutions the JIG received bids from eight of the nine universities with existing dental schools for further expansion and seven bids (subsequently short-listed to six) from universities wishing to establish new dental schools. After short-listing, there were bids for 578 places under consideration. In acknowledgment of the quality of these bids and the importance of the needs they addressed, additional funding was found to increase the number of places on offer to 100.

The JIG applied the following criteria to the assessment of these bids: geography, innovation, quality, potential to widen participation in higher education, value for money and the viability of the proposals for recruiting academic staff. The majority of the bids were of very high quality offering a wide range of innovations in recruiting students and staff and teaching methods. Strategic/geographical considerations were therefore of particular significance.

For example, the JIG noted that there are five dental schools/dental teaching hospitals in the North, but none south of a line from Bristol to London. On the other hand, levels of dental disease are generally higher in the North, except in areas where drinking water is fluoridated. Areas distant from the main conurbations (and therefore from the existing dental schools) often have fewer dentists in relation to population than other areas.

The JIG submitted its recommendations to the HEFCE Board in December 2005 and, at its meeting on 26 January 2006, the Board decided to approve:

the bid from the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth for a new Peninsula Dental school with places for 62 students to be admitted annually from 2007

the bid from the University of Liverpool in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire for the development of 32 outreach training places for dental

students in Lancashire and Cumbria, subject to further discussion of points of detail; and

the University of Leeds to be allocated six new places to develop outreach training for dental students in Hull.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Grant Report (England and Wales) and Amending Reports

The Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety (Hazel Blears): On 5 December 2005, I informed the House that I had issued for consultation a provisional police finance settlement for 2006–07 giving indicative grant increases for that year and for 2007–08. The consultation period closed on 11 January. I intend to lay before the House shortly the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2006–07 which will establish the amounts of Police Grant to be paid to police authorities in 2006–07 and the basis of their distribution.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Electoral Reform

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): I have published the Government's response to the public consultations carried out on its proposals for the future of electoral registration and the regulation of political donations in Northern Ireland.

The consultation response outlines how the Government intend to move forward with regard to reforming the arrangements for electoral registration and political donations in Northern Ireland.

Copies of the response have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

PRIME MINISTER

Intelligence and Security Committee

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): Following appropriate consultation and in accordance with Section 10 of the Intelligence and Security Act 1994, I have appointed the right hon. Michael Ancram QC DL MP as a member of the Intelligence and Security Committee in place of the right hon. James Arbuthnot MP.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Common Commencement Dates

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Barry Gardiner): The DTI has today published its Annual Statement of Common Commencement Dates (CCDs) and other forthcoming proposals. This shows the extension of CCDs to all domestic regulatory areas of DTI. The Statement lists those regulations that will come into force on 6 April and 1 October 2006. Other sections of the report show the in-force date of European and other domestic legislation, which are not aligned with CCDs.

The document has today been placed in the Libraries of the House and on the DTI and Small Business Service websites at:

http://www.dti.gov.uk/ewt/common__comence5.htm/.

http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?r.s=sl&type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=1075320304.

TRANSPORT

Dartford—Thurrock Crossing Road User Charging Scheme: Accounts for 2004–05

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): The Dartford—Thurrock Crossing Road User Charging Scheme accounts for 2004–05 are published today under section 3(1)(b) of the Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (Keeping of Accounts) (England) Regulations 2003. A copy of the accounts will be placed in the House Library. Copies are available from the Vote Office.

Transport Innovation Fund

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Further to my statement to the House on 5 July 2005, I am today publishing guidance on the operation of the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF). Copies are today being placed in the Library of the House, published on the Department for Transport website and sent to all local highway authorities and Regional Development Agencies in England.

Through the fund we will be able to direct resources towards the achievement of two key objectives—tackling congestion and improving national productivity. The guidance I am publishing today explains how we will (a) support schemes aimed at tackling local congestion through demand management and better public transport, and (b) support schemes which meet national productivity objectives.

Schemes to tackle congestion

The guidance explains how local authorities can apply for funding from TIF to support the costs of smarter, innovative local packages which couple demand management, including road pricing, with improved public transport. It follows the award, on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 3WS, of £7 million of pump-priming funding for seven areas in England to assess the feasibility of such schemes. The new guidance explains the process for bidding for TIF funds for such schemes and offers local authorities the opportunity to enter into a partnership with the Department to develop their proposals.

There will be a second opportunity to bid for TIF pump-priming funds in July this year. TIF funding is open to bidding by all authorities in England, regardless of whether they are awarded pump-priming funds or TIF partnership.

For schemes to tackle local congestion, some local authorities may wish to bid for TIF funding to, amongst other things, support bus schemes. Such authorities will want to be reassured that there are suitable mechanisms for involving private operators. The Transport Act 2000 provided two mechanisms for this—Quality Contracts (about which guidance was published in February 2005)

and Statutory Quality Partnerships. Guidance on SQPs, including how they relate to TIF supported schemes, will be issued shortly. In this context my Department is considering ways in which SQPs, and existing or future partnership arrangements, could deliver major improvements in bus services as part of a package to improve traffic flows in cities outside London. My officials are discussing with the Office of Fair Trading how to ensure that these partnerships are consistent with competition law.

Schemes with benefits for national productivity

The Transport Innovation Fund will also be available for packages and schemes which are expected to make a major contribution to national productivity, but for which existing sources of funding are insufficient. The Department will suggest, for further evaluation, schemes which have been identified earlier, and which appear likely to meet the criteria set out in the guidance, and to assist in this process it will be seeking the views of the Regional Development Agencies on potential candidates and priorities. Accordingly, there will not be any form of bidding process for productivity schemes.

Decisions on the final allocation of TIF funds between these schemes will be taken following appraisal of their business cases against the criteria set out in the guidance document, alongside the bids for congestion schemes.

Implementation of the Network Modification Provisions in the Railways Act 2005

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Today we have published a consultation document on the implementation of the provisions in the Railways Act 2005 relating to network changes. The consultation covers the guidance which the Secretary of State is required to issue on circumstances in which rail closures should be allowed. It also covers when more minor modifications should be allowed, and will replace existing guidance that becomes obsolete when the Strategic Rail Authority is formally wound-up later this year.

The Government want more passengers to use the railways. Indeed, Britain now has the fastest growing railway in Europe. The Government are also committed to increasing investment in the railways. But from time to time, as in any industry, changes to service provision will be necessary to reflect passenger and freight demand. That is why there needs to be an open and transparent process to allow these changes to be made. The Railways Act 2005 allows that to happen—hence this consultation.

This guidance will ensure that safeguards and standard practices are applied to any proposals for changes on the rail network. For the first time, statutory guidance will be put in place on rail closures, making procedures clearer and more transparent. It will also ensure certain procedures are taken into account before any rail closure can be considered. The draft guidance requires that:

All alternatives are considered.

A full consultation takes place and that this includes passenger groups.

The current and future impact on passengers are considered as well as the safety, economic and environmental costs or benefits.

In contrast with current procedures, where the Secretary of State determines closure proposals, the independent Office of Rail Regulation must be satisfied that a robust economic analysis has been performed.

The document published today seeks views on the proposed implementation of this legislation.

Copies of the consultation have been laid in the House Library and the deadline for responses is the 21 April 2006. The existing procedure for closures will remain in place until the responses to the consultation have been considered and a final version of the new guidance has been laid before Parliament. It will continue to be administered by the Strategic Rail Authority during this period. This will be the Authority's sole responsibility after 31 March 2006, and will only require a minimal number of staff.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) has today announced its Phase 14 programme of work.

BFI inspections in this programme will include councils whose published performance figures indicate that they take longer than most to process claims for housing benefit. There can be a number of reasons for comparatively slow processing of claims. BFI inspection will determine the reasons for delays and seek to provide remedies. The councils include: Gateshead metropolitan borough council, Portsmouth city council, Shepway district council, Stevenage borough council and Walsall metropolitan borough council. Where this has been achieved, the councils will have the opportunity to demonstrate improvement in recent performance.

It is important to deter fraudsters by applying sanctions, including prosecutions; therefore BFI will inspect two authorities that in comparison to their caseload have applied few sanctions, including successful prosecutions. The authorities are Elmbridge borough council and Exeter city council.

BFI will also inspect four other authorities to provide assurance on a range of reported performance. These authorities are Dudley metropolitan borough council, Milton Keynes council, Reading borough council and Rushcliffe borough council.

I am pleased to announce that planned inspections of Castle Point borough council and South Ayrshire council will not go ahead because both councils have shown significant improvements in their performance.

BFI is an independent unit within the Department for Work and Pensions that inspects and reports directly to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the standard of benefits administration and counter-fraud activity in local authorities and the Department itself. During its inspections, BFI undertakes a thorough analysis of service standards and is careful to understand the reasons for under performance. Where a council has recently improved and has effective recovery plans in place, BFI will take this into account in the final inspection report.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 9 January 2006

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Line of Route

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what percentage of the line of route is inaccessible to wheelchair users; and if he will make a statement. [39062]

Nick Harvey: Of the 17 distinct stops on the visitor route, only St. Stephen's Hall is entirely inaccessible to wheelchair users. Wheelchair users can view the Lords Chamber from alongside the throne and from the Bar of the House, but cannot transit the Chamber due to the narrow space between the benches and the Table of the House.

Public Gallery

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what assessment the Commission has made of the impact on visitor numbers to the Public Gallery in the Chamber since the erection of the security screen. [39063]

Nick Harvey: There is no reason to suggest that the erection of the Chamber screen has had any impact on numbers of visitors to the Public Gallery. In the year April 2003 to March 2004 before the temporary security screen was in place there were 107,136 visitors from the public queue and 10,355 from Members' allocated tickets (total 117,491). From April 2004 to March 2005 with the screen in place the corresponding figures were 111,846 from the public queue and 10,329 from Members' allocations (total 122,175). I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Hazel Grove (Andrew Stunell) on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2231W, on the effect of the erection of the permanent screen on the view of the southern portion of the Chamber, and the steps to be taken to alleviate this.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crime Clear-up Rates

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Solicitor-General in which areas primary responsibility for decisions to charge for offences has been passed from the police to the Crown Prosecution Service; and what the clear-up rates for crime in *(a)* the year before and *(b)* the year after implementation of the policy were in each case. [39569]

The Solicitor-General: To date, 30 areas are operating under statutory charging. The remaining 12 areas have been operating shadow charging schemes since 2003, whereby charging is operating on a non-mandatory basis, which mirrors as closely as possible statutory charging arrangements between 9 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday. These remaining areas are scheduled to move onto statutory charging by April 2006.

The expected benefits of the charging scheme are a reduction in the rate of discontinuance, an increase in the guilty plea rate, and a reduction in the rate of attrition.

The following table shows, for each area, the date of implementation of statutory charging, and the proportion of recorded crime which was detected by the police.

23 per cent. of recorded crime in England and Wales was detected by the police in 2003–04. The latest data show that the detection rate rose by three percentage points, to 26 per cent., in 2004–05.

Implementation of statutory charging, and detection rate as percentage of recorded crime

Area	*Statutory charging introduced*	*Scheduled introduction of statutory scheme*	*Detections as percentage of recorded crime*	
			2003–04	*2004–05*
Avon and Somerset	July 2004	n/a	15	17
Bedfordshire	n/a	January 2006	23	28
Cambridgeshire	n/a	March 2006	23	23
Cheshire	n/a	February 2006	27	26
Cleveland	June 2004	n/a	21	24
Cumbria	December 2005	n/a	32	30
Derbyshire	n/a	January 2006	25	28
Devon and Cornwall	n/a	March 2006	29	30
Dorset	n/a	March 2006	26	28
Durham	August 2005	n/a	29	29
Dyfed Powys	n/a	February 2006	47	43
Essex	December 2005	n/a	28	27
Gloucestershire	October 2005	n/a	28	27
Greater Manchester	September 2004	n/a	22	23
Gwent	December 2005	n/a	45	42
Hampshire	April 2005	n/a	27	28
Hertfordshire	November 2005	n/a	25	29
Humberside	August 2004	n/a	19	20
Kent	May 2004	n/a	25	23
Lancashire	June 2004	n/a	27	30

Implementation of statutory charging, and detection rate as percentage of recorded crime

Area	Statutory charging introduced	Scheduled introduction of statutory scheme	Detections as percentage of recorded crime 2003–04	2004–05
Leicestershire	n/a	February 2006	22	25
Lincolnshire	November 2005	n/a	22	25
Merseyside	October 2004	n/a	27	30
London, City of	November 2004	n/a	33	36
Metropolitan Police	November 2004	n/a	15	21
Norfolk	October 2005	n/a	26	28
Northamptonshire	n/a	February 2006	28	29
Northumbria	June 2004	n/a	30	29
North Wales	September 2005	n/a	33	42
North Yorkshire	November 2005	n/a	28	35
Nottinghamshire	July 2004	n/a	18	20
South Wales	October 2005	n/a	29	29
South Yorkshire	May 2004	n/a	24	26
Staffordshire	n/a	January 2006	33	35
Suffolk	October 2005	n/a	33	32
Surrey	n/a	January 2006	22	26
Sussex	November 2005	n/a	24	25
Thames Valley	September 2004	n/a	23	26
Warwickshire	n/a	March 2006	25	27
West Mercia	July 2005	n/a	31	34
West Midlands	November 2005	n/a	25	23
West Yorkshire	May 2005	n/a	20	25
Wiltshire	n/a	March 2006	28	29
England and Wales			23	26

Iraqi Prisoners

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Solicitor-General for what reasons the Crown Prosecution Service did not proceed with charges against the individuals who faked photographs of British troops abusing Iraqi prisoners. [40458]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service has already confirmed that no charges were preferred as there was no realistic prospect of a conviction. In accordance with usual practice, they do not publish detailed reasons for the decision.

Special Counsel

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) in how many criminal cases a special counsel has been appointed in each year since 1997; [38705]

(2) in how many criminal cases in Northern Ireland a special counsel has been appointed in each year since 1997. [38716]

The Solicitor-General: As appears from the decision of the House of Lords in R *v.* H & C [2004] the Attorney-General may be asked by the court to appoint a special counsel to represent the interests of a defendant when issues of disclosure are being considered by the court in the absence of the defendant and his legal team. Such cases are rare. I am informed that the number of special counsel newly appointed in England and Wales in criminal cases in the year 2004–05 is 10 (in 12 cases) and in 2005–06 (to date) is one. In Northern Ireland the figure for 2004–05 is one and no further special counsel has been appointed so far in 2005–06.

Spy Ring (Stormont)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Solicitor-General who was consulted on the decision to discontinue the case against those charged with running a spy ring at Stormont in 2002. [38708]

The Solicitor-General *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The decision to offer no evidence in this case in December 2005 was taken by the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland following information received in November 2005 from the police. That decision was based on his assessment of the public interest. The Director kept the Attorney-General informed throughout this case and consulted the Attorney-General in respect of his decision.

In January 2005 an issue arose in the trial process, the Attorney-General carried out a Shawcross exercise by which he consulted ministerial colleagues as to whether they had information that might bear on the consideration of the public interest by the Director. In the event, having regard to ongoing developments in the trial process, no decision was required to be taken at that time and the information obtained formed no part of the Director's decision to discontinue the prosecution in December 2005. That decision was informed by facts and information provided by the chief constable in November 2005 following upon a further development in the trial process. No further ministerial consultation took place.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

0870 Numbers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 November 2005, *Official Report*,

column 1364W, on 0870 numbers, what contractual arrangements her Department has for the provision of 0870 lines. [37642]

Jim Knight: The core Department's 0870 number is used by callers to the Pet Travel Scheme helpline and is provided by BT which has a minimum contractual period of 12 months. This helpline number was provided by BT in late 1999 so it is no longer bound by a contractual period.

British Uplands (Tourism)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of how much money the British uplands generate for the tourist industry in each of the last five years. [39232]

Jim Knight [*holding answer 20 December 2005*]: The Department has not made a specific assessment of the contribution of the British uplands to the tourist industry.

In England responsibility for the strategic development of the tourist industry has been devolved to the Regional Development Agencies. Working closely with partners in the region they gather the necessary evidence to fulfil this role. This may include the contribution of geographic areas or sectors within the region.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* parliamentary questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Members of the House of Lords were dealt with by her Department in each year since 1995; what percentage took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if she will make a statement. [34753]

Jim Knight: The information required is as follows:

(a) The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members'/Peers' correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 137–40WS. Reports for earlier years are available in the Library of the House.

(b) The data are not held in the format requested. Therefore data provided in table A are given using Defra's 15-day working target.

Table A: General correspondence 2000–01 to 2005–06

Period[1]	General correspondence received	General correspondence responded to within 15-days target	Percentage responded to within 15-days target
April to March			
2000–01	106,007	96,899	91
2001–02	99,545	85,573	86
2002–03	114,229	98,546	86
2003–04	119,446	116,626	98
2004–05	106,451	96,679	91
April to September (half financial year)			
2005–06	55,673	54,624	98

[1] Data before 2001, when Defra was created, are less reliable and has not been provided.

(c) The data are not held in the format requested. Data provided in table B are based on the number of PQs answered more than 11 days late. Figures are collated on the basis of parliamentary sessions rather than calendar years.

Table B: Parliamentary questions 1996 to 2005

Period[1]	Number of PQs	Reply after 11+ days	Percentage 11+ days	Department
1995–96	2,210	—	—	MAFF
1996–97	1,297	—	—	MAFF
1997–98	4,081	—	—	MAFF
1998–99	2,704	—	—	MAFF
1999–2000	2,721	—	—	MAFF
2000–01	1,909	—	—	MAFF
2001–02	8,619	—	—	DEFRA
2002–03	5,444	—	—	DEFRA
2003–04	5,311	848	16	DEFRA
2004–05	1,871	265	14.2	DEFRA

[1] Data before 2001, when Defra was created, are less reliable and has not been provided.

In November 2003 a new database was introduced, which is not compatible with the earlier system. The new database produces stats on whether PQs have been answered on time, 1 day late, 2–5 days late, 6–10 days late and 11+ days late.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the value is of *(a)* pay supplements, *(b)* bonuses and *(c)* other incentive packages that are payable in her Department on the basis of geographic location; how many people are in receipt of each payment; and what the total cost to her Department of each payment was in 2004–05. [35919]

Jim Knight: The only pay/pay related payments that are operated in the core-Department, on the basis of geographical location are the National/London pay ranges and some Local Pay Additions (LPAs) retained on a reserved rights basis by some staff. The details are given as follows and are based on the 2004–05 pay outturn data:

National/London Pay Range Differentials

There are some 2,890 staff on London pay ranges, the additional cost (i.e. the differential between national and London pay rates) of which, over the pay rates paid to staff on national pay ranges equates to £8,705,581. As a percentage of the core-Department's paybill this equates to 5 per cent.

London/Local Pay Additions (LPAs)

There are 155 staff in receipt of LPAs on a reserved rights basis, the total cost of which equates to £68,261. This represents 0.035 per cent. as a percentage of the core-Department's paybill.

The payments are split geographically as follows:

Location	Number of staff	Total cost by location (£)
London	105	44,905
Cambridge	15	6,000
Chelmsford	1	700
Guildford	16	7,700
Kings Lynn	1	400
Reading	12	7,000
York	5	1,556

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are taken by the Department to support staff with mental ill health. [36275]

Jim Knight: Defra have taken a number of initiatives and offer various levels of support and a variety of resources to support staff with mental ill health.

The primary resource for line managers is the booklet published by 'Mindout', which offers practical advice on managing and supporting people who are experiencing stress, distress and mental health problems. Every manager has been passed a copy of this booklet and alongside this there are other resources including the Department's 'Stress-Web' intranet site which is a comprehensive central source of information on awareness, prevention and management of stress in the workplace and at home.

'Stress-Web's' primary objectives to raise awareness of stress policy, suggest ways to prevent stress in the workplace and at home, help staff identify symptoms of stress in themselves and others, assist with the management of stress and identifies others who can help such as the Departmental Health and Safety Advisers and Employee Support Services. It also provides other internal and external resources such as videos, literature and information about events and websites of interest.

As part of its new occupational health service provision and restructuring of its health and safety and welfare functions, Defra has refocused its resources to better tackle stress at work by targeting the 'root causes' at an organisational level, with its Health and Safety and Employee Support Advisers working more closely with business managers proactively to seek to ensure that better controls are in place to manage the risks from stress correctly.

Devolved Legislatures (Documents)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in her Department giving evidence to (i) Scottish Parliament, (ii) Welsh Assembly and (iii) Northern Ireland Assembly Committees; and to what categories of document she gives (A) full access, (B) restricted access and (C) no access to (1) Scottish Parliament, (2) Welsh Assembly, (3) Northern Ireland Assembly and (4) House of Commons Select Committees. [34751]

Jim Knight: Requests for the attendance of Ministers or officials to give evidence to the devolved legislatures, and for the provision of information to the assemblies, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This consideration will reflect: the principles set out in the Cabinet Office guidance 'Departmental Evidence and Response to Select Committees' (July 2005); the policy outlined in the Department for Constitutional Affairs' Devolution Guidance Note #12 'Attendance of UK Ministers and Officials at Committees of the devolved legislatures'; and the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. The principles underlying the provision of information to House of Commons Select Committees are set out in 'Departmental Evidence and Response to Select Committees', particularly sections 4B and 4C.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether a Minister in her Department is planned to be nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the Office for Disability Issues; and if she will make a statement. [37079]

Jim Knight: Prior to the general election Defra's Minister responsible for diversity issues was Alun Michael. Since the election, the Department has been reviewing its diversity strategy and wanted to complete this work before appointing a new Minister with this responsibility. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, intends to nominate one of her Ministers in the new year.

The new appointee will take responsibility for championing all diversity groups which will include liaison with the Office for Disability Issues.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the initial activity undertaken by her Department in response to those recommendations in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People, where lead responsibility was assigned to all Government Departments. [37080]

Jim Knight: This Department has undertaken the following activity in response to the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report.

Defra is currently undertaking work on a Disability Equality Scheme which is required by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This will address how the Department delivers and promotes its services to disabled employees and customers. As part of the scheme we will be developing specific indicators of progress which the report outlines as important in measuring success. This Disability Equality Scheme will be published by 1 December 2006.

Although some of the recommendations made in the Strategy Unit Report are not directly within Defra's remit, the Department is doing a lot of work in relation to the recommendation

> "improved support and incentives for getting and staying in employment."

In particular disabled candidates are supported through the Two Ticks Scheme which ensures that all disabled applicants are interviewed for jobs, if they meet the minimum criteria for the post. In addition, the Department uses the Access to Work Scheme which

independently assesses each disabled employee so reasonable adjustments can be made, where applicable, to enable them to develop and work to their full potential.

Energy Review

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received regarding the Energy Review; and when she expects the Energy Review to report to her. [39050]

Mr. Morley: The review of UK energy policy is being taken forward by a team led by my hon. Friend, the Minister for Energy. The review will report to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in early summer.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of the directive on procedures for the surveillance and monitoring of environments concerned by waste from the titanium dioxide industry, *(b)* Advisory Committee on the transportation of radioactive waste (surveillance and control) and *(c)* Committee overseeing the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [39011]

Mr. Morley: No meetings of these committees took place during the UK presidency.

Farm Payments

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department will pay interest on delayed payments under the *(a)* Entry Level Scheme and *(b)* single farm payments. [37902]

Jim Knight: For payments under the Entry Level Scheme there is no regulatory deadline by which payments must be made. Applicants can enter into agreements which can commence at intervals throughout the year with full payment being made in due course. A number of steps have been introduced this year to mitigate against the impact of later than planned delivery. Therefore interest on delayed payments is not appropriate. The Single Payment Scheme has a regulatory payment window which runs from 1 December to 30 June each year. Consideration would not be given to paying interest until this period has expired.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to the agricultural industry of a month's delay in payment by the Rural Payments Agency of the single farm payment. [23803]

Jim Knight: The EU regulatory window for payments under the 2005 Single Payment Scheme is 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) remains committed and on target to commence payments well within that window in February 2006. The cost to the agriculture industry of payments being made in one month rather than another would depend on individual farmers' circumstances.

Buncefield Oil Depot

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tonnes of carbon she estimates were emitted as a consequence of the fire at Hemel Hempstead; and what percentage of the UK's annual carbon emission this constitutes. [38837]

Mr. Morley: Whilst it is too early to say exactly how much fuel was burnt during the fire at the Buncefield oil depot earlier this month, a worst case scenario would suggest that approximately 42.9 kilo tonnes of carbon were released which would equate to about 0.03 per cent. of the UK's carbon emissions for 2005.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role the Government Decontamination Service has played in responding to the Hemel Hempstead oil depot fire. [39248]

Mr. Morley: On being informed of the incident, Government Decontamination Service staff established contact with those involved in the response and recovery to establish whether GDS assistance was required.

That contact was maintained until it was clear that there was no formal requirement on the part of the local authorities and emergency services for GDS advice, guidance and facilitation.

Hunting Trophies

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers the Government have to restrict the *(a)* importation and *(b)* retention of hunting trophies; and under what circumstances these powers would be used. [38322]

Jim Knight: Many of the species that are hunted for trophies are subject to EU legislation implementing the convention on international trade in endangered species (CITES), which includes powers to enable member states to refuse imports where such trade is detrimental to the conservation of the species concerned. If we decide, on the basis of our scientific advice, that such trade is unsustainable we will press the European Commission to use its powers to suspend the trade.

Powers are also available to prohibit the keeping of certain CITES specimens and we recently went out to public consultation on our proposals for using these powers. This included proposals to prohibit the keeping of trophies made from tigers, Tibetan antelopes and rhinos, which have prompted some respondents to call for the proposed prohibition to be extended to include all hunting trophies. We are currently considering all comments received during the consultation process and I shall announce our conclusions in the new year.

Pesticides

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish on the internet *(a)* the detailed record of discussions of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides (ACP), *(b)* the agendas and minutes of the ACP's Medical and Toxicology Panel and *(c)* a declaration of interests of the ACP's Medical and Toxicology Panel. [35800]

Mr. Morley: A summary report of all ACP discussions is published. The Department has previously considered the feasibility of publishing the detailed record of the ACP's meetings but this was not taken forward due to the fact that certain commercially confidential information is included.

As the Medical and Toxicology Panel of the ACP does not provide advice direct to Government it does not currently publish minutes. Most of the Panel's work is preparatory and reported direct to the ACP and hence reported in the ACP minutes. The ACP annual report lists the issues the panel has considered over the year.

I have asked my officials to look again at these issues in consultation with the ACP and its panel members to see whether more information could be made available.

Membership of the Medical and Toxicology Panel, and the affiliations of the non-ACP members, is published in the ACP annual report. Members are also required to declare any conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting, and the Chair decides the appropriate action in each case.

Road Traffic (Emissions)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on the carbon dioxide emissions caused by road traffic congestion in *(a)* Harborough constituency and *(b)* the East Midlands Government office area. [38843]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Department has not received any representations in respect of carbon dioxide emissions caused by traffic congestion in Harborough or the East Midlands.

Sustainability Symposia (Harlow)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the representatives from her Department and public bodies for which her Department is responsible who attended the Harlow North Sustainability Symposia on 6 June. [37447]

Mr. Morley: So far as I am aware, one official from Defra attended this event along with two officials from the Environment Agency, one from the Waste Resources Action Programme and two from the Sustainable Development Commission.

I believe this was a private event organised by Beyond Green under Chatham House rules.

Upland Farmers

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the optimum number of farmers in the English uplands to maintain sufficient land management capacity. [38157]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* We are currently reviewing the future of upland reward in the context of the number of public benefits we wish to see delivered.

While we understand the difficulties faced by upland farm businesses in England, and acknowledge the provision of public goods they deliver any future reward structure will be based on the delivery of public benefits for the receipt of public resource.

TRANSPORT

Act of Austria

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on implementation of Protocol 9 to the Act of Austria concerning transport by road and rail and combined transport (Ecopoints), *(b)* Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of roadworthiness tests of vehicles, *(c)* Committee for a transparent system of harmonised rules for restrictions on heavy goods vehicles involved in international transport on designated roads and *(d)* Advisory Committee for the harmonisation and comparability of the accounting and annual accounts of railway undertakings have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38035]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

(a) and *(b)* There were no meetings of these Committees during the UK presidency.

(c) As legislation on harmonised driving restrictions has yet to be adopted this Committee has not yet met.

(d) There were no meetings of this Committee during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Carbon Emissions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which unit in his Department is responsible for reducing carbon emissions. [39901]

Ms Buck: The Department's policy is to integrate environmental thinking into policy. Responsibility for reducing carbon emissions is therefore shared among all the relevant units in the Department and all schemes are appraised for their environmental impacts, including CO_2 emissions.

Concessionary Transport

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the provision of travel concessions for pensioners on public transport; [40606]

(2) what recent discussions he has held on the provision of free off-peak bus travel for old age pensioners in England. [40608]

Ms Buck: The statutory entitlement to free off-peak local bus travel in England for people 60 and over and disabled people will come into effect on 1 April 2006. The Secretary of State has had no recent discussions on concessionary fares. The Department for Transport has issued guidance to local authorities on implementation but it is for individual concessionary travel authorities to design and operate their local concessionary fares scheme.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39112]

Ms Buck: The Department was formed in May 2002. Details of spend on external consultants and advisers by the central Department and its Executive agencies is shown in the following table. Details in respect of non-departmental public bodies and other sponsored bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

£ million

	2002-03	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Central Department	57.2	58.5	65.2
Highways Agency	157.5	169.7	115.0
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	4.0	3.4	4.8
Driving Standards Agency	4.2	4.0	3.6
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	3.3	3.0	3.4
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	1.2	0.8	1.2
Vehicle Certification Agency	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	227.5	239.5	193.3

EU Transport Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on the driving licence, *(b)* Advisory Committee on access for Community air carriers to intra-Community air routes, *(c)* Advisory Committee on the definition and use of compatible technical and operating standards and specifications for the procurement of air-traffic-management equipment and systems and *(d)* Committee on the harmonisation of technical requirements and administrative procedures in the field of civil aviation have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38034]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

(a) and *(b)* There were no meetings of these committees during the UK presidency.

(c) There were no meetings of this Committee during the UK presidency. The Committee will not meet again as the related directives 93/65/EEC and 97/15/EC and regulations (EC) numbers 2082/2000 and 980/2002 were repealed on 20 October 2005 by the Single European Sky interoperability regulation.

(d) There have been three meetings of this Committee during the UK presidency. All of the meetings were chaired by the European Commission. DfT represented the UK. The Civil Aviation Authority also attended one of the meetings.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee for the establishment of conditions for the interoperability of the trans-European high speed rail system, *(b)* Committee on the adaption to scientific and technical progress of legislation concerning the transport of dangerous goods, *(c)* Committee for the adaption of technical progress of recording equipment in road transport (tachographs) and *(d)* Community—Switzerland Transport Committee (rail and road) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38036]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

(a) There have been three meetings of this committee during the UK presidency. DfT and the Health and Safety Executive were represented. These were chaired by the European Commission.

(b) There has been one meeting of this Committee during the UK presidency. It was chaired by the European Commission. DfT officials represented the UK.

(c) There were no meetings of this committee during the UK presidency.

(d) There has been one meeting of this committee during the UK presidency. DfT did not attend.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on the system of charging for the use of transport infrastructure, *(b)* Committee on the development of the trans-European transport networks and *(c)* Committee for granting Community financial aid in the field of trans-European energy networks have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38037]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

(a) There have been no meetings of this committee during the UK presidency.

(b) There has been one meeting of this Committee during the UK presidency. The Committee was chaired by the Commission and the UK was represented by DfT.

(c) The policy area with which this Committee deals is not the responsibility of the Department for Transport.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee for granting Community financial aid in the field of trans-European transport networks, *(b)* Committee for granting Community financial aid in the field of trans-European telecommunications networks, *(c)* Advisory Committee on the management of the research programme for management and storage of radioactive waste and management of the Community plan of action in the field of radioactive waste and *(d)* Committee on application of the legislation on application of tonnage measurement of ballast spaces in segregated ballast of oil tankers have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38038]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

(a) There has been one meeting of this committee during the UK presidency. The committee was chaired by the European Commission. The purpose of the meeting was to vote on the 2005 annual bidding round.

(b) and *(c)* The policy areas with which these committees deal are not the responsibility of the Department for Transport.

(d) The committee referred to no longer deals with this subject area. In 2002 its responsibility was assumed by a new committee called the Committee on Safe Seas and the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (known as COSS). COSS was created by Regulation (EC) No. 2099/2002 to centralise the tasks of earlier committees that had been set up under Community maritime legislation to assist the European Commission.

During the UK presidency there has been one meeting of the full COSS and one meeting of a COSS Working Group of Experts. Neither discussed the subject area of the committee referred to at *(d)* in the hon. Member's question. The COSS meetings were presided over by the European Commission. The UK was represented by officials from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, an Executive agency of the Department for Transport.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Implementation Committee on minimum requirements for vessels bound for or leaving Community ports carrying dangerous or polluting goods, *(b)* Committee on transfer of ships from one register to another within the Community, *(c)* Advisory Committee on aids to transport by rail, road and inland waterway, *(d)* Advisory Committee for the application of legislation on the development of the community railways and *(e)* Advisory Committee for the application of uniform principles on costing for railway undertakings have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38039]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

(a) and *(b)* The committees referred to no longer deal with these subject areas. In 2002 their responsibilities were assumed by a new committee called the Committee on Safe Seas and the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (known as COSS). COSS was created by Regulation (EC) No 2099/2002 to centralise the tasks of earlier committees that had been set up under Community maritime legislation to assist the European Commission.

During the UK presidency there has been one meeting of the full COSS and one meeting of a COSS Working Group of Experts.

Neither discussed the subject areas of the committees referred to at *(a)* and *(b)* in the hon. Member's question. The COSS meetings were presided over by the European Commission. The UK was represented by officials from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Transport.

(c) There were no meetings of this Committee during the UK presidency.

(d) There has been one meeting of this committee during the UK Presidency. It was chaired by the European Commission. The UK was represented by officials from DfT and the Office of Rail Regulation.

(e) There were no meetings of this Committee during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12 to 15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings the *(a)* Advisory Committee on transport, *(b)* EC-Bulgaria Joint Transport Committee, *(c)* EC-Romania Joint Transport Committee, *(d)* Consultative Committee European Energy and Transport Forum and *(e)* EC-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Joint Transport Committee have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38040]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

(a) , *(b)* and *(c)* There were no meetings of these Committees during the UK presidency.

(d) There was one meeting of this Forum during the UK presidency. It is a stakeholders' body, chaired by the Commission. DfT does not attend.

(e) There was no meeting of this Committee during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12 to 15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* Advisory Committee on measures to be taken in the event of a crisis in the market in the carriage of goods by road and for laying down the conditions under which non-resident carriers may operate national road haulage services, *(b)* Advisory Committee for the application of legislation on the conditions under which non-resident carriers may operate national road passenger transport services within a member state and *(c)* Committee on the reciprocal recognition of national boatmasters' certificates of the carriage of goods and passengers by inland waterways have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38041]

Dr. Ladyman: None of these committees met during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in

paragraphs 4.12 to 15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

First Aid (Driving Tests)

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce basic first aid education as part of the driving test requirements. [40274]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 27 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 504W.

Ministerial Meetings

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list meetings held between Ministers and *(a)* airport authorities and *(b)* interested groups since June; and if he will place the minutes of the meetings in the Library. [26407]

Ms Buck: Ministers and officials have met with a wide range of aviation stakeholders, including airlines, airports and local and environmental interest groups. The matters discussed at many of them are confidential for commercial or other reasons, therefore it would not be appropriate to summarise the details of these meetings or to place the minutes in the House Library.

Mobile Phones

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to inform motorists of the dangers of using a mobile phone while driving. [40667]

Dr. Ladyman: Messages on the dangers of using a mobile phone while driving are promoted as part of the Department's THINK! road safety campaign, which has a budget of £18 million in this fiscal year.

Mobile phone messages have been included in the THINK! campaign since 2002. Activity this fiscal year includes cinema and radio advertising and leaflets and posters which encourage drivers to switch off their mobile phones before they drive off, using captions such as "switch off before you drive off" and "missing a call won't kill you".

Provisions in the Road Safety Bill, presently before the House, will make the penalty for the offences of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving, and for not having proper control of a vehicle (used to deal with those who drive poorly while using a hands-free phone), endorseable with three points and a £60 fine. Subject to parliamentary consideration of the Bill, the Department will promote awareness of the increased penalties.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has held with the Home Office regarding the enforcement of the offence of driving while using a mobile phone. [40668]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is in regular discussion with the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers on all aspects of roads policing. In this context, Ministers from the two Departments and the Head of the ACPO Road Policing Business Area issued a joint Roads Policing Strategy Statement on 11 January 2005—available online at www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_033749.pdf

The day to day enforcement of road traffic law is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police. They are best placed to recognise local concerns and to identify and assess the nature and cause of specific local problems. They will then determine how best to deploy their resources to address them in the light of their overall priorities.

Motorbikes

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the value of new motorbikes purchased in each year since 1997. [38656]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not available.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new motorbikes were purchased in each year since 1997. [38658]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of motorcycles newly registered in Great Britain are as follows:

	Thousand
1997	106.4
1998	117.2
1999	123.0
2000	118.8
2001	112.4
2002	110.0
2003	108.8
2004	98.4

Source:
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

These figures exclude scooters and mopeds.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the value of second-hand motorbikes purchased in each year since 1997. [38659]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not available

Port of Sharpness

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made towards re-opening a rail link to the Port of Sharpness. [39275]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not received any proposals to re-establish rail links to the Port of Sharpness.

Railways

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in what month he expects to publish the specification for the new merged Central Trains/Midland Mainline railway franchise. [39787]

Derek Twigg: Our current expectation is that consultation on the new East Midlands franchise draft specification will commence in summer 2006.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average age is of passenger trains on *(a)* the London and South East heavy rail network, *(b)* the local regional rail network and *(c)* the Northern Trains franchise. [38722]

Derek Twigg: The average age of passenger trains, as at 1 October 2005 is approximately as follows: London and South East Network 12 years; the regional network 16 years and Northern Trains franchise 17 years.

Road Accidents

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) killed, (ii) seriously injured and (iii) slightly injured as a result of a motor vehicle being driven on the wrong side of the road in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [39708]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available.

Road Deaths

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road deaths there have been in the Nottinghamshire county council area in the last three years. [40690]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatalities in personal injury road accidents, in the Nottinghamshire county council area (excluding the City of Nottingham) in the last three years is given in table.

Fatalities in personal injury road accidents[1] in Nottinghamshire CC (excl. Nottingham City)

	Number
2002	69
2003	64
2004	54

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident. Excludes confirmed suicides, death from natural causes and injuries to pedestrians with no vehicle involvement (e.g. a fall on the pavement).

Roads

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost has been to his Department of *(a)* repairing existing and *(b)* building new roads in each year since 1997, broken down by category of road. [38451]

Dr. Ladyman: The motorways and trunks roads of the strategic road network are managed by the Highways Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Transport. The reporting of the cost of these roads is not broken down by category of road. The figures for repairing existing and building new roads on this network since 1998–99 are:

£ billion

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Repairing[1]	0.64	0.72	0.74	0.71	0.76	0.78	0.73
Building new roads[2]	0.32	0.36	0.31	0.40	0.51	0.35	0.35

[1] Resource and capital expenditure.
[2] The apparent decrease in spending between 2002–03 and 2003–04 is due to a change in accounting treatment of lands provisions.
Note:
Information is not readily available for 1997–98.

This information includes expenditure on roads in London until the creation of Transport for London in 2000. The later numbers do not include this expenditure, which is now a matter for the Mayor of London and the Greater London Assembly.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Article 14 Directives have been served by the Highways Agency on developments in North Northamptonshire. [39784]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has served eight Article 14 Directions in North Northamptonshire since 1 January 2005. An additional direction issued in December 2004 is still in force. The Highways Agency offered no objection to a further 44 Planning Applications. Details of the directions are shown in the following table:

Table 1

LPA	*Council reference*	*Received*	*Issue date*
Wellingborough	WP/2004/0362/O	6 September 2004	7 November 2005
Corby	04/00240/OUT	11 March 2004	8 December 2004
Corby	04/00442/OUT	13 December 2004	24 February 2005
Corby	05/00078/OUT	6 January 2005	7 January 2005
Corby	05/00013/OUT	2 April 2005	3 July 2005
Corby	05/000119/OUT	28 April 2005	31 May 2005
Corby	05/00159/DPA	24 May 2005	14 June 2005
Corby	05/00171/OUT	26 May 2005	6 October 2005
Northants CC	KE/05 and WP/05	25 August 2005	19 September 2005

LPA	HA response	Applicant name	Development details
Wellingborough	Conditions—travel plan	Hampton Brook Ltd	Land Off Bourton Way, Wellingborough
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Corby Developments Ltd.	Priors Hall
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd	Land South of Long Croft Road, Corby
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Brian Barber Associates	Land at Weldon Park, Oundle Road,
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Astral Developments Ltd	Eurohub, Land North of Long Croft Road, Corby
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Morrisons Supermarkets	Land North of Birchington Road
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Boden Properties Ltd	Retail Warehouse, St. Mark's Road
Corby	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Quadrant Estates (Corby) Ltd	Land North of Cockerell Road
Northants CC	Holding Direction—insufficient information	Northamptonshire County Council	A509 Isham Bypass

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with Northamptonshire county council about the construction of new distributor road capacity around Kettering. [39785]

Dr. Ladyman: None.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* front and *(b)* rear seat belt wearing rates are among (i) males and (ii) females in each of the last five years for which information is available; and what the equivalent rates were in (A) 1980, (B) 1982, (C) 1983, (D) 1984, (E) 1987, (F) 1990, (G) 1992, (H) 1994, (I) 1996 and (J) 1998. [39777]

Dr. Ladyman: Survey data on observed seat belt wearing rates from 1982 to 1989 only cover front seat occupants of cars and do not distinguish by gender. Surveys were not made prior to 1982. The available data are in the table:

Wearing rates for car front seat occupants

Percentage

Month	Driver	Passenger
May 1982	37	39
April 1983	95	94
April 1984	95	96
April 1987	94	95

Source:
TRRL report RR289: "Restraint use by car occupants 1982 to 1989"

From October 1988, surveys provided the following observed wearing rates for drivers and front and rear occupants:

Wearing rates for car drivers and front and rear seat occupants

As at April 1990	Percentage
Driver	93
Front passenger	93
Rear passenger	45

Source:
TRRL leaflet LF2051 "Restraint use by car occupants 1990–91"

From April 1991 the surveys provided observed wearing rates by age group for drivers and by age group and gender for front and rear occupants, shown in the following table. Later surveys provided wearing rates by gender for drivers. A gender split for children is only available from April 2003. Prior to April 2003, the data for children in rear seats are split into 0–4 and 5–13 age groups and wearing rates are not aggregated.

Wearing rates for car drivers, front and rear seat occupants distinguished by age group and gender

Percentage

	Driver			Front seat passenger				Rear seat passenger			
	Age groups										
Gender	17–29	30–59	60	0–13	14–29	30–59	60	0–13	14–29	30–59	60 or 0–4/5–13
April 1992											
Male	91	93	94	94	83	87	88	85/67	44	39	48
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	93	96	95	—	41	51	55
April 1994											
Male	92	93	94	97	87	89	93	82/81	36	40	53
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	93	97	96	—	46	53	65
April 1996											
Male	91	91	93	95	84	91	93	85/74	31	42	53
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	92	96	95	—	40	48	59
April 1998											
Male	91	91	93	96	84	86	89	87/73	38	36	59
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	91	95	95	—	46	52	66
April 1999											
Male	91	92	94	97	88	90	92	94/86	53	47	70
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	94	96	97	—	58	61	72

Wearing rates for car drivers, front and rear seat occupants distinguished by age group and gender

Percentage

	Driver			*Front seat passenger*				*Rear seat passenger*			
				Age groups							
Gender	*17–29*	*30–59*	*60*	*0–13*	*14–29*	*30–59*	*60*	*0–13*	*14–29*	*30–59*	*60 or 0–4/5–13*
April 2000											
Male	88	91	93	96	83	89	93	94/86	45	45	69
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	93	96	97	—	49	61	74
April 2001											
Male	91	91	92	96	83	85	92	94/85	54	49	55
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	93	96	96	—	52	52	70
April 2002											
Male	91	91	93	95	86	85	93	97/86	53	37	59
Female	[—]	[—]	[—]	—	93	96	97	—	61	58	69
April 2003											
Male	86	88	92	96	82	81	93	90	51	41	68
Female	93	95	94	96	92	96	97	91	61	64	73
April 2004											
Male	88	91	92	96	84	89	94	92	57	47	69
Female	96	96	96	97	94	96	97	93	71	67	80
April 2005											
Male	90	90	94	98	87	88	95	93	56	45	65
Female	96	96	97	96	93	96	98	92	70	66	80

Source:
TRL leaflets Lf2056, 2068, 2077, 2078, 2081, 2083, 2085, 2087, 2090, 2092, 2096.

The most recent survey results, "Restraint use by car occupants 2003 to 2005" (Reference Lf2096) are available free from TRL at www.trl.co.uk/store/report_list.asp?pid=211&pno=6&searchtext= (listed under Reports 51–54). Earlier reports are available on application to TRL (www.trl.co.uk).

Speed Cameras

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will permit revenue raised from speed camera fines to be used to fund 20 mph zones outside schools. [39289]

Dr. Ladyman: The current funding arrangement of the National Safety Camera Programme allows for revenue raised from safety cameras to be used only to fund the deployment of safety cameras.

This is because the Safety Camera Programme has a specific purpose, provided for in the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001, section 38 'Unified power for the Secretary of State to fund speed cameras etc' whereby police forces and highway authorities are provided with extra resources to support the deployment and operation of safety cameras, from the fines for speeding and red light offences detected, over and above their main road safety funding. The resources provided through the programme cannot therefore be used for any other purposes, not provided for in the Act.

Under this current arrangement any surplus fine revenue is paid to the Consolidated Fund at HM Treasury.

The Secretary of State announced on 15 December 2005 that this funding arrangement for safety cameras will end on 31 March 2007. From 1 April 2007 all future income from safety cameras in England and Wales will go to the Consolidated Fund in the same way as other fines.

In England the Department for Transport will be enhancing the level of funding for road safety within the local transport planning process by £440 million over the period 2007–08 to 2010–11. This new arrangement for funding road safety will give local road safety partnerships (local authorities, the police and other agencies who work with them) greater flexibility to implement the mix of road safety measures, including 20 mph zones around schools, that will make the greatest contribution to reducing road casualties in their area.

On 1 April 2007, responsibility for safety cameras in Wales will transfer to the National Assembly for Wales. I understand that the Welsh Assembly Government are considering future funding arrangements.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 328W, on speed cameras, what previous studies of regression to the mean effect on the statistics relating to the number of accidents on roads with speed cameras have been conducted; and what the results were. [36964]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport has not conducted any previous studies of the regression to the mean effect on the number of accidents on roads with speed cameras.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many speed cameras there are in the county of Nottinghamshire excluding cameras on the A1. [40689]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of speed camera sites, broken down by type, which are operated by the Nottinghamshire Safety Camera Partnership, excluding those on the A1.

	Nottinghamshire	*Nottingham city*	*Total*
Combined speed/red light	2	0	2
Time/distance	7	4	11
Fixed	6	3	9
Mobile	24	12	36
Total	39	19	58

There may be several camera housings contained within one site. The police have the discretion to enforce speed limits outside the national safety camera programme, and this could be done anywhere on the road network.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information his Department collects centrally on speeding fines. [39683]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on speeding fines is collected by the Home Office. The only information held by the Department is the total income from fixed penalty fines from safety cameras that are operated as part of the safety camera programme. This information is available for each area that participates in the national safety camera programme. The latest information available is shown in the Audit Certificates published on the Department's website at www.dft.gov.uk/safetycameras.

Transport (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious road traffic accidents occurred in the Gravesham constituency in each year since 1997. [40624]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatal and serious personal injury road traffic accidents in the Gravesham constituency since 1997 are shown in the table.

	Fatal accidents	*Serious accidents*
1997	5	36
1998	7	36
1999	5	48
2000	4	44
2001	3	47
2002	6	30
2003	3	39
2004	3	36

The accidents in the table are those which occurred within the 2004 boundary of Gravesham constituency.

Trust Ports

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what grants have been made to each trust port in the last 12 months *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by type of grant. [39414]

Dr. Ladyman: Trust ports receive no grants from this Department to support their functions as Statutory Harbour Authorities. I understand that grants were given by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for fishing port facilities in 2005 to the following trust ports:

£

Trust port	*Amount*
Mevagissey	56,705
Newlyn	1,043,366
North Sunderland (Seahouses)	9,038
Port Isaac	40,000
Sennen Cove	2,473
Warkworth (Amble)	111,007

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* private cars, *(b)* commercial vans, *(c)* lorries and *(d)* motorbikes did not have their vehicle excise duty renewed in each year since 1997. [39681]

Dr. Ladyman: The estimated number of vehicles that did not have their excise duty renewed for each year in Great Britain is as follows:

Thousand

	(a) Cars	*(b) Commercial vans*	*(c) Lorries*	*(d) Motorbikes*
1997	1,564	162	34	112
1998	1,812	184	46	88
1999	1,578	172	25	97
2000	1,908	212	28	122
2001	1,865	202	32	126
2002	2,032	218	22	108
2003	2,197	227	22	99
2004	1,817	194	11	82

Source:
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

The figures are produced by comparing the number of vehicles newly registered each year against the overall increase in stock. Vehicles that were renewed in a later year than the expiry date are included in the year in which they were renewed.

The Motorbike data includes scooters and mopeds as well as motorbikes.

Vehicle Registration

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the number of foreign registered *(a)* cars, *(b)* commercial vans and *(c)* lorries on UK roads in each year since 1997. [38829]

Dr. Ladyman: Estimates of the number of foreign registered vehicles on UK roads are not available. However, the estimated number of foreign registered vehicles leaving the UK is as follows.

Estimated number of foreign registered vehicles[1] leaving the UK: 1997 to 2004

Thousand

	Cars[2]	*Goods vehicles[3]*
1997	1,019	671
1998	880	826
1999	[4]1,015	967
2000	801	1,153
2001	722	1,319
2002	862	1,435
2003	770	1,453
2004	799	1,595

[1] Vehicles leaving on ferries or through the Channel Tunnel. Figures are for vehicle trips (i.e. a vehicle is counted once each time it leaves the UK).

[2] Cars includes minibuses (small passenger vehicles with 9 to 15 passenger seats) and similar vehicles, and light goods vehicles up to 4.5 metres long.

[3] Goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight.

[4] From 1999, traffic between the UK and the Irish Republic, either by sea or across the land border (about 130,000 cars) is included. This was excluded in earlier years.

Source:

Cars, International Passenger Survey (Office for National Statistics); Goods vehicles, Roll on/Roll off Goods Vehicle Survey (Department for Transport)

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Art Loans

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she has taken to reassure the Russian Government that works of art on loan to British museums and galleries will not be seized as a result of international debts owed to third parties. [40273]

Mr. Lammy: No discussions have as yet taken place with the Russian Government on these issues. I am meeting museum and gallery directors most affected by these issues shortly to discuss possible solutions and to consider how we can reassure Russian museums and galleries as to the safety of continuing to lend items to UK institutions.

Churches (Inspired Campaign)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the implications for churches in the Vale of York of English Heritage's Inspired campaign. [39609]

Mr. Lammy: No specific assessment has been made of the potential implications of the campaign on churches in the Vale of York. When the Inspired campaign is launched in May 2006, it will bring together existing and new research to provide an accurate picture of the repair needs of listed places of worship, and the support required by congregations. Information on the most vulnerable places of worship will be available at a county level.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter dated 25 October from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Mike Amesbury. [37158]

James Purnell: I am sorry for not replying sooner to my right hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Gorton's question tabled on 8 December. I replied to my right hon. Friend's letter on 20 December.

Departmental Expenditure

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33214]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows:

(a) The Department has had a zero spend on design and production of new logos since 2000.

(b) (i) The Department spent £100,000 on public relations in 2004–05. The Department anticipates a spend of £250,000 on public relations in 2005–06 (both public relations spends relate to the Digital Campaign).

(ii) The information on graphic design agencies broken down by projects could be given only at disproportionate cost. However the total spend on publicity, including all graphic design work, since 2000 are as follows:

	£
1999–2000	497,404
2000–01	497,243
2001–02	318,140
2002–03	386,233
2003–04	533,549
2004–05	711,242

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what has been the annual expenditure on training and development for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39995]

Mr. Lammy: For the last three financial years the total cost to *(a)* the Department of all training and development provision was as follows:

	£
	Cost
2002–03	482,573
2003–04	453,709
2004–05	621,349

The information for *(b)* (i) Non-Departmental Public Bodies and (iii) other public bodies for which the Secretary of State is responsible is not collected centrally on a regional basis and so could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(ii) The figures for The Royal Parks Agency, the Department's only executive agency, are as follows:

£

	Amount
2002–03	33,000
2003–04	24,000
2004–05	62,000

In reference to points (A), (B), (C) and (D), neither DCMS nor the Royal Parks Agency has offices outside London.

The planned expenditure on training and development for the Department for 2005–06 is £621,000.

The planned expenditure on training and development for the Royal Parks Agency for 2005–06 is £100,000.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40340]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport spent £19,059.00 on bottled water in 2004–05.

The Royal Parks Agency spent £865.27 on bottled water in 2004–05.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) executive agency, (ii) non-departmental public body and (iii) other public body for which his Department is responsible are located in (A) Scotland, (B) each of the English regions, (C) Wales, (D) Northern Ireland and (E) overseas; and what proportion in each area has responsibilities which apply to (1) England only, (2) England and Wales and (3) the UK as a whole. [39938]

Mr. Lammy: Permanent staff numbers on a (FTE basis) are published in Table D Civil Service Statistics. This information is available on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp>

All jobs in DCMS and Royal Parks are based in the London region.

The other information is not held centrally i.e. that relating to:

Non Departmental Public Bodies and other public bodies for which the Department is responsible broken down by geographical regions, and

what proportion in each area has responsibilities which apply to the areas requested.

This information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many civil servants in her Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40295]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not centrally monitor staff working patterns. However, of those we know, there are 25 people who regularly work from home for at least one day a week.

The Department continues in its commitment to Work Life Balance and has policies in place to encourage staff to take advantage of a wide range of alternative working patterns on offer, including working from home.

Elite Athletes (Funding)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what submissions her Department has received concerning funding for elite athletes at the *(a)* 2008 and *(b)* 2012 Olympics: from whom those submissions came; what increase in funding they recommended; over what time period; and if she will make those submissions public. [38358]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* DCMS has received advice in the form of a submission from UK Sport, the Government's lead agency on elite sport. The Government are looking carefully at the case for additional funding for elite athletes in advance of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. The Government are looking at a range of funding options, but are not in a position at this stage to make public the levels of funding under discussion.

We have not received any further submissions on this matter.

Free Television Licences

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many households are in receipt of free television licences in Swansea East. [38850]

Mr. Caborn: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in Swansea East in 2004–05 was 4,245, according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

Gambling Act 2005

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the timetable is for the implementation of the Gambling Act 2005, including *(a)* the publication of regulations, *(b)* the anticipated parliamentary timetable for the ratification of secondary legislation and *(c)* the timetable for licensing authorities to consult on their licensing policies and receive applications for premises licences for casinos. [40116]

Mr. Caborn: We plan to bring the Gambling Act 2005 fully into force with effect from September 2007.

The first two commencement orders were made at the end of August 2005. These brought into force on 1 October 2005 the provisions of the Act formally creating the Gambling Commission.

My Department has been considering the remaining subordinate legislation needed to complete the process of implementation and the timetable for that legislation. We propose to publish details early in the new year.

We plan to lay regulations setting out the form that the licensing authorities' three-year licensing policy statements should take, on 10 March 2006. These regulations shall come into effect on 31 March 2006.

Licensing authorities must publish their policy statements at least one month before they come into effect, which will be on 31 January 2007.

We have established an independent Casino Advisory Panel to advise the Secretary of State on the exercise of her powers to specify which local authorities may issue the new casino premises licences created by the Act. The panel is due to make its recommendations by the end of 2006, and the Secretary of State will announce her decisions in spring 2007. Those licensing authorities which are selected are required to be specified in an order under section 175(4). That order will be subject to parliamentary approval by the affirmative resolution procedure.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Gambling Commission has issued on when licensing authorities may (i) consult on and (ii) adopt, a policy resolution not to issue casino licences under the Gambling Act 2005; and if she will make a statement. [40117]

Mr. Caborn: Licensing authorities may have regard to any principle or matter in passing a resolution, made under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005, not to issue a casino premises licence. They may consult local people at any time and in any manner on their views on casinos, and we envisage that many will want to do so when considering making a resolution under section 166.

Licensing authorities will not be able to pass a resolution until the relevant provisions in section 166 have been formally commenced. This will be done in good time for any resolution to be included in licensing authorities' three year licensing policy statements.

Draft guidance to licensing authorities about the exercise of their functions under the Gambling Act 2005 was published by the Gambling Commission on 16 December 2005.

Gaming Regulation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on the regulation of *(a)* fixed odds betting terminals and *(b)* adult gaming centres. [39496]

Mr. Caborn: During the passage of the Gambling Act through Parliament the Department received representations from the Association of British Bookmakers, other gambling industry bodies, and the British Greyhound Racing Board regarding the regulation of fixed odds betting terminals.

The Department has also received representations from British Amusement Catering Trades Association, faith groups and correspondence from members of the public regarding the regulation of both fixed odds betting terminals and adult gaming centres.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which casino premises are *(a)* licensed and *(b)* licensed and operational under the 1968 Gambling Act. [39497]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is set out in the table.

Location	*Casino*	*Operating yes/no*
Aberdeen	International Casino	Yes
Aberdeen	Gala Casino	Yes
Birkenhead	Stanley Wirral Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Circus Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Grosvenor Fiveways Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Broadway Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Stanley Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Grosvenor Casino	No
Birmingham	Gala International Casino	Yes
Birmingham	Stanley Midland Wheel Club	Yes
Birmingham	Rainbow Casino	Yes
Blackpool	Paris Casino	Yes
Blackpool	Stanley Casino	Yes
Blackpool	The Oasis Casino	No
Blackpool	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Bolton	Grosvenor Casino Moor Lane	Yes
Bolton	Stanley Casino	Yes
Bournemouth	Gala Casino	Yes
Bournemouth	Stanley Casino	Yes
Bradford	Gala Casino	Yes
Bradford	Napoleons Casino Club	Yes
Brighton and Hove	Rendezvous Casino	Yes
Brighton and Hove	Stanley Brighton International Casino	Yes
Brighton and Hove	Grosvenor Casino, Brighton	Yes
Brighton and Hove	Grosvenor Casino, Hove	
Bristol	Gala Casino	No
Bristol	Gala Casino	Yes
Bristol	Grosvenor Casino	Yes

Location	Casino	Operating yes/no
Bristol	Stanley Annabelle Casino	Yes
Bristol	Triangle Casino	Yes
Cardiff	Les Croupiers Casino	Yes
Cardiff	Gala Electric Casino	Yes
Cardiff	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Coventry	Stanley Annabelle Casino	Yes
Coventry	Isle of Capri Casino	No
Coventry	Stanley Casino	Yes
Derby	Stanley Grand Casino	Yes
Derby	Gala Casino	No
Derby	Stanley Carlton Casino Club	Yes
Dudley	Castle Hill Casino	Yes
Dundee	Grosvenor Casino	No
Dundee	Gala Casino	Yes
Edinburgh	Stanley Berkeley Casino	Yes
Edinburgh	Stanley Edinburgh Casino	Yes
Edinburgh	Stanley Leith Casino	Yes
Edinburgh	Gala Maybury Casino	Yes
Glasgow	Rendezvous Casino	No
Glasgow	Gala Merchant City Casino	Yes
Glasgow	Gala Riverboat Casino	Yes
Glasgow	Gala Rotunda Casino	Yes
Glasgow	Stanley Berkeley Casino	Yes
Glasgow	Gala Casino	Yes
Great Yarmouth	Stanley Kings Casino	Yes
Great Yarmouth	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Huddersfield	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Kingston-upon-Hull	Gala Casino	Yes
Kingston-upon-Hull	Napoleons Casino Club	Yes
Leeds	Napoleons Casino Club	Yes
Leeds	Grosvenor Casino (Moortown)	Yes
Leeds	Gala Casino	Yes
Leeds	Grosvenor Casino (Merrion)	Yes
Leeds	Rendezvous Casino	No
Leicester	Gala Casino	Yes
Leicester	Stanley Annabelle Casino	Yes
Leicester	Stanley Leicester East Bond Street Casino	Yes
Liverpool	Leo Casino	Yes
Liverpool	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Liverpool	Stanley Casino	Yes
Liverpool	Stanley Grand Casino	Yes
London	Empire Casino	No
London	Ladbroke Casino and Sports Bar	No
London	Gala Casino (Russell Square)	Yes
London	Gala Casino (Tottenham Court Road)	Yes
London	Gala Barracuda Casino	Yes
London	Sportsman	Yes
London	Gala Golden Horseshoe	Yes
London	Grosvenor Victoria Casino	Yes
London	Rendezvous Casino	Yes
London	50 St. James	Yes
London	Crockfords Club	Yes
London	Golden Nugget	Yes
London	Hard Rock Casino	Yes
London	Ritz Club	Yes
London	Les Ambassadeurs Club	Yes
London	Clermont Club	Yes
London	Palm Beach Casino	Yes
London	Aspinall's	Yes
London	Colony Club	Yes
London	Napoleons Casino	Yes
London	Gala Casino (Piccadilly)	Yes
London	London Park Tower Casino	Yes
London	Mint Casino	Yes
London	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
London	The Connoisseur Club	Yes
London	Maxims Casino Club	Yes
Luton	Stanley Casino	Yes
Luton	Stanley Luton International Casino	Yes
Luton	Grosvenor Casino	Yes

Location	Casino	Operating yes/no
Lytham St. Annes	Stanley St. Annes Casino	Yes
Manchester	Rendezvous Casino	No
Manchester	Grosvenor Casino (Empire St.)	Yes
Manchester	Grosvenor Casino (Whitworth)	Yes
Manchester	Hard Rock Casino	Yes
Manchester	Grosvenor Casino (George St.)	Yes
Manchester	Stanley Casino (The Circus)	Yes
Manchester	Stanley Strand Casino	Yes
Margate	Regal Sporting Club	Yes
Margate	Stanley Margate Casino	Yes
Newcastle	Bannatyne's Casino	Yes
Newcastle	Aspers Casino	Yes
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Stanley Casino	Yes
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Northampton	Gala Casino	Yes
Northampton	Tanners Casino	No
Northampton	Gala Regent Casino	Yes
Nottingham	Gala Casino (Maid Marion Way)	Yes
Nottingham	Gala Casino (Bridlesmith Gate)	Yes
Nottingham	Rendezvous Casino	No
Plymouth	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Plymouth	Stanley Grand Casino	Yes
Portsmouth	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Portsmouth and Southsea	Stanley Casino	Yes
Portsmouth and Southsea	Grosvenor Casino (Osborne)	Yes
Ramsgate	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Reading	Grosvenor Casino	No
Reading	Reading Sporting Club	Yes
Reading	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Salford	Stanley Albion Casino	Yes
Salford	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Scarborough	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Scarborough	Opera House Casino	Yes
Sheffield	Napoleons (Owlerton)	Yes
Sheffield	Napoleons (Ecclesall)	Yes
Sheffield	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Southampton	Harbour House Casino	Yes
Southampton	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Southampton	Stanley Casino	Yes
Southend-on-Sea	Westcliff Sporting Club	Yes
Southend-on-Sea	Rendezvous Casino Club	Yes
Southend-on-Sea	Spielers Casino	Yes
Southport	Stanley Casino	Yes
Stockport	Casino 36	Yes
Stockport	Gala Casino	Yes
Stoke-on-Trent	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Stoke-on-Trent	Stanley Casino	Yes
Sunderland	Gala Casino	Yes
Swansea	Lanes Casino	No
Swansea	Grosvenor Casino	No
Swansea	Aspers	No
Swansea	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Teesside	Royale Casino	No
Teesside	Gala Casino	Yes
Teeside	Grosvenor Casino	No
Torquay	Stanley Torquay Casino	Yes
Walsall	Grosvenor Casino	Yes
Walsall	Stanley Casino	No
Walsall	Sorrento Casino	Yes
Warley	Grosvenor Casino	No
West Bromwich	The Shaftesbury Casino	Yes
Wolverhampton	Gala Casino	Yes
Wolverhampton	Rubicon Casino	Yes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications the Gambling Commission has received for new casinos under the 1968 Gambling Act in each of the last 24 months. [39498]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Commission (previously the Gaming Board for Great Britain) considers applications for certificates of consent for casinos. Once a certificate of consent is issued, operators can then apply to the Licensing Justices for a Gaming Licence.

The following table sets out the number of applications for certificates of consent in respect of new casinos that the Gaming Board has received during the period requested.

	Applications for certificates of consent for new casinos
2003	
December	1
2004	
January	0
February	0
March	2
April	1
May	1
June	0
July	2
August	1
September	2
October	2
November	3
December	4
2005	
January	2
February	1
March	4
April	1
May	6
June	13
July	11
August	4
September	4
October	0
November	3

Gyms (Accessibility)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with operators of national gymnasium chains on accessibility by disabled users; what assessment she has made of the current levels of access to gymnasia for disabled people; and if she will discuss steps to require gyms to be fully accessible to disabled users with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. [40740]

Mr. Caborn: All Government Departments are committed to the broader vision of improving the life chances of disabled people through the delivery of services and the development of their policies. The Department for Work and Pension's Inter-Departmental Group on Disability is a forum for DCMS to take part in policy discussions on disability issues.

DCMS has had no discussions with national gymnasium chains about accessibility but in August 2005 I wrote to all local authorities reminding them of their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act in the context of leisure and tourism facilities.

Since 2001, Sport England (SE), working in partnership with the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS), has invested £6 million in the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI). The investment has supported the development of 180 fully accessible local authority gyms which have a required minimum level of accessible gym equipment; suitably trained staff; marketing which is targeted at members of the disabled community; and strong links with other sporting opportunities for disabled people.

SE and the EFDS are also working with fitness gym providers such as Cannons and Fitness First to improve provision for disabled people in private sector facilities.

Licensed Premises

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of *(a)* the proportion of licensed premises to which children have access and *(b)* the proportion of these premises which (i) serve and (ii) do not serve food. [39359]

Mr. Caborn: Under the old regime, it was legal for unsupervised children of any age to enter and remain in licensed premises so long as they did not enter the 'bar area'. Under the new regime, there are restrictions that prevent unaccompanied children under 16 being present in certain categories of premises that sell alcohol for consumption on the premises, including pubs and night clubs. In addition, where necessary and appropriate, conditions may be attached to premises licences or club premises certificates which prohibit or restrict the entry of children.

We estimate that there are around 190,000 premises licensed under the 2003 Act but information is not held centrally on how many have conditions attached to their licence which restrict entry to children. As 'licensed' premises include pubs, nightclubs, hotels, cinemas, theatres, restaurants and late night takeaways, it is likely that the vast majority serve food, including bar snacks.

Licensing Act

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many establishments she estimates are trading without a licence under the Licensing Act 2003 in each London borough; and if she will make a statement. [39055]

Mr. Caborn: This information is not held centrally. My Department has received no reports from the police or licensing authorities about establishments in London carrying on a business without an appropriate licence.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the local authorities that have *(a)* made representations to her Department for additional resources and *(b)* been allocated additional resources to take on the functions under the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [39056]

Mr. Caborn: Costs incurred by local authorities in meeting their requirements under the Licensing Act 2003 will, provided that they have been incurred legitimately and efficiently, be fully met by fees within the national fee regime. No additional resources should therefore be necessary.

In the context of Sir Les Elton's independent panel, which is currently reviewing fee levels to ensure that the fees have been set at the right level, representations by local authorities are co-ordinated through the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Local

Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), and are not generally attributable to particular local authorities.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list local authorities that have outstanding licence applications under the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [39057]

Mr. Caborn: Data on these are not held centrally. There are always likely to be some licence applications outstanding, because the licensing process under the 2003 Act is a continuous one, as people create new businesses and services, or seek changes in the use of premises, and so on.

London Olympics

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who will own the *(a)* land and *(b)* properties on the land acquired by the London Development Agency following the London 2012 Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [39058]

Mr. Caborn: The owner of the land will depend on the decision taken by the Secretary of State about whether to confirm the London Development Agency's (LDA) Lower Lea, Olympic and Legacy Compulsory Purchase Order (expected in 2006).

If it is confirmed, the LDA as the acquiring authority would have legal title vested in the land required within the Olympic Park—both prior to and after the Games in 2012. It is proposed that it will then enter into agreements to make available land/properties to identified development partners or managing organisations to deliver the regeneration and sporting legacy identified for this area and proposed in the compulsory purchase order.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35633]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport can provide accurate records for the last four financial years, including this year to the present date.

Financial year	£
2002–03	121,673.22
2003–04	124,284.18
2004–05	120,668.96
2005-todate	107,322.67

National Lottery Grants

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost is of administering national lottery grants to good causes per pound of grant disbursed. [40261]

Mr. Caborn: On the basis of information provided by distributors, during financial year 2004–05 the amount paid in administration was just over 10 pence per pound of Lottery grant paid to successful applicants.

Primary School Children (Activities)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what activities are sponsored by her Department for primary school children during their summer holidays. [40229]

Mr. Lammy: My Department supports a number of activities funded across government, our public bodies and by the Big Lottery Fund which deliver a range of sporting and cultural opportunities for children and young people throughout the year.

The DCMS website, Breakout, provides information and ideas to families on a range of sports, arts and cultural activities, and can be found at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/breakout/fl/index.htm

Public Service Agreement

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how her Department plans to assess progress towards its public service agreement performance target 2 prior to the next spending review; and if she will make a statement. [40254]

Mr. Caborn: The public service agreement (PSA) to halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children under 11, in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole, is the joint responsibility of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, and the Secretary of State for Health.

Joint cross-departmental programme management arrangements have been established to drive action to meet this target. Progress against the target will be measured through the Health Survey for England. The baseline will be established for the years 2002–04. The 2005 Health Survey data will be available late 2006/early 2007. We shall assess progress at that point.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effect of the change to the definition of attendance in her Department's 2005 to 2008 public service agreement: technical note on her Department's public service agreement performance target to increase the number of people *(a)* from black and minority ethnic groups, *(b)* with a physical or mental disability and *(c)* in socio-economic groups C2, D and E who attended arts events at least twice a year by 3 per cent.; and if she will make a statement. [40255]

Mr. Lammy: Measurement of the arts public service agreement target for 2005–08 will look to establish whether individuals from the three priority groups have attended two different types of arts event in the previous 12 months. The previous measurement counted individuals who had attended two or more events, which could be of the same type, resulting in generally higher percentages.

The Department has commissioned, together with Arts Council England and other sponsored bodies, a national Taking Part Survey which will measure attendance and participation at quarterly intervals, with baseline figures being produced in summer 2006.

The Government remain committed to widening access by under-represented groups to the arts.

School Sport Partnership Scheme

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of school children in England have spent a minimum of two hours each week on high quality physical education and school sport within and beyond the curriculum in schools outside the School Sport Partnership scheme in each year since 2002; and if she will make a statement. [40252]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is not held.

The annual PE, School Sport and Club Links survey only collects data from schools that are within a School Sport Partnership. However all maintained schools will be within a partnership from 2006 and the national survey, already the largest survey of PE and school sport in Europe, will include all schools from that point on.

The 2004–05 survey, in which over 54 per cent. of schools in England who were at that time within a School Sport Partnership participated, showed that 69 per cent. of pupils were taking part in two hours or more of high quality PE and school sport each week.

Sports Activity

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the baseline is by which her Department's measures to increase the number of people from priority groups *(a)* who participate in active sports at least 12 times a year by 3 per cent., *(b)* who engage in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity level sport at least three times a week by 3 per cent., *(c)* who participate in an arts activity at least twice a year by 2 per cent., *(d)* who attend arts events at least twice a year by 3 per cent., *(e)* accessing museums and galleries collections by 2 per cent. and *(f)* visiting designated historic environment sites by 3 per cent. will be measured; and if she will make a statement. [40256]

Mr. Lammy: Final baselines for public service agreement target 3 (PSA3) will be available in late 2006.

Provisional baseline estimates for PSA3 were published on 15 December 2005. Copies of the report can be found at www.culture.gov.uk/global/research/taking_part_survey/survey_outputs.

Swimming Pools

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many calls have been made to the hotline set up to deal with parents' questions about swimming pool admissions policy. [39642]

Mr. Caborn: The primary purpose of the hotline is to provide a point of contact for parents who wish to make a complaint about being denied access to a specific pool as a result of a child admissions policy. Since it went "live" on 8 September 2005, the hotline has received nine telephone calls, all of which have been to request general information about local swimming facilities. The hotline has also received 14 e-mails which have ranged from specific complaints about an admissions policy at an individual pool to more general concerns about admissions policies per se.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pools have altered their admission policy on parental supervision of children since her meeting on the subject earlier in 2005. [39643]

Mr. Caborn: Data have not been collated on the numbers of pools where an admissions policy has altered since my meeting on this subject in 2005. Information on admissions policies at individual pools in England is available through Sport England's "Active Places" website (www.ActivePlaces.com). The Amateur Swimming Association has also compiled a comprehensive list of swimming pools through which similar information can be found. Both databases are maintained regularly.

It is for individual pool operators to determine appropriate measures to mitigate risks at their pools identified through a risk assessment. The Health and Safety Executive advocates that, as part of this process, pool operators should consider the number of children which can safely be accompanied by a single adult. Risk mitigation measures should be kept under review to ensure that they remain appropriate. It is also sensible for pool operators to take account of the guidance available in this area.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent assessment she has made of the situation regarding parental supervision of children in swimming pools; and if she will make a statement. [39644]

Mr. Caborn: On 8 September 2005 my Department, after consultation with the Health and Safety Executive and other relevant bodies, implemented an action plan to address the issue of apparent blanket applications of admissions policies at swimming pools. I am confident that the plan will encourage proper flexibility in the implementation of pool safety and risk management measures.

Television/Radio

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what is the estimated number of *(a)* televisions and *(b)* radios in use in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales, (iii) each of the English regions and (iv) Northern Ireland is. [39204]

Mr. Caborn: The number of televisions in use by ITV region (the only format in which we possess this information) is:

	Number of television sets
London	11 million
Midlands	9.1 million
North West	6 million
Yorkshire	5.5 million
Central Scotland	3.2 million
North Scotland	1.2 million
South and South East and Channel Islands	5.4 million
North East	2.8 million
East	4.3 million

	Number of television sets
South West	1.8 million
Ulster	1.1 million
Border	636,000
West	2.4 million
Wales	2.4 million

Note:
Border ITV covers communities on both sides of the England/Scotland border.

Source:
BARB Establishment survey June 2004.

The approximate number of radio sets (including analogue and digital) in the nations of the UK are:

Million

	Number of radio sets
Scotland	13
England	120
Wales	7.6
Ulster	4.3

Source:
RAJAR

WORK AND PENSIONS

Norcross (Job Losses)

14. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he has in place to deal with potential job losses at the Department's site in Norcross. [40171]

Mrs. McGuire: The significant investment made to modernise the Department's IT systems and transform the way it delivers services more efficiently means that fewer staff will be required to deliver high quality services in the future. These efficiencies are being made across the country and in all of the Department's businesses.

We are managing the reduction in staffing through normal staff turnover, controlling recruitment and promotions, and re-deploying staff to fill vacancies. In addition we are running a limited number of voluntary early release/early retirement schemes. There has not been a single compulsory redundancy at the Norcross site and we will continue to do everything possible to avoid the need for redundancies in the future.

Child Support Agency

15. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the process used by the Child Support Agency for the assessment of cases. [40172]

Mr. Plaskitt: Under the new scheme, non-resident parent's net weekly income is used to determine how much child maintenance they have to pay. Normally maintenance is then calculated with 15 per cent. for one child; 20 per cent. for two children; and 25 per cent. for three children or more. But there are special provisions, for example, parents on benefits or low income.

19. **James Brokenshire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress with the reform of the Child Support Agency. [40176]

Mr. Plaskitt: There's good progress. The chief executive Stephen Geraghty has been undertaking a review of all aspects of the agency's operation. Ministers are considering his report and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will make an announcement to the House shortly.

24. **Mr. Evennett:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when all Child Support Agency cases will be calculated under the new scheme. [40181]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Secretary of State will make an announcement on Child Support shortly.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been received by the Child Support Agency in each year since 1997; how many went forward for adjudication; and how many have been *(a)* fully and *(b)* partially upheld. [11799]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many complaints have been received by the Child Support Agency in each year since 1997; how many went forward for adjudication; and how many have been *(a)* full and *(b)* partially upheld.

I have provided tables below to show the number of complaints received by the Agency by clients, and by other bodies, for which information is available. It should be noted that it is difficult to use this information to make meaningful comparisons over time due to changes in the way that information has been recorded. In particular, whilst the volume of Stage 1 complaints undoubtedly rose between 2002/3 and 2003/4, this is likely to have been due in part to more rigorous recording of complaints received at the time, and the introduction by the Agency of a three tier complaints process during 2003/04.

The three tier complaints process comprises of; Stage 1 complaints from clients which are dealt with by the Complaints Resolution Team located within each of the Agency's six business units. Stage 2 complaints which are an escalation to the relevant Area Director when the client is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1, and stage 3 which is an escalation to the Chief Executive if the client remains dissatisfied.

Complaints are also received into the Agency from MPs, or via MPs from a member of the public.

The outcome of whether a complaint to the Agency is upheld is not recorded. However, as described above, clients are signposted to the next level of the process should they remain dissatisfied. The table below shows the volume of cases escalated to stages two and three, for which information is available. Once these internal avenues have been exhausted, the client may wish to contact the Independent Case Examiner (ICE), their MP or, via their MP, to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration.

Agency complaints—number of cases received in the agency 1997 to 2005

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Stage 1 complaints received (written)	27,875	28,073	21,015	19,634	15,493	15,182	24,809	29,213
Stage 1 Complaints received (telephone)	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[2]—	7,458	10,570
Chief Executive Complaints	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	4,096	4,555	7,804	[4]—	[5]—
Treat Official Complaints	[3,6]—	[3,6]—	[3,6]—	2,609	2,869	1,344	1,521	1,108
MP Complaints to Business Units	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	4,175	4,818	4,537	5,317	8,871

Stage 1: Complaints escalated to stages 2 and 3. Between June 2004 and March 2005

	Number
Stage 1 complaints	32,898
Complaints escalated to stage 2	4,352
Complaints escalated to stage 3	2,549

[1] While the agency did receive stage 1 telephone complaints prior to 2002–03, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[2] Although 671 stage 1 telephone complaints were recorded between December 2002 and March 2003, their volumes were not recorded throughout the whole year, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[3] While the agency did receive complaints directly to the chief executive, treat official complaints, and MP complaints to business units prior to 2000–01, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[4] During 2003–04 complaints sent directly to the chief executive were not recorded separately from those complaints, which were escalated to him as part of the 3 stage process. Therefore, although 7,183 complaints in total were received during 2003–04, it is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the chief executive directly (as opposed to those escalated via the complaints process), thus preventing meaningful comparison with data for earlier years.

[5] In April and May of 2004, the chief executive received a total of 1,435 complaints but is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the chief executive directly, as opposed to those escalated to stage 3 of the complaints process). From June 2004-March 2005, after which time such complaints were recorded separately, the chief executive received 4,352 direct complaints and 2,549 complaints escalated upwards from stage 2. Again, these recording issues prevent meaningful comparison of this category with earlier years.

[6] Treat official letters are those received by a Minister from a member of the public, and referred for initial consideration to an official of the agency.

I hope you find this answer useful.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what monitoring he is undertaking of progress in eliminating the faults in the Child Support Agency computer system. [17583]

Mr. Timms: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what monitoring he is undertaking of progress in eliminating the faults in the Child Support Agency computer system.

The new Child Support computer system (CS2) is now more stable technically and performance has improved to the point where service levels are generally being met. A number of defects do remain but EDS has agreed to resolve these as a part of an agreed forward programme of enhancement.

EDS is required to report progress against its plans and maintain, jointly with the Department, records of IT items and fixes delivered. In addition, the Department has in place governance arrangements, including assessment against acceptance criteria, designed to achieve satisfactory delivery of all system improvements.

Finally, the Department's staff continue to monitor performance of the live CS2 service against agreed service levels.

I hope this information is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what proportion of parents with care on income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance have received Child Support Agency maintenance in each reporting period since 1999–2000; [21435]

(2) what proportion of parents with care on income support and income based jobseeker's allowance have received maintenance for their children in each year since 1995–96; and if he will make a statement. [21957]

Mr. Timms: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2005:

In reply to your recent parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Works and Pensions what proportion of parents with care on income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance have received Child support Agency maintenance in each reporting period since 1999–2000.

In addition, you asked the Secretary of State what proportion of parents with care on income support and income based jobseeker's allowance have received maintenance for their children in each year since 1995–96; and if he will make a statement.

The available information is detailed in the attached table.

I hope you find this helpful.

Proportion of parents with care on income support and income based jobseeker's allowance receiving maintenance between November 1997 and May 2005

	Percentage
November 1997	28
February 1998	27
May 1998	27
August 1998	26
November 1998	26
February 1999	26
May 1999	26
August 1999	26
November 1999	26
February 2000	25
May 2000	25
August 2000	25
November 2000	25
February 2001	24
May 2001	25
August 2001	25
November 2001	24

Proportion of parents with care on income support and income based jobseeker's allowance receiving maintenance between November 1997 and May 2005

	Percentage
February 2002	24
May 2002	24
August 2002	24
November 2002	24
February 2003	25
May 2003	—
August 2003	—
November 2003	—
February 2004	23
May 2004	23
August 2004	23
November 2004	24
February 2005	24
May 2005	25

Notes:

1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

2. The percentages are calculated by combing information from the CSA administrative system with that from the benefits system to get current benefit status. Information from the latter system does not exist prior to 1997.

3. We cannot provide information for 2003–04. This is due to limitations with the new system (CS2), which mean we do not currently hold information for new scheme cases and old scheme cases on CS2 for that period. This is an issue we are working to address and are hopeful that we will be able to provide this information in the near future.

4. The methodology used to produce these statistics is consistent with that used in the measurement of the Department's Public Service Agreement target in this area. Namely, all those cases with a child maintenance calculation or assessment where the parent with care is on income support or income based job seekers allowance (including those with a nil liability) who are in receipt of maintenance.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library the latest list of change requests made to EDS by the Child Support Agency. [30015]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will place in the Library the latest list of change requests made to EDS by the Child Support Agency.

A list of change requests was placed in the House Library on the 17 of November 2004. A list of subsequent requests is at Annex A and will also be placed in the House Library.

I hope you find this information useful.

Annex A: List of further changes agreed by the Child Support Agency and EDS

Description	Benefits
To enable the number of concurrent users of the Training System to remain at 700.	Maintain current capacity to train caseworkers on how to process cases on CS2.
The automatic deletion of superseded debt management work items.	Improved workload management for caseworkers. Removal of unnecessary work.
Debt management work items are generated in caseworkers' work queues to prompt the investigation of late or unexpected payments. However, a subsequent event on the case can remove the need for such an investigation. This new functionality will remove any debt management work items that are no longer relevant for investigation.	
The provision of several standard reports directly from CS2 audit trail data.	Compliance with Departmental Audit and Security Standards.
These reports will list, for checking and monitoring purposes, caseworkers that have completed activity on CS2 that has been pre-defined as a potential data security risk.	
To capture and record an audit trail of caseworkers' access to, and changes of, key data on CS2 client records.	Compliance with Departmental Audit and Security Standards.
The provision of a facility to allow specified users to make enquires of the recorded audit trail data, to support the completion of management and security checks on caseworker access to, and processing of, client records.	Compliance with Departmental Audit and Security Standards.
To provide an automated facility within CS2 to allow staff to record additional information provided by clients in note form, that will prove useful during subsequent contacts with the client.	Removes the need for recording and holding information clerically and supports improved service to clients as caseworkers will have a greater understanding of previous case activity.
The automatic retrieval of Benefit Office details and Post Office details using office identity codes.	Reduced resources required to correct transaction failures across the automated interface between the Child Support Agency and Jobcentre Plus, reduced delay in the start of deductions from benefit and improved levels of compliance.
Staff have to record Benefit Office details on cases where clients are in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance/Income Support to enable the correct electronic exchange of information. Post Office details are recorded to support the processing of payments.	
The provision of functionality to support the bulk conversion of cases from old scheme to new scheme from more than one maintenance assessment effective date.	Greater flexibility in the automatic processing available to support the bulk conversion of cases. (Note: bulk conversion is not yet scheduled).
The provision of automatic selection functionality within the bulk conversion process to identify cases based on their initial effective date.	More efficient selection of cases for conversion from old scheme rules to new scheme rules. (Note: Bulk conversion is not yet scheduled).

Annex A: List of further changes agreed by the Child Support Agency and EDS

Description	*Benefits*
To provide the ability to correct the effective date from which a case is converted from old scheme to new scheme.	Improved accuracy in the bulk conversion of cases from old scheme rules to new scheme rules. (Note: Bulk conversion is not yet scheduled).
Notifications issued to clients to advise them that their assessment is to convert to new rules, to be amended to include an explanation of why their case has been selected for bulk conversion.	Improved client service and a reduction in the volume of contact received from clients during bulk conversion from old scheme to new scheme. (Note: Bulk conversion is not yet scheduled).
To provide, as a prototype, additional functionality for staff to enquire on the progress of a case and view summary financial records. Staff have to perform these enquiries to answer frequent client queries on the progress of their case or payment.	The ability to test new functionality in a pilot study within one Business Unit to determine whether business benefits could be realised by the provision of this additional enquiry functionality.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of parents who are waiting for their Child Support Agency cases to be transferred from the old to the new scheme will pay *(a)* increased and *(b)* decreased payments under the new scheme. [30043]

Mr. Plaskitt: For those cases with a Full Maintenance Assessment on the Child Support Computer System (CSCS) in May 2005, we estimate that around *(a)* 60 per cent. would have an increased liability and *(b)* 40 per cent. would have a decreased liability if the new scheme rules were applied to their current reported circumstances.

We estimate that the majority of changes in maintenance liabilities will be for less than 10 per week. To give non-resident parents and parents with care time to adjust to their new amount, most changes are phased in by fixed annual steps.

Source:
Child Support Computer System 5 per cent. extract, May 2005.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in respect of how many children are payments being made through the Child Support Agency's *(a)* new scheme and *(b)* old scheme. [31021]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 24 November 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in respect of how many children are payments being made through the Child Support Agency's *(a)* new scheme and *(b)* old scheme.

In September 2005, payment of maintenance was received from the non-resident parent via the Agency's collection service, or a maintenance direct arrangement was in place, in respect of 529,000 children, (of which 365,000 were on the old scheme, and 164,000 on the new scheme).

These figures (which are rounded to the nearest thousand) can be further broken down as follows:

Payment of maintenance had been received from the non-resident parent via the Agency's collection service in respect of 391,000 children, of which 127,000 were on the new scheme and 264,000 on the old scheme.

Maintenance-direct arrangements were in place in respect of 138,000 children (101,000 on the old and 37,000 on the new scheme). However, it is not possible to say whether or not payment was forthcoming in these cases as, once the arrangement has been set up, the parent with care and non-resident parent deal with each other direct.

I hope you find this helpful.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of assessed Child Support Agency claims in Scotland had maintenance collected via deduction of earnings orders in each quarter since 1994. [31144]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of assessed Child Support Agency claims in Scotland had maintenance collected via deduction of earnings orders in each quarter since 1994.

Such information as is available is presented in the attached table. I am sorry that I cannot provide disaggregated information for Scotland for the period prior to May 1997, or post February 2003.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in respect of how many *(a)* new scheme, new computer, *(b)* old scheme, new computer, *(c)* old scheme, old computer and *(d)* backlogged child support cases the Child Support Agency has no record of the address of the non-resident parent. [34143]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 2 December 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many *(a)* new scheme new computer *(b)* old scheme new computer *(c)* old scheme old computer and *(d)* backlogged child support cases does the Child Support Agency have no record of the address of the non-resident parent.

We are not able to give statistics for the number of non resident parents for which the Agency does not hold address information due to limitations with currently available management information.

What I can tell you is that, at the end of September 2005, there were 35,000 cases on the old scheme old computer system that were suspended because the NRP could not be traced. In addition,

there were 14,000 old scheme cases that required trace action by CSA staff. Equivalent statistics are not currently available for new and old scheme cases on the new computer system.

I hope you find this information useful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has received a report from the chief executive of the Child Support Agency (CSA) with recommendations for the reform of the CSA; and what plans he has to make an oral statement to the House on this matter. [35689]

Mr. Plaskitt: Stephen Geraghty is undertaking a root and branch review of the Child Support Agency (CSA). Since his arrival at the Department for Work and Pensions, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has been considering the emerging findings and recommendations. He will make an announcement to the House in due course.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for how long the Child Support Agency plans to continue collecting maintenance from the constituent of the right hon. Member for Birkenhead, case number 327000131454. [39531]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for how long the Child Support Agency plans to continue collecting maintenance from the constituent of the hon. Member for Birkenhead case number 327000131454.

As details about individual cases are confidential I have written to you separately about this case.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time was between the Child Support Agency notifying the Job Centreplus to deduct the five pound flat rate in maintenance from a non-resident parent's benefit and the maintenance deduction being made in the last period for which figures are available. [39537]

Mr. Plaskitt: I will let the hon. Member have such information as is available as soon as possible.

National Pension Savings Scheme

16. **John Penrose:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effect of employer contributions to the national pension savings scheme, as proposed by the Turner Commission, on his Department's target of achieving an employment rate of 80 per cent. of the working-age population. [40173]

Mr. Timms: We are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the commission in detail. At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. One of the commission's recommendations, to which we will be giving careful consideration, is the introduction of mandatory employer contributions. In looking at this option we will of course take account of possible impacts on business and on the labour market.

Women's Pensions

17. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proposals are being considered to improve the pension provision available for married women who choose to stay at home to bring up their children. [40174]

Mr. Timms: Women's pension provision is steadily improving through increased labour market participation, home responsibilities protection and the state second pension. The Government are considering how to extend pension coverage further and enable women with caring responsibilities to build up better pension entitlement. Our proposals for reform which we intend to publish in the spring, will be guided by the principle that the pension system should deliver fair outcomes for women and carers. A campaign to encourage carers to apply for home responsibility protection is being launched today.

Housing Benefit

18. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to improve the administration of housing benefit. [40175]

Mr. Plaskitt: In 2002, we put in place a comprehensive strategy for reform of housing benefit, with the first priority being to improve administration across the board.

We have already made significant progress. The average time taken by local authorities to process new claims has shortened by two weeks. We have introduced a number of simplification measures to reduce complexity in the housing benefit rules. We have provided investment, to help authorities make improvements in the administration of housing benefit. We have reduced the losses due to fraud and error. We are piloting the new Local Housing Allowance in 18 local authorities, with a view to national implementation.

22. Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions his Department has had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the ending of the single room rent restriction for housing benefit. [40179]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have had no recent discussions with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister specifically regarding the ending of the Single Room Rent restriction.

We are currently planning the way forward for HB reforms in the private sector and we will look at the Single Room Rent as a part of this process. Indeed we are piloting a more generous scheme in those areas running the new Local Housing Allowance.

However, the core rationale for the Single Room Rent, that of encouraging work, remains. Removing all Single Room Rent restrictions would in fact have the perverse effect of creating a situation where greater benefit dependency would be fostered at an early age.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 372W, on housing benefit, what estimate he has made of *(a)* the cost of limiting a 10 per cent. reduction in the housing benefit taper to earned income and *(b)* the cost of limiting a five per cent. reduction in the council tax benefit taper to earned income. [29779]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 21 November 2005]*: There would be no cost to local authorities for paying additional benefit as this would be met by the Department. The only impact to local authorities would be associated with the processing and maintenance of additional new claims; the numbers of which are in the table. The Department does not collect management information relating to the cost to authorities of processing and maintaining claims.

The available information is in the table.

Cost associated with reducing housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB) tapers

	Number of new beneficiaries floating on	*Number of existing beneficiaries gaining*	*Cost in annually managed expenditure (£ million per year)*
Reducing the HB taper from 65% to 55% for earned income	105,000	305,000	150
Reducing the CTB taper from 20% to 15% for earned income	255,000	290,000	75

Notes:

1. All figures are for Great Britain.
2. Beneficiaries are rounded to the nearest 5,000 and costs are rounded to the nearest £5 million.
3. Each beneficiary represents a benefit unit, which can be a single claimant or a couple.
4. Earned income consists of income from earnings only, and excludes occupational pensions. For a couple, their earned income is their combined earnings.
5. The impact is estimated using the Department's Policy Simulation Model for 2005–06, using data from the 2003–04 Family Resources Survey up-rated to 2005–06 prices, benefit rates and earnings levels, and is calibrated to latest published forecasts and policies.
6. Results are subject to sampling and reporting errors and estimation assumptions, and are therefore indicative only. No behavioural changes are assumed.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to publish details of his plans to pilot the local housing allowance in the social rented sector; and if he will make a statement. [29995]

Mr. Plaskitt: In order for housing benefit to keep pace with our wider welfare reforms we are considering options for reforming housing benefit for tenants in the social rented sector. However, we appreciate that conditions for social tenants are very different from those in the private sector, for example, social sector tenants don't always have the same degree of choice as those in the private sector. Such differences will need to be taken very seriously in developing proposals for reform, which we will do in discussion with experts on social housing.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of ending the direct payment of housing benefit to registered social landlords on their financial viability. [30011]

Mr. Plaskitt: While we want to create a situation where people become responsible for paying their own rent where they are able to do so, we recognise that this is a significant issue for social landlords and lenders. Departmental officials regularly meet with representatives of social landlords and will ensure that their concerns are taken very seriously when developing proposals for reforming housing benefit.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many tenants in *(a)* England, *(b)* the West Midlands and *(c)* Birmingham received housing benefit in each of the past eight years; what percentage in each year rented from (i) a local authority, (ii) a registered social landlord, (iii) a private landlord and (iv) an employer; and what the average housing benefit payment was in each category. [33299]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available for tenancies where the landlord is the tenant's employer. The available information is in the following tables.

Housing benefit caseload by tenure as percentage of total caseload: England

		Percentage of total		
May	*Total (000)*	*Local authority*	*Registered social landlord*	*Private (excluding RSL)*
1997	3,870.8	57.9	17.6	24.4
1998	3,725.5	57.3	19.6	23.1
1999	3,585.4	56.0	21.8	22.2
2000	3,341.7	54.2	24.4	21.4
2001	3,207.4	52.5	27.3	20.2
2002	3,159.9	50.9	29.4	19.8
2003	3,161.3	47.2	33.1	19.7
2004	3,232.6	45.4	34.5	20.1
2005	3,314.9	43.9	35.2	20.9

Housing benefit caseload by tenure as percentage of total caseload: West Midlands

		Percentage of total		
May	*Total (000)*	*Local authority*	*Registered social landlord*	*Private (excluding RSL)*
1997	413.4	65.6	18.5	16.0
1998	402.8	64.9	19.4	15.8
1999	388.6	62.1	22.4	15.5
2000	364.5	59.1	25.7	15.2
2001	351.7	53.9	31.4	14.7
2002	349.1	52.0	33.1	14.9
2003	349.9	47.0	37.9	15.1
2004	347.0	44.1	40.4	15.5
2005	352.2	43.1	40.1	16.8

Housing benefit caseload by tenure as percentage of total caseload: Birmingham

		Percentage of total		
May	Total (000)	Local authority	Registered social landlord	Private (excluding RSL)
1997	110.8	63.8	20.5	15.7
1998	109.5	63.0	21.2	15.9
1999	104.5	62.3	22.1	15.6
2000	91.7	61.2	24.0	14.8
2001	90.8	60.6	25.4	14.0
2002	92.4	58.9	26.7	14.3
2003	89.5	58.2	27.4	14.4
2004	88.7	56.8	27.7	15.5
2005	88.5	54.9	28.1	17.0

Housing benefit caseload and tenure by average amount in payment: England

£ per week

May	Total	Local authority	Registered social landlord	Private (excluding RSL)
1997	44.82	37.15	50.31	59.07
1998	45.90	37.97	52.63	59.89
1999	47.90	40.04	54.64	61.11
2000	50.00	42.34	55.88	62.69
2001	52.97	45.38	58.18	65.65
2002	56.60	47.73	62.87	70.07
2003	57.99	49.90	60.41	73.32
2004	61.99	53.95	63.09	78.29
2005	65.79	56.98	65.92	84.11

Housing benefit caseload and tenure by average amount in payment: West Midlands

£ per week

May	Total	Local authority	Registered social landlord	Private (excluding RSL)
1997	39.30	34.81	45.46	50.61
1998	40.40	35.34	47.50	52.46
1999	42.38	36.99	49.15	54.21
2000	44.08	38.89	48.98	55.92
2001	46.52	41.33	49.72	58.73
2002	49.43	43.44	52.77	62.97
2003	50.08	44.35	52.02	63.10
2004	52.99	47.23	54.12	66.41
2005	55.67	48.99	56.65	70.44

Housing benefit caseload and tenure by average amount in payment: Birmingham

£ per week

May	Total	Local authority	Registered social landlord	Private (excluding RSL)
1997	42.95	37.75	49.55	55.49
1998	43.86	37.71	52.03	57.40
1999	46.16	39.98	53.89	59.87
2000	47.05	40.82	54.59	60.56
2001	48.13	41.97	55.55	61.36
2002	51.87	44.90	60.02	65.31
2003	51.47	45.09	58.27	64.32
2004	54.91	48.18	61.08	68.56
2005	58.60	51.55	63.49	73.26

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest hundred and shown in thousands.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Figures for any non-responding authorities have been estimated.
4. Housing benefit figures exclude any extended payment cases.
5. Average amounts are rounded to the nearest penny.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken between May 1997 and May 2005.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to restrict the direct payment of housing benefit to landlords whose tenants commit antisocial behaviour. [35180]

Mr. Plaskitt: As with the wider community, landlords have a responsibility to ensure that, in carrying out their business, they minimise the scope for antisocial behaviour by their tenants.Most landlords take this responsibility seriously and the Government have in the past considered what action can be taken against those few landlords who do not.

We have looked at the option of removing entitlement to direct payments from recalcitrant landlords, but have concluded that this would not be an effective measure.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1256W, on housing benefit, when he expects to make a decision on the recommendation in his Department's research report No. 243 that all disabled claimants and all care leavers should be made exempt from the single room rent restriction. [38105]

Mr. Plaskitt: We will continue to review the single room rent and local housing allowance shared room rate as we move forward with wider welfare reform, to ensure that young people can access appropriate accommodation. However, the core rationale for the single room rent, that of encouraging work, remains.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the oral statement of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 271WH, on housing benefit pathfinders, what the source was for the figure he gave of 60 per cent. of those who rent in the private sector who are not in receipt of housing benefit rent sharing accommodation. [38106]

Mr. Plaskitt: The source of this figure is the Department's analysis of the 2002–03 Family Resources Survey.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will assess the merits of removing the 16-hour housing benefit rule to enable young adults in housing need to study full-time for qualifications at level 3 or below without loss of housing benefit; [38285]

(2) what research he has carried out on the impact of the 16-hour housing benefit rule on those in housing need who are unable to claim housing benefit if they are studying for more than 16 hours per week. [38286]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1762–63W to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws).

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Government are planning to remove the single room rent upper limit on housing benefit provisions for those under 25 years. [40170]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have no such plans, although we will continue to look at the single room rent as part of the process of wider housing benefit reform.

Pensions Commission

20. **Mr. Graham Stuart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the second report of the Pensions Commission. [40177]

Mr. Timms: The Government have welcomed the Pensions Commission's second report, and welcomed its proposals and options as the right basis for building the consensus that we need.

The Government will now reflect on the report and are committed to consulting with the public and stakeholders on these key issues as part of the National Pensions Debate. At this stage of the debate no decisions have been taken on the specific recommendations of the report, and we are ruling nothing in and nothing out. The Government will work towards the publication of a White Paper in the spring which will set out their response.

Departmental Retirements

21. **Dr. Pugh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average age of retirement for employees of his Department was in the last period for which figures are available. [40178]

Mrs. McGuire: The average retirement age in the year to October 2005 is 62.

Where people have left the Department in an early retirement exercise the average age is 55.

Where people have been retired on grounds of ill health the average age is 47.

Basic State Pension

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the change in the basic state pension will be between 2005–06 and 2006–07. [40180]

Mr. Timms: From April 2006 the rate of the basic state pension will increase by 2.7 per cent. in line with the growth in the Retail Prices Index. This means the weekly rate for a full basic state pension will rise from £82.05 a week to £84.25 a week.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much more the basic state pension will be worth in 2006–07 than in 2005–06. [38522]

Mr. Timms: The basic state pension will be increased next April by 2.7 per cent. in line with the Retail Prices Index.

Administrative Savings

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what administrative savings have been made by his Department in each of the last eight years. [34951]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service.

Information is published on gross and net controlled administration cost under spends in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Papers. These are available in the Library of the House.

As part of the 2004 Spending Review the Department is required to achieve efficiency gains of at least £960 million by 2007–08 as set out in the Efficiency Technical Note which is available on the Department's website.

Benefit Claimants (Forest of Dean)

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Forest of Dean constituency are receiving *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* incapacity benefit. [36245]

Mr. Plaskitt: As at October 2005, there were 706 people claiming jobseeker's allowance in the Forest of Dean parliamentary constituency.

As at May 2005, there were 3,300 people claiming incapacity benefit or severe disability allowance in the Forest of Dean parliamentary constituency.

Both figures are the most recent available.

Benefit Payments

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether it is the policy of his Department to transfer to direct payment the benefits of claimants paid by cheque if they fail to express their desire to continue receiving payment by cheque in response to correspondence from his Department; [39187]

(2) what length of time his Department allows for people to respond who have been written to by his Department advising them that benefits paid to them by cheque will be transferred to direct payment unless they state a preference to continue being paid by cheque; [39188]

(3) whether letters being sent to claimants who have one or more benefits paid by cheque and another paid into a bank account about their wish to continue receiving payment by cheque are being made available in formats accessible to those who cannot read standard print. [39189]

Mr. Plaskitt: Cheque payments were designed for those people who cannot open or operate any sort of bank or building society account.

Around 100,000 customers had one benefit paid by cheque and another into an account. We have been writing to these customers to tell them that we plan to start paying all their benefits into their account unless they let us know that they want to carry on being paid by cheque. Customers are normally asked to contact us within 14 days of the letter being sent if they want to continue to be paid by cheque.

Customers receiving disability living allowance or attendance allowance by cheque were advised that the way we pay benefits is changing and that we would now pay into the account into which their other benefit(s) were already being paid. A specified period to contact us was not included.

We are not able to automatically identify all those customers who may have trouble reading standard print at the time we send out the initial letters. If they contact us we can then send them a letter in larger print or in Braille.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average number of days was from first contact by a new jobseeker's allowance claimant to first payment for claims administered by *(a)* the Benefits Agency and *(b)* Jobcentre Plus in each of the last five years. [34271]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 6 December 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about what the average number of days was from first contact by a new Jobseeker's Allowance claimant to the first payment for claims administered by *(a)* the Benefits Agency and *(b)* Jobcentre Plus in each of the last five years. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus came into existence in 2002. Prior to that, claims were processed by the Benefits Agency. The processing of claims to Jobseeker's Allowance has undergone considerable change since 2000, with much more emphasis being given to providing a package of support aimed at helping the customer to find work. For example, the introduction of Work Focused Interviews, although adding an extra stage to the claim process, has facilitated a pro-active rather than a passive approach to the search for work.

The information is in the table.

Calendar year	*Actual average clearance time (days)*
2000	9.1
2001	9.6
2002	10.2
2003	10.8
2004	12.0
2005 (up to October)	13.4

The Actual Average Clearance Time for Jobseeker's Allowance is measured from the date the customer first contacts Jobcentre Plus to the date the customer is sent a notice of entitlement.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what total spending was on *(a)* all pensioner benefits, *(b)* the basic state pension, *(c)* minimum income guarantee and pension credit, *(d)* winter fuel payment, *(e)* disability benefits for pensioners, *(f)* housing benefit for pensioners, *(g)* council tax benefit for pensioners and *(h)* other benefits for pensioners (i) in cash terms, (ii) in real terms and (iii) as a percentage of gross domestic product in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of the equivalent figures in (A) 2010, (B) 2020, (C) 2030, (D) 2040 and (E) 2050. [35363]

Mr. Timms: The available information is in the following tables.

(a) All pensioner benefit expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	45,464	54,674	5.5
1998–99	47,505	55,683	5.5
1999–2000	50,532	58,089	5.5
2000–01	53,415	60,610	5.5
2001–02	57,637	63,824	5.7
2002–03	60,869	65,327	5.7
2003–04	64,214	67,137	5.7
2004–05	70,654	72,333	6.0
2010–11	97,710	85,759	6.2
2020–21	151,930	101,163	5.8
2030–31	265,021	133,893	6.3
2040–41	448,220	171,806	6.7
2050–51	781,010	227,129	7.2

(b) Basic state pension expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	30,391	36,547	3.7
1998–99	31,914	37,408	3.7
1999–2000	33,378	38,369	3.6
2000–01	33,986	38,564	3.5
2001–02	36,565	40,490	3.6
2002–03	38,469	41,287	3.6
2003–04	39,828	41,641	3.6
2004–05	41,389	42,373	3.5
2010–11	54,339	47,693	3.4
2020–21	71,809	54,477	3.1
2030–31	132,914	67,150	3.2
2040–41	197,113	75,555	2.9
2050–51	274,409	79,802	2.5

(c) MIG/pension credit expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	3,721	4,475	0.5
1998–99	3,566	4,180	0.4
1999–2000	3,725	4,283	0.4
2000–01	4,035	4,578	0.4
2001–02	4,417	4,891	0.4
2002–03	4,405	4,728	0.4
2003–04	4,851	5,072	0.4
2004–05	5,997	6,140	0.5
2010–11	9,262	8,129	0.6
2020–21	15,145	10,085	0.6
2030–31	33,145	16,745	0.8
2040–41	75,471	28,929	1.1
2050–51	175,361	50,998	1.6

(d) Winter fuel payment expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	191	229	*
1998–99	194	228	*
1999–2000	759	873	0.1
2000–01	1,749	1,985	0.2
2001–02	1,681	1,861	0.2

(d) Winter fuel payment expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
2002–03	1,705	1,830	0.2
2003–04	1,916	2,003	0.2
2004–05	1,954	2,000	0.2
2010–11	2,147	1,884	0.1
2020–21	2,024	1,348	0.1
2030–31	2,492	1,259	0.1
2040–41	2,807	1,076	*
2050–51	3,013	876	*

(e) Disability benefit expenditure for pensioners, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	4,031	4,848	0.5
1998–99	4,353	5,103	0.5
1999–2000	4,652	5,348	0.5
2000–01	4,965	5,634	0.5
2001–02	5,335	5,907	0.5
2002–03	5,598	6,008	0.5
2003–04	6,027	6,301	0.5
2004–05	6,418	6,571	0.5
2010–11	9,019	7,916	0.6
2020–21	13,874	9,238	0.5
2030–31	23,220	11,731	0.6
2040–41	35,826	13,732	0.5
2050–51	51,544	14,990	0.5

(f) Housing benefit for pensioners expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	3,781	4,547	0.5
1998–99	3,843	4,504	0.4
1999–2000	3,931	4,518	0.4
2000–01	4,110	4,664	0.4
2001–02	4,380	4,850	0.4
2002–03	4,730	5,077	0.4
2003–04	4,475	4,679	0.4
2004–05	4,692	4,804	0.4
2010–11	6,194	5,437	0.4
2020–21	9,044	6,023	0.3
2030–31	16,186	8,177	0.4
2040–41	29,958	11,483	0.4
2050–51	58,791	17,097	0.5

(g) Council tax benefit for pensioners expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	1,080	1,298	0.1
1998–99	1,125	1,318	0.1
1999–2000	1,164	1,338	0.1
2000–01	1,230	1,395	0.1
2001–02	1,325	1,467	0.1
2002–03	1,420	1,524	0.1
2003–04	1,636	1,711	0.1
2004–05	1,818	1,861	0.2
2010–11	2,808	2,465	0.2
2020–21	3,648	2,429	0.1
2030–31	6,004	3,034	0.1
2040–41	10,595	4,061	0.2
2050–51	20,870	6,069	0.2

(h) Other benefits for pensioners expenditure, Great Britain

	£ million		
	(i) Cash terms	*(ii) Real terms, 2005–06 prices*	*(iii) Percentage of gross domestic product*
1997–98	2,270	2,730	0.3
1998–99	2,510	2,942	0.3
1999–2000	2,923	3,360	0.3
2000–01	3,340	3,789	0.3
2001–02	3,935	4,358	0.4
2002–03	4,541	4,874	0.4
2003–04	5,480	5,730	0.5
2004–05	8,386	8,535	0.7
2010–11	13,941	12,236	0.9
2020–21	26,375	17,563	1.0
2030–31	51,062	25,797	1.2
2040–41	96,449	36,970	1.4
2050–51	197,022	57,297	1.8

Notes:

1. Expenditure figures are for Great Britain.
2. Expenditure has been rounded to the nearest million pounds.
3. Gross domestic product percentages have been rounded to one decimal place. A percentage less than 0.1 per cent. is indicated by the symbol *.
4. Expenditure for the basic state pension, minimum income guarantee and other benefits for pensioners include a small amount of expenditure on child dependency increases which are paid with some of these entitlements.
5. Disability benefits for pensioners include disability living allowance, attendance allowance and severe disablement allowance.
6. For figures up to 2004–05, other benefits for pensioners include additional state pension/SERPS, non-contributory retirement pension, contribution based Christmas bonus, pensions compensation board, over65's payment, over70's payment, the over 75 TV licence, widow's benefit, bereavement benefits and incapacity benefit.

Incapacity benefit is only included until 2000–01 as incapacity benefit was no longer paid to people over pension age after that year, following the 1995 Reforms.

7. For figures from 2010–11, other benefits for pensioners include additional state pension/SERPS, non-contributory retirement pension, contribution based Christmas bonus, non-contributory Christmas bonus and the over 75 TV licence.
8. As per the above notes (6 and 7), the breakdown of expenditure is not on a consistent basis.

Source:

Expenditure and percentage of gross domestic product figures have been taken from data which underlies the 2005 pre-Budget report.

Benefits Administration Errors

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of losses due to error in the administration of benefits for each of the last eight years, broken down by the type of benefit. [28773]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department produces estimates for the amount overpaid through fraud and error across the benefits system. Previously published results are included in the table.

Global estimate of error (official error and customer error combined)

	Monetary value (£ billion)
From April 1997-March 1998 through to April 2002-March 2003	1
April 2003-March 2004	1.5

Notes:

All figures rounded to the nearest £500 million.

The methodology used for estimating this was changed in 2004–05 to improve the quality of the estimate. We have also estimated fraud and error in 2003–04 using this new methodology for the purposes of making comparisons. The estimates for official error for 2003–04 and 2004–05 are in the table.

Global estimates of official error 2003–04 and 2004–05

	Official error 2003–04		*Official error 2004–05*	
	£ million	*Percentage*	*£ million*	*Percentage*
Regularly reviewed				
Income Support	190	1.8	210	2.1
Jobseeker's Allowance	100	3.8	80	3.5
Pension Credit	100	2.1	130	2.2
Housing Benefit[1]	150	1.3	140	1.1
Periodically reviewed				
Disability Living Allowance[2]	60	0.7	60	0.7
Retirement Pension[3]	20	0.1	30	0.1
Carer's Allowance	10	0.6	10	0.6
Incapacity Benefit[3]	50	0.8	50	0.8
Instrument of Payment fraud	—	—	—	
Interdependences[4]	10	—	10	—
Unreviewed				
Un reviewed (excluding Council Tax Benefit)[5]	100	0.9	100	0.9
Council Tax Benefit[6]	40	1.3	40	1.1
Total[2,7]	£0.8 billion	0.8	£0.9 billion	0.8

[1] Individual estimates have been uprated in line with 2004–05 expenditure and may differ from published values.
[2] Figures expressed as percentages (percentage) give the overpayments as a percentage of the benefit paid out in the year.
[3] The housing benefit estimates in this table include approximations for the purposes of producing an overall fraud and error figure. The estimates in the table will therefore be different from those published previously as National Statistics.
[4] The 2004–05 DLA National Benefit Review identified cases where the change in customer's needs have been so gradual that it would be unreasonable to expect them to know at which point their entitlement to DLA might have changed. These cases do not result in a recoverable overpayment as we cannot quantify or define when the customer's change occurred. Because legislation requires the Secretary of State to prove that entitlement to DLA is incorrect, rather than requiring the customer to inform us that their needs have changed, cases in this subcategory are legally correct. The difference between what claimants in these cases are receiving in DLA and related premiums in other benefits and what they would receive if their benefit was reassessed is estimated to be around £0.7 billion (+/- £0.2 billion). This figure is not included in the total above, but a similar figure was included in the global fraud and error figure of £3 billion reported in the resource account for 2003–04.
[5] Official error rates have been updated with estimates from the 2003–04 measurement exercise.
[6] Overpayments due to knock-on effects between loss of DLA component entitlement and premiums on income-related benefits.
[7] The estimated rate of fraud and error on unreviewed benefits, for which we have no reliable review information, has been set at 2.7 per cent. and divided equally among fraud, customer error and official error.
Notes:
1. Fraud and error on CTB has not been measured before and is assumed here to be equal to fraud and error rates on HB.
2. Although quoted to the nearest £0.1 billion, there are considerable uncertainties around the total estimates (95 per cent. confidence intervals of between ± £0.2 billion and ± £0.3 billion).
3. Individual figures may not add across to total fraud and error figures due to rounding.

The Department publishes National Statistics reports including estimates of overpayments through official error. Estimates for income support (IS), jobseeker's allowance (JSA), pension credit and housing benefit (HB) are published every year so these are the benefits where we have most information on changes over time. These figures are presented in the tables.

IS/JSA/pension credit official error over payments from National Statistics reports

	IS (not including pensioners)	*JSA*	*IS for pensioners/ pension credit*
October 1997–September 1998			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.6	4.2	1.6
Overpaid (£ million)	130	150	60
April 1998–March 1999			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.6	5.6	1.3
Overpaid (£ million)	130	200	50
April 1999–March 2000			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.5	4.0	1.5
Overpaid (£ million)	130	130	60

IS/JSA/pension credit official error over payments from National Statistics reports

	IS (not including pensioners)	*JSA*	*IS for pensioners/ pension credit*
April 2000–March 2001			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.3	2.8	1.2
Overpaid (£ million)	120	80	50
April 2001–March 2002			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.3	3.5	0.8
Overpaid (£ million)	130	90	40
April 2002–March 2003			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.4	4.2	1.0
Overpaid (£ million)	140	110	50
April 2003–March 2004			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.8	3.8	2.1
Overpaid (£ million)	190	100	100
October 2003–September 2004			
Latest published estimates			
percentage of benefit overpaid	2.1	3.5	2.2
Overpaid (£ million)	220	80	120

Note:
The figures for April 2003-March 2004 and October 2003-September 2004 in the above table have been adjusted for data quality problems found. Previous figures have not been adjusted in this way as there is not enough information available to do so. The tables therefore are not all suitable for making reliable comparisons over time but give a reference of our best estimate of these overpayment figures in each year. Confidence intervals are not provided in these tables although are typically around ± 20–30 per cent. of the central estimates.

Housing benefit (HB) official error overpayments from National Statistics reports

	Percentage of benefit overpaid	*Overpaid (£ million)*
April 2002-March 2003	0.9	100
April 2003-March2004	1.0	100
October 2003-September 2004[1]	0.9	90
April 2002-March 2003	0.9	—

[1] Latest published estimates

Notes:
1. These figures will not include all overpayments in HB through official error. They were published in the latest National Statistics report for HB fraud and error, and only cover the 83 per cent. of HB expenditure that is within the scope of the HBR sample. In these reports, there was an extra category of error labelled "non-residence" error, an unknown amount of which will be due to mistakes made by officials—these overpayments are not included in the figures in this table.
2. The Second National Housing Benefit Accuracy Review, in 1997–98 gave an estimate of £60 million for official error, but was based on a different methodology, so the results are not considered comparable with more recent estimates.

The Department also publishes one-off snapshot reviews. The most recent report covered disability living allowance (DLA) and the official error figures from these are in the table.

2004–05 DLA official error overpayments from National Statistics report

	Amount of money overpaid (£ million)	*Percentage benefit overpaid*
Official error	60	0.8

Annual estimates of official error only are made for short-term benefit overpayments (incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance). The recent results are shown in the following table. Previous results were carried out using a different methodology and are not comparable.

Short-term benefits (incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance) official error overpayments

	Monetary value (£ million)
April 2001 to March 2002	43
April 2002 to March 2003	43

Short-term benefits (incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance) official error overpayments

	Monetary value (£ million)
April 2003 to March 2004	53
April 2004 to March 2005	[1]104

1. These estimates are subject to wide margins of error. Our best estimate of STB overpayments for 2004–05 includes a further amount of around £20 million due to incorrectness types not captured under methodology in earlier years.

Annual estimates of official error only are made for long-term benefit overpayments (retirement pension, widow's benefit and bereavement benefit). The recent results are shown in the following table:

Long-term benefits official error overpayments

	Monetary value (£ million)
April 2001 to March 2002	43
April 2002 to March 2003	14
April 2003 to March 2004	26
April 2004 to March 2005	27

Notes:
1. The sample for long-term benefits is a small one and excludes some types of cases. It provides reassurance that official error on these benefits is a very low proportion of expenditure, but the estimate is only a broad indicator.
2. As a result of the wide margins of error, the changes over time are not statistically significant.

Benefits Office Closures

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken to process *(a)* crisis loans, *(b)* budgeting loans and *(c)* community care loans in (i) Vale of Clwyd constituency and (ii) Denbighshire was in (A) each of the six months prior to closure of the Rhyl Benefits Office and (B) each month since. [34621]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question concerning the average time taken to process *(a)* crisis loans *(b)* budgeting loans and *(c)* community care loans in (i) Vale of Clwyd constituency and (ii) Denbighshire was in *(a)* each of the six months prior to closure of the Rhyl Benefits Office and *(b)* each month since. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus does not keep statistical information about social fund applications broken down to the Vale of Clwyd constituency or the county of Denbighshire. However, I have detailed social fund performance for our Wrexham and North Wales coast district, which covers both these areas and others.

	Crisis loans		*Budgeting loans*		*Community care grants*	
	Applications received	*Average clearance times (days)*	*Applications received*	*Average clearance times (days)*	*Applications received*	*Average clearance times (days)*
February 2005	783	1	1,138	2.04	452	3.55
March 2005	803	1	1,180	1.89	435	3.13
April 2005	879	1.02	1,372	1.89	484	3.03
May 2005	749	1	1,239	1.89	466	3.22
June 2005	832	1	1,284	1.99	506	3.47
July 2005	757	1.03	1,122	2.53	424	3.41
August 2005	687	1.08	1,157	2.48	468	8.99
September 2005	820	1.16	1,152	2.21	417	7.55
October 2005	794	1.23	1,218	1.95	449	8.96

The District Manager is aware of the increase in clearance times for community care grants and is now putting measures in place to improve performance. This involves using additional help from the social fund processing team in Llanelli.

I hope this is helpful.

Buncefield Oil Depot

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Total Oil Depot site at Buncefield, near Hemel Hempstead, was classed as a *(a)* tier one and *(b)* tier two site for the purposes of the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999. [39371]

Mrs. McGuire: Hertfordshire Oil Storage Ltd. at Buncefield is joint operated by Total UK Ltd. and Texaco Ltd. The Hertfordshire Oil Storage Ltd. operation is classed as a top tier site under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999.

Burslem Job Centre

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on reorganisation of *(a)* (i) Jobcentre Plus and (ii) social fund application services in North Staffordshire and *(b)* current services provided at Burslem jobcentre. [37719]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Leslie Strathie, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about the reorganisation of *(a)* (i) Jobcentre Plus and (ii) Social Fund application services in North Staffordshire and *(b)* current services provided at Burslem Job Centre. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Under our reorganisation in North Staffordshire there will be four local service outlets providing the full range of face-to-face Jobcentre Plus services. In Hanley, a new building designed specifically for Jobcentre Plus delivery is scheduled for completion by May 2007. Kidsgrove Jobcentre Plus has been fully refurbished to the new Jobcentre Plus design, and work is underway to complete the refurbishment of Longton Jobcentre Plus. The final Jobcentre Plus office will be in Newcastle-under-Lyme scheduled for completion by July 2006.

In addition there will be a centre for benefit delivery in the former Hanley Social Security Office.

Burslem Jobcentre is scheduled to close as part of the reorganisation, but will not do so until the new Hanley building is complete. Leek Jobcentre is also being considered for closure and we are currently consulting with all local MPs, stakeholders and Trade Union with our proposed plans. We will make a formal decision early in the New Year.

The processing work for Social Fund claims is being transferred from Newcastle-under-Lyme to Birmingham Perry Barr, as part of a wider centralisation of this work for the West Midlands Region. Crisis Loan applications will continue to be made by telephone with the option of face-to-face contact if required. All other Social Fund applications will continue to be made by post either through Jobcentre Plus or via agencies such as Citizen's Advice Bureau. Payments will continue to be issued at the customer's local office.

Burslem Jobcentre currently takes new claims to Jobseeker's Allowance, and undertakes all mandatory Jobseeker's Allowance interviews.

Carers

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he is taking to remove the barriers to work for people with caring responsibilities. [27007]

Mrs. McGuire: In the National Strategy for Carers, 'Caring About Carers', published in February 1999, the Government set out its commitment to encourage and enable carers of working age to remain in work and to help those carers who are unable, or do not want, to combine paid work with caring to return to work when their caring responsibilities cease or diminish. Many people providing informal care already do paid work as well.

From April 2004, Work Focussed Interviews (WFIs) have been introduced for partners of benefit customers in Jobcentre Plus areas. Although partners who are full-time carers with entitlement to carer's allowance are exempt from WFIs, they are however entitled to help and support, including through new deal for partners, on a voluntary basis.

Carers who are in receipt of carer's allowance can work and earn up to £82 per week. This amount is calculated net of expenses such as income tax, some national insurance contributions, and half of any contribution towards an occupational or personal pension. Help can also be given with the cost of care of the disabled person when the carer is at work, provided that the substitute carer is not a close relative of either the carer or the disabled person. The amount allowable is 50 per cent. of the net earnings after deduction of the other allowable expenses. Therefore, it is possible for a carer to earn well in excess of £82 and still remain eligible for carer's allowance.

Child Support

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many child support cases were referred to the special payments department for financial loss in each year since 1997; and how much was paid out by the Child Support Agency in special payments in each year. [34696]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many child support cases were referred to the special payments department for financial loss in each year since 1997 and how much was paid out by the Child Support Agency in special payments in each year.

We are unable to provide precisely the information you have requested. This is because a referral could consist of more than one component of maladministration (for example, delay, consolatory, and financial loss) and robust information is only available from 1 December 2001.

We can provide the number of financial loss components considered and paid for the period 1 December 2001 to 31 October 2005 and also the total amount of special payments paid in each year during the same period.

The table below contains the number of financial loss components considered, the number paid and the amounts paid for the period 1 December 2001 to 31 October 2005 (this is different from either the total number of Special Payments made or indeed the number of people paid Special Payments).

Period	Number of financial loss components considered	Number of financial loss components paid	Total amount paid during the period (£)
1 December 2001 to 31 March 2002	2,291	1,884	662,174
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	7,219	5,863	2,478,000
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	6,268	4,897	2,331,000
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	8,742	7,122	3,043,000
1 April 2005 to 31 October 2005	4,470	3,496	2,089,138
Total	28,990	23,262	10,603,312

I hope this information is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of Child Support Agency old scheme cases have not had a reassessment for more than *(a)* six months, *(b)* one year, *(c)* two years, *(d)* three years, *(e)* four years, *(f)* five years and *(g)* 10 years. [37930]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the latest compliance rate is for Child Support Agency cases; what the target is; and if he will make a statement. [21436]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the latest compliance rate is for Child Support Agency cases; what the target is; and if he will make a statement.

The compliance targets and performance rates to September 2005 are presented in the table below.

Agency compliance targets and performance at September 2005

Percentage

	Target	Performance at September
New scheme case compliance	78	66
Old scheme case compliance	75	72
Overall case compliance	—	70
New scheme cash compliance	75	61
Old scheme cash compliance	68	71
Overall cash compliance	—	68

Notes:

1. Case compliance is defined as the percentage of cases open at the end of any quarter for which any maintenance due via the collection service was received.
2. Cash compliance is defined as the percentage of maintenance due in any quarter which has been collected via the collection service.

I hope you find this helpful.

Data Protection

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken by his Department has been to respond to requests for information under the Data Protection Act 1998 since it came into force. [20354]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is not recorded centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. This is because requests for information are dealt with as part of normal business consistent with the obligations of the Data Protection Act.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to improve security of personal data held by his Department on its employees. [39316]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP has policies and systems in place to protect the security of payroll and other personal data relating to its staff. These are subject to managerial checks and regular internal and external auditing.

The Department is, however, urgently reviewing its current procedures in the light of the unauthorised disclosure of employee details in relation to apparently irregular tax credit claims.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of his Department's staff have had their personal details stolen for fraudulent tax credit applications. [39317]

Mrs. McGuire: The combined DWP and HMRC investigation is making good progress and I will be in a position to provide more details early next week.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the recent theft of data relating to staff in his Department for use in fraudulent tax credit applications. [39318]

Mrs. McGuire: The combined DWP and HMRC investigation is making good progress and I will be in a position to provide more details early next week.

Debt Manager System

Ian Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost is of the introduction of the new Debt Manager system in his Department. [33030]

Mr. Plaskitt: The introduction of the new IT system is part of the programme to modernise the recovery of overpaid benefits; in particular to bring about improvements in accounting controls to ensure that accounting irregularities, which have contributed to the qualification of DWP accounts by the C&AG in previous years, are removed from the system.

The total cost of introducing the new DWP Debt Manager system is £21.509 million; this includes all supplier costs (including hardware and software), the costs of Project staff and the Debt Management operational staff costs relating exclusively to the implementation of the new system.

Departmental Call Centres

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of his Department's call centres

have contracted for voice training for their staff; how many staff in each of these call centres have undertaken voice training courses; what assessment he has made of the effects on *(a)* staff and *(b)* customers of voice training; and if he will make a statement. [16310]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP has 85 call centres of which 77 have arranged voice training for 4,691 staff during either their initial induction programme or subsequent telephony training. We are unable to breakdown the 4,691 staff that received voice training by site level as this information is not collated centrally by our Learning and Development teams and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Some centres evaluate the impact on staff 12 weeks after the training is received to check to what extent the learning has been understood and that staff are using the skills gained from the sessions.

Other areas within DWP where voice training has been undertaken have not evaluated the impact of the learning, but have assessed the quality of the sessions, which have been positively received.

The Pension Service will be piloting a national course for their 25 centres called 'Smart Talk' and will include modules on how to look after your voice.

No evaluation has been undertaken of the impact on customers of voice training.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37479]

Margaret Hodge: The Department for Work and Pensions has not let any *(a)* catering or *(b)* entertainment contracts.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions who is responsible for running his Department's Estate; what relevant specialist qualifications he or she holds; and what the details are of his or her career to date. [26327]

Mrs. McGuire: The DWP Estate is run through a 20 year PFI partnership deal competitively awarded by the then Department of Social Security to Trillium (now called Land Securities Trillium) on 1 April 1998. Following the creation of DWP in June 2001, the former Employment Service estate was transferred to Land Securities Trillium from 15 December 2003 under an expansion of the contract.

Officials' responsibility within the Department therefore is to manage this contractual agreement. The officers responsible are :

The Commercial Director has specialised in procurement and commercial matters in the Public Sector for nearly 20 years and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply. Before moving to DWP, he was Head of Procurement for the Inland Revenue and has previously held commercial posts in the Home Office and HM Treasury (Central Unit on Procurement).

The Director of Estates has been in this role since 2000 and has specialised in estates and commercial matters in the Public Sector for the previous 10 years previously occupied Estate Management roles since 1991. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply and the British Institute of Facilities Management.

Their details are also provided in the Civil Service Yearbook—the official online directory for all Government Departments.

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* new build and *(b)* refurbishment of the Department's estate is underway in North Staffordshire; and what the (i) costs are and (ii) timetable is in each case. [37722]

Margaret Hodge: *(a)* The department has received planning permission for a new build in Hanley to replace the existing Jobcentre. We are in the process of seeking tenders and hope to start work on site in March 2006 with an anticipated opening of the office in May 2007. We will not be able to provide information on costs until the tenders have been assessed.

(b) With regards to refurbishment the department will be refurbishing three offices in North Staffs:

Kidsgrove—refurbishment complete at a cost of £872,322 (including £20,990 for IT)

Longton—refurbishment under way—scheduled cost of £1,362,000 (including £71,355 for IT)

Newcastle—refurbishment due to start 24 February—detailed costs not yet known.

Departmental NDPBs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list those of his Department's advisory non-departmental public bodies which the Government are required *(a)* to consult prior to legislative proposals and *(b)* to publish their response to advice received from such schools; [20139]

(2) which of the advisory non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department have a statutory base which *(a)* publish their advice to Government, *(b)* publish an annual report and *(c)* lay an annual report before Parliament; and whether it is under a statutory requirement in each case; [20140]

(3) which of the advisory non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department *(a)* hold public meetings, *(b)* conduct public consultation exercises, *(c)* conduct consultation exercises with outside commercial interests, *(d)* publish a register of members' interests, *(e)* publish agendas for meetings and *(f)* publish the minutes of meetings; and whether it is under a statutory requirement in each case. [20141]

Mrs. McGuire: The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) requires the Government to consult the Council prior to legislation on the list of prescribed diseases and on any other matter relating to the industrial injuries disablement benefit scheme or its administration. The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) requires the Government to consult the Committee about proposals for most social security regulations. Only in the case of SSAC is there a statutory requirement to publish the Committee's advice together with the Government's response.

The Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board (DLAAB) and IIAC have a statutory base, but neither body has a statutory requirement to publish their advice to Government. Only DLAAB has a statutory requirement to present an annual report, although it is not required to lay this before Parliament. In addition, although there is no requirement to do so, MAC, SSAC and the Disability Employment Advisory Committee (DEAC) also produce an annual report which is published on the body's website. Printed copies are also available from the secretariats.

IIAC holds public meetings and conducts public consultation exercises, as does SSAC. Where relevant, SSAC also conduct consultation exercises with outside commercial interests. IIAC is the only advisory body, which publishes its register of members' interests. The register is included within the annual report. MAC publish agendas for their public meetings, but do not publish the minutes of the meetings, although they are available on request. There is no statutory requirement for any of this activity.

Departmental Posts

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the change in the number of jobs in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies was in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05, broken down by business area; what change is planned for (A) 2005–06 and (B) 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [23393]

Mrs. McGuire: The change in the number of staff in the Department and its agencies between 2003–04 and 2004–05 is shown in Table 1. The baseline for the Department's agreed efficiency challenge is 1 March 2004 at which time overall staffing was 130,632.

The change in planned staff numbers in the Department and its agencies for 2005–06 and 2006–07 is shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Change in staff numbers 31 March 2004 to 31 March 2005

	31 March 2004	*31 March 2005*	*Reduction in numbers*
Jobcentre Plus	79,122	73,406	5,716
The Pension Service	18,567	16,189	2,378
Child Support Agency	10,779	9,784	995
Disability and Carers Service	7,103	6,506	597
Appeals Service	816	752	64
The Rent Service		718	n/a
Other Departmental Units	12,068	11,874	194
Total	128,455	119,229	9,226

n/a = Not available.

Notes:

1. Figures are full time equivalents and exclude staff on paid maternity leave.
2. The Rent Service joined the Department from 1 April 2004 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
3. Disability and Carers Service was granted Agency status from 1 November 2004.
4. Figures exclude the Health and Safety Executive.

Table 2: DWP planned staffing numbers

	31 March 2006	*31 March 2007*
Jobcentre Plus	70,200	67,550
The Pension Service	14,200	13,350
Child Support Agency	9,400	9,400
Disability and Carers Service	6,400	5,950
Appeals Service	750	750
The Rent Service	750	650
Corporate HR	1,250	1,200
Group Finance	5,500	5,000
Programme and Systems Delivery	500	450
Other Corporate Services	1,150	1,150
Work, Welfare and Equality Group	1,050	950
Pensions Client Directorate	350	350
DWP Contingency	1,000	1,250
Total DWP	112,500	108,000

Notes:

1. Figures are full-time equivalents rounded to the nearest 50 and exclude staff on paid maternity leave.
2. Planned staffing numbers are subject to ongoing review.

Departmental Rebranding

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money has been spent on rebranding in his Department and related agencies in each of the last five years. [18130]

Mrs. McGuire: The costs for rebranding incurred by the Department for Work and Pensions during this period are £15,756 for the Child Support Agency brand in 2001–02.

Departmental Staff

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many staff in the Department accepted voluntary severance schemes in the last three financial years; [19267]

(2) whether voluntary severance has been suspended in sections of the Department or its agencies. [19266]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the number of staff in the Department who have accepted voluntary severance and voluntary retirement through exit schemes in the last three financial years is in the following table.

There has been no suspension of voluntary severance or retirement in any section of the Department or its agencies.

Financial year	*Number of staff*
2002–03	73
2003–04	63
2004–05	467

Note:

Figures are full time equivalent (rounded).

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the rates of employee absence in his Department have been in each year since 1997. [21039]

Mrs. McGuire: Not all of the information requested is available.

Information about worker absences other than sickness absences is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

There is no information available about sick absence rates from 1997 to 1998.

The information for the period from 1999 to 2003–04 has been published in NAO Report HC 18 on 8 December 04 (Page 17 Figure 6).

The remaining information requested is as follows:

Department for Work and Pensions

	Sickness rate	
	Average working days lost	*Percentage working time lost*
2004-05	12.4	5.0

Notes:
1. The average working days lost figure is calculated by dividing the working days lost in the Department for the year in question by the working days available for the same period, then multiplying by 250 (the working year: 365 days less weekends and public/privilege days).
2. The percentage working time lost figure is calculated as in note 1, but the multiplier is 100 instead of 250.

Source:
Extracts from DWP payroll systems as processed by the DWP Information Directorate.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what voluntary severance schemes are in place in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies. [21765]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 25 October 2005]:* The voluntary release schemes currently being run within the Department and its agencies are shown in the following tables. Table 1 illustrates the number of schemes operating in each Government Office Region. Table 2 illustrates the agencies and departmental directorates participating in schemes in each Government Office Region.

Table 1

Region/country	*Number of schemes*
Wales	3
South East	3
Yorkshire and The Humber	4
North East	3
London	4
East Midlands	1
East of England	1
West Midlands	1
South West	1
Scotland	1
North West	1

Table 2

Region/country	*Agency/departmental directorate included*
Wales	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service
South East	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service
Yorkshire and The Humber	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
North East	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
London	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Disability and Carers Service; Appeals Service; Departmental Directorates
East Midlands	Jobcentre Plus
East of England	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
West Midlands	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
South West	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
Scotland	Jobcentre Plus; The Pension Service; Departmental Directorates
North West	Jobcentre Plus

Notes:
1. Voluntary release schemes are managed on a regional basis. Each scheme may cover all or some staff in an agency/ departmental directorate at all or a limited number of sites within the region.
2. Voluntary release schemes include voluntary severance and voluntary early retirement.
3. All schemes are governed by the rules of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme in which there are a number of different types of scheme. More that one type of scheme can be run concurrently within a region.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on reductions in departmental staffing to date in accordance with the Gershon efficiency targets, with particular reference to changes in the balance between *(a)* full-time and part-time staffing transfers from back-office to frontline functions and *(b)* natural wastage and redundancy. [26819]

Mrs. McGuire: The agreed baseline for the Department's Efficiency Challenge is 1 March 2004 at which time overall staffing was 130,631 (Full Time Equivalent). Staffing at the end of September 2005 was 116,417 (Full Time Equivalent); a reduction of 14,215 (Full Time Equivalent) since the baseline date.

The percentage of full-time and part-time staff at the baseline date and at 30 September 2005 is shown in the following table.

	Full-time		*Part-time*	
Date	*Number of staff*	*Percentage*	*Number of staff*	*Percentage*
1 March 2004	103,423	79	27,209	21
30 September 2005	88,086	76	28,331	24

As part of the Department's plans to meet the efficiency challenge, we are increasing the number of posts that have regular, direct contact with customers by 10,000 by March 2008. The increase in posts will occur principally within Jobcentre Plus and they will be resourced through a combination of existing staff within the Department and new recruits. As at the end of September 2005, the Department had created and resourced around 4,000 new customer-facing posts.

Excluding temporary staff, the number of staff leaving the Department over this period through managed exits and natural wastage was 16,117. Of these, 91 per cent. were as a result of natural wastage, and 9 per cent. as a result of managed exits. There have been no compulsory redundancies.

Electronic Tagging

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the implications for health and safety of electronically tagging workers in commercial warehouses. [35882]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has made no assessment of the implications for health and safety of electronically tagging workers in commercial warehouses.

Such warehouses are allocated to local authorities for the purposes of health and safety enforcement. Operators of such warehouses have to assess all risks to which their employees may be exposed.

HSE guidance on health and safety in warehouses is in the process of being revised and this topic will be considered for inclusion if evidence is available that any risk exists.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14605]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department has a vital role in promoting equality and diversity. Key policy areas include promoting disability rights, taking initiatives to increase employment among ethnic minorities and other groups, and supporting more women to save for retirement. The annual departmental report and the annual report and accounts of the agencies provide fuller information about the Department's policy areas and expenditure. These are laid in the House.

As an employer the DWP incorporates diversity and equality principles in all its practices. The document 'Realising Equality in the Department for Work and Pensions', published in August 2005, provides an overview of the Department's current diversity and equality activity and its plans for the coming three years. It also reports specifically on race equality for the preceding 12 months. It has been placed in the Library.

The Department has, since 2002, employed diversity managers in each business area. Promoting equality and diversity is an intrinsic part of their work. The cost of the diversity manager teams for 2004–05 was £985,530. Information for earlier years is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Complete information on the cost of promoting equality and diversity is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Firework Storage Sites

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what checks are made on consignments of fireworks leaving Health and Safety Executive-licensed firework storage sites to ascertain that legal distribution is taking place. [36388]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for regulating the health and safety of the manufacture, storage and transport of fireworks. It has no remit to regulate consignments of fireworks leaving HSE-licensed storage sites other than checking compliance with the transport of dangerous goods legislation.

Local authorities are responsible for enforcing the legal provisions on the supply of fireworks. HSE works in partnership with local authorities in the regulation of fireworks; where it became aware of information suggesting the illegal supply of fireworks it would immediately pass this information on to the relevant local authority.

Local authorities are notified about firework imports. It is at the discretion of the local authority to decide what checks it undertakes. This is likely to depend on the circumstances.

The most likely circumstances are where a local authority had found evidence of illegal storage or supply in breach of a supply licence issued under the Fireworks Regulations 2004. It could then investigate the firm that had supplied those fireworks with a view to taking enforcement action against it.

Fraudulent Claims

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the value of fraudulent claims made in each of the last five years in the names of people who have died. [37791]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by what means his Department traces those in receipt of benefit for whom they have an incorrect address. [37792]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions has a wide range of processes in place for tracing individuals in receipt of benefit for whom they have an incorrect address.

At the outset of a claim for benefit steps are taken to confirm that the address provided exists and is correct, this is done through matching the details provided with historical data held within my Department. Decision notices issued when entitlement is established and annual award notices issued when benefit rates change include written reminders of the need for customers to notify changes of address. In addition to this when it is known that an address is out of date various steps are taken depending upon the benefit in payment, for example in jobseekers allowance the customer is seen on a regular basis where correct address details are confirmed. Disability & Carers Service would contact such people as carers, health care professionals involved in the case etc to confirm address details. In other areas checks would be made with local authorities where housing benefit and council tax benefit are in payment.

If an address could not be traced banks would be contacted to suspend payments and data matching takes place with organisations such as Royal Mail redirect. Details of changes in addresses notified to one part of my Department are shared with other Agencies within the Department through cross-benefit computer systems. These systems also receive address data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs where many customers who are in receipt of child benefit, child tax credits and new tax credits are also customers of my Department.

My Department is also looking at data matching with Credit Reference Agencies to ensure address data is kept up to date.

Government Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what activities have been made unlawful by legislation introduced by his Department since 1 May 2001; and if he will make a statement. [35983]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following criminal offences have been created in primary legislation sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions since 1 May 2001.

(a) Social Security Fraud Act 2001

(i) section 2(3)*(a)* inserts a new paragraph (ab) into subsection (1) of section 111 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 to make it an offence for a person to refuse or neglect to comply with any requirements under section 109BA or 110A (power of the Secretary of State or local authority to require electronic access to information) or with any requirement of any arrangement entered under that section to allow authorised officers access;

(ii) section 16 amends section 111A of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (dishonest representations for obtaining benefit etc) to extend the circumstances in which a person is to be guilty of an offence if there has been a change of circumstances which he knows will affect entitlement to benefit (either his or another person's), the change is not one which is excluded by regulations from the changes which are required to be notified, and he dishonestly fails, or dishonestly causes or allows another person to fail, to give a prompt notification of the change;

(iii) section 16 also amends section 112 of that Act (false representations for obtaining benefit etc) to extend the circumstances in which a person is to be guilty of an offence if he fails or causes another to fail to give a prompt notification of any change which he knows affect entitlement to any benefit;

(b) Pensions Act 2004

(i) section 77(1) makes it an offence for a person, without reasonable excuse, to refuse to provide information or produce a document when required to do so under section 72 by the Regulator;

(ii) section 77(2) makes it an offence for a person to intentionally delay or obstruct an inspector exercising powers under sections 73 to 75 or to refuse to produce or secure the production of any document or to answer a question or provide information when required;

(iii) section 77(5) makes it an offence for a person intentionally or without reasonable excuse to alter, suppress or destroy any document which he is required to produce under section 72 or 75;

(iv) section 80 makes it an offence for a person to knowingly or recklessly provide the Regulator with information which is false or misleading in a material particular in certain specified circumstances;

(v) section 82 makes it an offence for a person to disclose restricted information in contravention of that section;

(vi) section 193 makes it an offence for a person to fail to provide information to the Board of the Pension Protection Fund or to obstruct a person appointed by the Board or to refuse to produce a document in circumstances similar to those described under (i) to (iii);

(vii) section 195 and 197 respectively make similar provision as in (iv) and (v) for providing information which is false or misleading to the Board or disclosing restricted information;

(viii) section 256 makes it an offence for a trustee or manager to be reimbursed out of the assets of a pension schemes for fines or penalties in contravention of that section;

(ix) Schedule 4, paragraph 11 makes it an offence for a person, without reasonable excuse, to refuse or fail to attend or to give evidence to the Pensions Regulator Tribunal or to alter, suppress or destroy any document which he is liable to produce to the Tribunal or to refuse to produce a document;

(c) Disability Discrimination Act 2005

(i) section 10(3) insets a new subsection (2B) into section 16B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 which makes it an offence for a person to knowingly or recklessly make a statement to the effect that publication of a particular advert would not be unlawful by reason of the operation of subsection (2);

(ii) section 7(2)*(b)* prospectively adds to the definition of relevant document in section 49(1) of the 1995 Act a rail vehicle accessibility compliance certificate so as to make it an offence for such a document to be forged, altered etc or for a false statement to be made for the purpose of obtaining such a certificate;

(iii) section 8(2) prospectively inserts a new subsection (5) into section 49 of the 1995 Act to make it an offence to falsely pretend to be a person authorised to inspect rail vehicles;

(iv) section 9 inserts a new section 21A into the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 in relation to badges issued outside Great Britain, subsections (4) and (8) of which respectively make it an offence to display a badge purporting to be a recognised badge unless it is a recognised badge and is displayed in accordance with regulations and to fail, without reasonable excuse, to produce a badge when required to do so by a constable or enforcement officer.

Housing Benefit Bill

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to introduce the Housing Benefit Bill; why it has been delayed; whether it is his policy to include a pilot scheme for the social rented sector and housing benefit sanctions for anti-social neighbours; and if he will make a statement. [31196]

Mr. Plaskitt: In the Queen's speech we made a commitment to legislate on reform of support for housing costs during this Parliamentary session and that remains the position.

We would want to discuss any proposals to reform housing benefit in the social rented sector in more detail with interested organisations as we determine our priorities for wider welfare reform.

We are continuing to keep all measures for tacking antisocial behaviour under review. Sanctions could be one of a number of measures that would help to address the misery caused by antisocial behaviour.

Human Resources

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions who the Director of Human resources is in his Department; what relevant specialist qualifications he or she holds; and what are the details of his or her career to date. [26331]

Mrs. McGuire: The Group Human Resources Director General for the Department for Work and Pensions is Kevin White. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and has been working in Human Resources for 12 years. His contact details, responsibilities and key staff are published in the Civil Service Yearbook—the official online directory for all Government Departments. His biography, including information about his present job, career history and education are reproduced in The Whitehall Companion.

Incapacity Benefit

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people living in *(a)* Wakefield

and *(b)* Hemsworth constituency (i) left and (ii) joined the register of persons in receipt of incapacity benefit in the last 10 years. [34668]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) commencements in the Wakefield metropolitan district council area and the Hemsworth parliamentary constituency in each year since 1996

Year ending 31 May	Great Britain	Wakefield	Hemsworth
1996	1,019,900	8,300	2,400
1997	998,700	8,700	2,400
1998	905,000	8,600	2,900
1999	837,300	6,800	2,500
2000	801,100	7,200	2,300
2001	788,700	6,400	1,800
2002	731,100	6,400	2,400
2003	722,400	6,200	1,800
2004	695,300	5,700	1,800
2005	624,400	5,800	2,000

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) terminations in the Wakefield metropolitan district council area and the Hemsworth parliamentary constituency in each year since 1996

Year ending 31 May	Great Britain	Wakefield	Hemsworth
1996	1,060,500	8,900	2,900
1997	987,000	9,000	3,200
1998	955,600	8,800	2,800
1999	866,200	7,200	2,700
2000	837,900	8,000	2,600
2001	725,800	5,800	1,800
2002	720,200	6,400	2,200
2003	698,200	6,000	1,900
2004	717,400	6,400	1,900
2005	665,100	6,400	2,300

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

2. These figures have been updated to include late notified commencements/terminations.

3. All figures back to 1995 have been revised, and may be subject to further change:

a. Figures prior to 2005 are subject to minor changes.

b. Figures for 2004 include fewer late notifications than previous quarters and will be subject to greater change in future.

c. Figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples.

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people living in the Normanton constituency claimed incapacity benefit in each year since 1997, [37851]

(2) what proportion of the working age population in the Normanton constituency claimed incapacity benefit in each year since 1997. [37852]

Mrs. McGuire: The information necessary to determine the proportion of the working age population claiming incapacity benefit or severe disability allowance is not available, because population estimates are not available for parliamentary constituencies.

The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in the Normanton parliamentary constituency: May 1997 to 2005

	Number of claimants
May 1997	3,900
May 1998	3,700
May 1999	3,800
May 2000	3,900
May 2001	4,000
May 2002	4,000
May 2003	3,900
May 2004	4,000
May 2005	3,800

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants (including IB credits only cases).

3. May 1997, 1998 and 1999 have been adjusted by applying detail from 5 per cent. data to 100 per cent. totals.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data. Information Directorate, 5 per cent. sample May 1997, 1998, 1999.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of people of working age are in receipt of incapacity benefit within each *(a)* local authority area and *(b)* parliamentary constituency. [38131]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested, because population estimates are not available by parliamentary constituency. The available information has been placed in the Library.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the types of mental health problems experienced by incapacity benefit claimants who have been claiming for *(a)* less than a year and *(b)* more than a year. [38250]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is in the table.

Types of mental or behavioural disorders experienced by incapacity benefit claimants who were claiming at 30 June 2005

Mental or behavioural disorder type	Claiming for greater than one year	Claiming for a year or less	Total
Depressive episode	377,250	88,540	465,790
Other anxiety disorders	91,580	19,930	111,510
Other neurotic disorders	71,510	7,300	78,810
Reaction to severe stress	35,380	16,760	52,140
Drug abuse	33,220	13,200	46,420
Alcoholism	37,200	8,550	45,750
Schizophrenia	36,180	2,450	38,640
Mental disorder not otherwise specified	19,420	3,960	23,370
Unspecified nonorganic psychosis	12,420	1,590	14,010

Types of mental or behavioural disorders experienced by incapacity benefit claimants who were claiming at 30 June 2005

Mental or behavioural disorder type	*Claiming for greater than one year*	*Claiming for a year or less*	*Total*
Specific development disorders of scholastic skills	10,070	1,980	12,050
Phobic anxiety disorders	7,540	790	8,340
Unspecified mental retardation	6,410	140	6,550
Unspecified mood disorder	4,150	740	4,890
M&B disorders associated with puerperium, not elsewhere classified	3,030	910	3,940
Specific personality disorders	2,330	370	2,700
Persistent delusional disorder	1,810	410	2,220
Persistent mood disorder	2,040	50	2,090
Eating disorder	1,180	280	1,470
Manic episode	910	80	990
Pervasive development disorders	600	270	870
Recurrent depressive disorder	740	90	820
Unspecified dementia	480	100	580
Dissociative disorders	100	20	130
Somatoform disorders	10	0	10
Total	755,570	168,510	924,070

Notes:
1. Data are to the end of August 2005.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. The statistics quoted in this response are taken from the Department's 100 per cent. Benefits Database.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the proposed reforms of the incapacity benefit system will be in place by the end of 2008; what recent meetings he has had to discuss such reforms; when he will publish a Green Paper on these reforms; and if he will make a statement. [38539]

Margaret Hodge: We intend to publish our proposals for welfare reform, including reforming incapacity benefits, in a Green Paper in January. I have continued the process of engagement with stakeholder groups and others which has been an on-going feature of our consultation on welfare reform. As we have said before, we plan to have the main elements of the reforms in place by 2008.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people aged over 50 years claimed jobseeker's allowance (JSA) in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04 and *(d)* 2004–05, broken down by region; what percentage in each region (i) remained on JSA, (ii) found work, (iii) moved onto income support and (iv) moved onto incapacity benefit in each year; and if he will make a statement; [34741]

(2) how many people aged over 50 years who claimed jobseeker's allowance (JSA) were eligible for the new deal 50-plus in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04 and *(d)* 2004–05, broken down by region; what percentage in each region (i) remained on JSA, (ii) found work, (iii) moved onto income support and (iv) moved onto incapacity benefit in each year; and if he will make a statement. [34742]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information has been placed in the Library.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged over 50 years participated in new deal 50 plus in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04 and *(d)* 2004–05, broken down by region; what percentage in each year (i) remained on jobseeker's allowance, (ii) found work, (iii) moved onto income support and (iv) moved onto incapacity benefit in each year; and if he will make a statement. [34743]

Margaret Hodge: Information is only available on starts to new deal 50 plus from January 2004. Prior to January 2004, new deal 50 plus information is available for those going into work and claiming the new deal 50 plus employment credit.

The available information is in the table.

New deal 50 plus

Jobcentre Plus region or country	*Individual starts between January 2004 and March 2005 claiming JSA at start date*	*of which, percentage who subsequently (to June 2005) moved*						
		Into work	*Into work and moved onto IS and/ or IB*	*Onto IS*	*Onto IB*	*Onto IS and IB*	*Neither into work or onto IB or IS*	*Claiming JSA at end of June 2005*
Scotland	4,200	27	3	1	5	5	58	38
North East	2,010	23	2	1	6	6	61	38
North West	3,010	26	2	1	5	7	59	37
Yorkshire and the Humber	2,420	25	2	1	5	6	62	40
Wales	1,920	25	2	1	6	6	60	36
West Midlands	4,450	23	2	1	6	5	63	36
East Midlands	1,920	23	2	2	5	6	64	40
East of England	3,750	22	1	1	4	5	67	39
South East	3,750	22	1	1	4	6	67	35
London	5,570	21	1	1	3	6	68	49
South West	2,750	27	2	1	4	7	59	32
Total	35,750	24	2	1	5	6	63	39

Notes:
1. Information on starts to new deal 50 plus is not available prior to January 2004 and has been amalgamated for the 15 month period January 2004 to March 2005.
2. Information for percentages of people from this group still claiming jobseeker's allowance (JSA) is given to June 2005 as this is the latest benefit information available and gives a more accurate reflection of people still claiming JSA.
3. Information is only for those who were claiming JSA when they started new deal 50 plus. It is possible to join new deal 50 plus and not be claiming JSA.
4. Percentage moving into work consists of people recorded as gaining a job through new deal 50 plus and may include people claiming a benefit other than income support or incapacity benefit.
5. Percentage moving into work and onto income support and /or incapacity benefit consists of people who are recorded as gaining a job through new deal 50 plus who are also recorded as having a new claim for income support or incapacity benefit after starting the programme. The income support/incapacity benefit claim may have occurred before, during, or after their job.
6. People recorded as not going into work or claiming income support or incapacity benefit could still be participating on new deal 50 plus.
7. The percentage claiming JSA at the end of June 2005 may include people who also went into work or claimed income support or incapacity benefit between joining the programme and June 2005.
8. Jobs figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
9. Individual percentages may not sum exactly to 100 per cent. due to rounding.
10. JSA (jobseeker's allowance); IS (income support); IB (incapacity benefit).

Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study and New Deal Evaluation Database

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the current average time taken is for jobseeker's allowance claimants *(a)* to be called in for interview and *(b)* thereafter to receive their first benefit. [35068]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what the current average time taken is for jobseeker's allowance claimants to be called for interview and thereafter receive their first benefit. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as chief executive of Jobcentre Plus.

To make a claim to jobseeker's allowance, the customer calls a contact centre where they answer a series of questions to assess their potential eligibility. Contact centre staff then arrange to call the customer back to complete a claim form, which is sent to the customer to check and sign. They also arrange a work focused interview at the customer's local Jobcentre Plus office.

Currently Jobcentre Plus measures the average time it takes to complete the whole process and collates statistics on the time it takes for the contact centre to call the customer back after initial contact.

Information about the average number of days a customer waits for a call-back across the entire contact centre network can be found in the table below. This data is only available from August and is recorded as actual days.

2005	*Average number of days call-back wait time*
Week commencing:	
15 August	4.2
22 August	4.2
29 August	4.2
5 September	5.0
12 September	5.2
19 September	4.8
26 September	4.8
3 October	4.8
10 October	4.4
17 October	3.3
24 October	3.1
31 October	2.3
7 November	2.4
14 November	1.6

In answer to the second part of your question, the following table contains the actual average clearance times for jobseeker's allowance from May to October this year.

2005	*Actual average clearance times JSA*
May	12.9
June	13.1
July	13.5
August	14.1
September	14.7
October	15.4
Year to date	13.7

We have put in place a robust set of improvement actions to improve this situation.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of those on jobseeker's allowance returned to full-time work within *(a)* one month, *(b)* three months and *(c)* six months, in each month in the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [37168]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. Information is available for those that have been recorded as having found work. However, not all leavers who find work tell Jobcentre Plus and so are not recorded as such. The available information has been placed in the Library.

The Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 244, Destination of benefit leavers 2004, showed that, nationally, 62 per cent. of claimants leaving income support, incapacity benefit or jobseeker's allowance entered employment of 16 hours or more a week. This compares to 61 per cent. in 2003. Copies of the reports are available in the Library.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Gravesham constituency are in receipt of jobseeker's allowance. [37534]

Mr. Plaskitt: As at October 2005, the most recent available figure, there were 1,462 people in receipt of jobseeker's allowance in the Gravesham parliamentary constituency.

Lone Parents

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the cost of income support for single parents who are now required to work due to the age of their children; and if he will make a statement. [36164]

Mr. Plaskitt: Lone parents are only entitled to receive income support if they are not required to be available for work. Where a lone parent is required to be available for work, they would have to claim jobseeker's allowance while they were seeking work.

New Deal

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measure of sustainability his Department uses for people gaining jobs through *(a)* new deal for young people, *(b)* new deal for 25 plus, *(c)* new deal for partners, *(d)* new deal for 50 plus, *(e)* new deal for disabled people, *(f)* new deal for lone parents and *(g)* all other welfare to work programmes since 1997; and whether this measure has changed in relation to each scheme. [31088]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 22 November 2005]:* Sustainability for jobs gained through the new deal programme is measured in slightly different ways across the new deals. In the case of new deal for young people and new deal 25 plus, employment is regarded as sustained if a person gaining a job through these new deals does not claim jobseeker's allowance for at least 13 weeks after gaining employment. This measure has not changed since the programmes were introduced in 1998.

Since 27 October 2005, employment sustainability for those participating on new deal for lone parents has been measured through the Work and Pensions longitudinal study. If a job gained through the programme lasts at least 13 weeks, it is regarded as sustained. A measure of job sustainability was not available prior to October 2005.

When a person gains a job through a new deal for disabled people (NDDP) job broker and remains in work for 13 weeks out of a 39 weeks period, that employment is regarded as sustained. This measure has not changed since the programme started in 2001.

A measure of job sustainability for new deal 50 plus and new deal for partners is not available.

Employment gained through employment zones, which help people living in areas of persistently high unemployment into work, is defined as sustained if a person gaining a job through the programme does not return to claim jobseeker's allowance for at least 13 weeks. This measure has not changed since the programme was introduced in 2000.

In the case of action teams, which help people in economically deprived areas into work, employment is regarded as sustained if the job lasts continuously for at least 11 weeks during the 13 week period after the person starts work, or if the person has two or more jobs which together add up to a total of at least 11 weeks during the 13 week period after they start work. This measure of sustainability has not changed since the programme was introduced in 2000.

In April 2004, we introduced working neighbourhoods pilots to help people in deprived areas into work. Employment gained through the programme is regarded as sustained if a person moves off benefit and remains in work for a minimum of 13 weeks. This measure has not changed since the programme was introduced in 2004.

Our ambition programme, which provides unemployed people with the skills and experience to work in specific employment sectors, defines employment as sustained if a person gaining a job through the ambition programmes is still working in that sector 26 weeks after gaining a job. This measure has not changed since ambition started in 2002.

Finally, our progress2work and progress2work linkup programmes, which assist drug and alcohol misusers into work, as well as offenders and homeless people, define employment as sustained if a person, gaining employment through the programmes, does not return to claim jobseeker's allowance within 13 weeks. This measure has not changed since the programmes were introduced in 2002.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been allocated to the full-time education and training option under the New Deal for 18 to 24-year-olds in England in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05, *(c)* 2005–06, *(d)* 2006–07 and *(e)* 2007–08. [33358]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the table.

Expenditure in England on the New Deal for Young People Full-Time Education and Training Option

£ million

	Outturn
2003–04	25
2004–05	32
2005–06[1]	31

[1] Forecast.

Notes:

1. Allocations for the 2006–07 and 2007–08 financial years are not yet available.
2. Figures exclude administrative expenditure and allowances payments to participants.
3. Figures are rounded to nearest million.

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Financial Strategy Division

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent changes there have been in the contracting process for New Deal services; and if he will make a statement. [36979]

Margaret Hodge: Contracts for New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 Plus are currently being re-tendered. All contracts are procured through open and fair competition in accordance with EU regulations, using the Jobcentre Plus website.

Jobcentre Plus wish to consolidate their contracts to provide larger, more viable and administratively less cumbersome contracts.

The competitive tendering process is now in two stages. The first stage is a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ), whereby providers set out at high level how they propose to meet the requirements.

Evaluation of the PQQ will then result in a shortlist of providers who will be invited to submit a full tender at the second stage.

Jobcentre Plus will ensure that local, small and specialist providers continue to contribute to their employment programmes. It is therefore encouraging smaller providers to develop relationships with other providers with a view to offering their services either as a consortium or on a sub-contract basis. The contracts will also be agreed in such a way as to protect good small providers or those who specialise in a particular area.

Jobcentre Plus will require all bidders to set out who they will be using to deliver the services. They will also require a signed declaration from sub-contractors confirming that they are content with the prices offered by the main contractor.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Gravesham constituency who attained sustained employment through a new deal programme have since re-started on a new deal programme. [33633]

Margaret Hodge: Up to the end of May 2005, 1,500 people had gained a sustained job through the new deal programme in Gravesham. Of these, 390 people had returned to a new deal programme to the end of August 2005.

Notes:

1. Information is not available at constituency level for new deal for disabled people.
2. A measure of job sustainability is not available for new deal 50 plus and new deal for partners.
3. Figures provided are for new deal for young people, new deal 25 plus and new deal for lone parents. Jobs information for these programmes is available to May 2005; starts information is available up to August 2005.
4. For the purposes of new deal for young people and new deal 25 plus, employment is defined as sustained if the person has not returned to claim jobseeker's allowance within 13 weeks of leaving new deal.
5. For the purposes of new deal for lone parents (NDLP), employment is defined as sustained if an NDLP participant has remained in employment for 13 weeks, as measured by the Work and Pensions longitudinal study.
6. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to increase the use of the voluntary sector in delivering new deal programmes. [38523]

Margaret Hodge: Contracts for new deal for young people and new deal 25 plus are currently being re-tendered. All contracts are procured through open and fair competition in accordance with EU regulations, using the Jobcentre Plus website.

We actively encourage voluntary sector providers to develop relationships with other providers with a view to offering their services, either as a consortium or on a sub-contract basis. We will be working with providers to ensure they understand the need for diversity in delivery, including the use of smaller providers and voluntary sector organisations. We will require all bidders to identify who they will be using to deliver their services, and will also require a signed declaration from all sub-contractors confirming they are content with the prices offered by the main contractor.

Jobcentre Plus district managers are also encouraged to work in close partnership with local organisations, making best use of non-contracted provision, often provided through the voluntary sector. For example, with new deal for lone parents, districts have agreements with intermediary organisations within both the voluntary and private sector to refer lone parents for training and other support. We have also procured European Social Fund contracts to provide training and job search support for new deal customers and these have been delivered by voluntary organisations.

We are currently looking at ways in which new deal participants would be able to access non contracted training provision, possibly with the voluntary sector and charitable organisations. This would give participants access to things like childcare and travel costs as well as a training premium of £15 per week for approved training activities.

New Registrations (Slough)

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the number of residents in Slough issued with new national insurance numbers in each of the last five years for which data are available; [38509]

(2) how many people from new EU member states countries have registered in Slough for new national insurance numbers in each of the last five years. [38513]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information as to how many residents of Slough were issued with new national insurance numbers is not available. Information regarding the number of applications for national insurance numbers administered in Slough is in the table.

Applications for national insurance numbers administered in Slough

	Number
September 2002 to March 2003	2,651
April 2003 to March 2004	5,127
April 2004 to March 2005	5,388
April 2005 to November 2005	5,203

The available information regarding the number of national insurance numbers issued in Slough to people from the new EU Accession states is in the table.

National insurance numbers issued in Slough to people from EU Accession states

	Number
October 2004 to March 2005	362
April 2005 to November 2005	1,986

Notes:

1. The new EU Accession states entered the EU from May 2004.
2. Figures on the number of national insurance numbers issued to people from EU Accession states are only available from October 2004.

Obesity

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the total expenditure on disability pensions was accounted for by people suffering from obesity in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how much was spent on disability pensions for people suffering from obesity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [28255]

Mrs. McGuire: Information is only available on those claiming incapacity benefits whose primary diagnosis is obesity. The available information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB), severe disablement allowance (SDA) and income support with a disability premium (ISDP); working-age expenditure on people suffering from obesity

£ million real terms

	Obesity—IB/ SDA/ISDP expenditure	*Total—IB/SDA and ISDP expenditure*	*Obesity as a percentage of IB/SDA/IS DP expenditure*
2000–01	8	13,184	0.06
2001–02	8	13,289	0.06
2002–03	8	12,789	0.06
2003–04	8	12,421	0.07
2004–05	8	12,554	0.07

Incapacity benefit (IB), severe disablement allowance (SDA) and income support with a disability premium (ISDP); working-age expenditure on people suffering from obesity

£ million nominal terms

	Obesity—IB/ SDA/ISDP expenditure	*Total—IB/SDA and ISDP expenditure*	*Obesity as a percentage of IB/SDA/IS DP expenditure*
2000–01	7	11,566	0.06
2001–02	7	11,955	0.06
2002–03	8	11,899	0.06
2003–04	8	11,883	0.07
2004–05	8	12,247	0.07

Notes:

1. Figures are consistent with the historical out-turn expenditure figures published in the DWP's benefit expenditure which can be found on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp
2. Expenditure has been apportioned using data on conditions of IB and SDA recipients from the IB 100 per cent. Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.
3. Expenditure refers to the total expenditure from IB, SDA and ISDP for those in receipt of IB or SDA.
4. Diagnoses are coded in accordance with the International Classification of Disease 10th edition, published by the World Health Organisation.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds.
6. Figures are of working-age claimants only.
7. Real term figures are in 2005–06 prices.
8. Figures for 2004–05 are estimated out-turn.

Source:

DWP Cross Cutting Strategy and Analysis Directorate, DWP information Directorate.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to answer the question tabled by the hon. Member for Daventry on 9 November, reference 28183. [36799]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1990W.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time equivalent mental health workers are employed by each Pathways to Work pilot area, broken down by type of mental health worker; and what the ratio of mental health workers to participants is in each area. [38248]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

In 2005–06, we expect around 3,000 customers in Pathways to Work pilot areas to receive support from the condition management programme.

Pension Credit

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Government are taking to ensure that it meets its target of 3 million people claiming pension credit by Easter 2006. [35311]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service is contacting again those individuals who are likely to be entitled to either small amounts of the guarantee element of pension credit, or the savings element only, to encourage them to apply. New marketing campaigns have been developed and data-matching techniques are being used to increase the accuracy with which letters are targeted. Further contact is also being made with those households we believe to be eligible for pension credit, but who have not so far responded.

Between April 2005 and March 2006, The Pension Service plans to have visited around 800,000 households to provide a full benefit check to ensure everyone is assisted in claiming their full entitlement to all benefits. The Pension Service's local service will also continue to work closely with its local partners such as Help the Aged and Age Concern to help ensure pensioners take up their entitlements.

National statistics showing the number of pensioners entitled to pension credit in the first six months after its introduction and the subsequent take-up rate are expected to be released early in 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of UK pensioners *(a)* entitled to pension credit and *(b)* receiving pension credit in each region; and if he will make a statement. [38147]

Mr. Timms: Latest estimates of the number of pensioners in Great Britain entitled to pension credit are due to be published in early 2006 in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2003/2004". Copies of the report will be available from the Library.

The number of pension credit recipients as at September 2005 is in the following tables.

Number of households receiving pension credit by pension credit type and GOR as at September 2005

	Total claimants	Guarantee credit (GC) only	Savings credit (SC) only	GC & SC
All GB	2,711,000	775,900	611,400	1,323,800
North East	158,200	36,800	40,000	81,300
North West	358,400	99,900	76,100	182,500
Yorkshire and The Humber	261,400	66,700	65,000	129,700
East Midlands	195,500	49,900	49,100	96,400
West Midlands	279,500	76,100	62,300	141,200
East of England	223,100	54,600	55,400	113,100
London	289,100	146,400	43,400	99,300
South East	280,200	76,100	69,200	134,900
South West	223,600	54,800	53,500	115,400
Wales	160,400	41,200	33,900	85,300
Scotland	281,600	73,400	63,500	144,700

Number of individuals receiving pension credit by GOR as at September 2005

	Total individual beneficiaries	Couple with female claimant	Single females	Couple with male claimant	Single males
All GB	3,299,100	125,500	1,589,000	462,500	533,900
North East	194,200	7,900	91,100	28,200	31,000
North West	433,500	16,600	209,400	58,500	74,000
Yorkshire and The Humber	321,100	12,800	152,400	46,900	49,300
East Midlands	241,100	10,000	114,300	35,700	35,500
West Midlands	345,500	13,400	159,100	52,600	54,400
East of England	274,000	10,700	132,700	40,200	39,600
London	344,100	8,800	165,900	46,200	68,100
South East	336,200	12,200	172,500	43,800	51,800
South West	273,500	10,800	132,400	39,100	41,400
Wales	197,900	8,300	92,500	29,300	30,300
	337,900	14,100	166,900	42,200	58,400

Notes:
1. The preferred data source for figures supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions is the Work and Pension Longitudinal Study, for which the latest published data is May 2005. The figures provided are those published in the Pension Credit Quarterly Progress Report, which provides an early estimate of caseload, these figures are our latest estimates.
2. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 100 and expressed in thousands. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Pension Credit (PC) replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto Pension Credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
4. Data from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS) 100 percent scan taken on 16 September 2005. The figures have been rated up to give month-end estimates.
5. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.
6. Couples may contain a number of partners who are less than the age of 60.
Source:
Information Directorate, 100 per cent. data.

Pension Protection Fund

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what meetings he has had with the Board of the Pension Protection Fund. [21721]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met with the chair on 22 November 2005.

I met with members of the Board of the Pensions Protection Fund on 25 May 2005 and 12 December 2005, with the chief executive on 2 June 2005 and the chair on 15 November 2005

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the operation of the Pension Protection Fund. [38529]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Protection Fund became operational on 6 April 2005. It will pay compensation to members of eligible non money purchase pension schemes where an employer becomes insolvent and the scheme is unable to afford to pay benefits at the level of PPF compensation.

The board will produce an annual report and set of accounts for its activities in respect of each financial year, which the Secretary of State will present to Parliament. It published proposals for calculation of the levy which will fund its activities on 16 December.

To date, there are 28 schemes in an assessment period for the fund, accounting for over 18,000 scheme members.

Pension Schemes

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Financial Services Authority and *(b)* life assurance companies about what constitutes best advice with regards to private funded pensions following the pensions regulator's assessment of the deficit of final salary schemes; and if he will make a statement. [24930]

Mr. Timms: The responsibility for keeping members of final salary schemes informed and up to date about their scheme and its funding rests with the trustees of the

scheme. Trustees can seek advice from their professional advisers; in addition, the pensions regulator produces a number of documents designed to help trustees in their work, including codes of practice. A code of practice on scheme funding is due to be published this month. The new funding provisions to replace the minimum funding requirement, due to come into force this month, promote greater transparency in scheme funding. Trustees of final salary schemes will be required to send regular statements of their scheme's funding position to all scheme members.

Pensioners

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number and percentage of pensioners in each county of the UK who had no private income in the last year for which figures are available. [22988]

Mr. Timms: The following tables show the percentage and number of pensioners with no private income in each of Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England. The data are from the 2003–04 Family Resources Survey. Because the data are from a sample survey the results are subject to a degree of uncertainty.

(a) Percentage of pensioners with no private income

	Pensioner couples	*Single pensioners*	*All pensioner units*
Northern Ireland	20	42	33
Wales	11	24	19
Scotland	12	22	18
England	6	18	13
United Kingdom	7	19	15

Notes:
1. Private income is defined as income from occupational and personal pensions, investment income, earnings, and 'other' income. The definition is consistent with that used in table 7 of the Pensioners' Income Series.
2. Pensioner couples are couples where the man is over State Pension Age—the table shows the percentage and number of pensioner couples without some form of private income. Pensioner units are either single pensioners or pensioner couples.

(b) Number of pensioner couples and single pensioners with no private income

	Pensioner couples	*Single pensioners*	*All pensioner units*
Northern Ireland	10,000	40,000	60,000
Wales	20,000	60,000	70,000
Scotland	30,000	90,000	120,000
England	150,000	660,000	810,000
United Kingdom	210,000	850,000	1,050,000

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10,000. The number of single pensioners and pensioner couples may not equal the total number of pensioner units due to rounding.
2. Pensioner couples are couples where the man is over State Pension Age—the table shows the percentage and number of pensioner couples without some form of private income. Pensioner units are either single pensioners or pensioner couples.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of *(a)* single women, *(b)* single men and *(c)* couples aged (i) 60 to 64, (ii) 65 to 69, (iii) 70 to 74 and (iv) 75 years or over receive less than a full basic state pension by up to (A) 50p, (B) £1, (C) £5, (D) £10, (E) £20 and (F) £30 per week. [35372]

Mr. Timms: The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is in the following table.

	Rate of basic pension									
	Less than £50		*£50.00 to £59.99*		*£60.00 to £60.99*		*£70 to £70.99*		*Full basic pension*	
	Number	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Men										
Aged 65–69	25,700	2.1	28,500	2.3	45,200	3.7	94,100	7.7	1,030,300	84.2
Aged 70–74	22,100	2.1	20,000	1.9	32,000	3.1	56,100	5.4	914,300	87.5
Aged 75+	17,200	1.0	16,200	1.0	21,900	1.3	39,800	2.4	1,553,900	94.2
Women										
Aged 60–64	543,600	40.9	161,000	12.1	139,200	10.5	126,900	9.5	358,100	26.9
Aged 65–69	680,500	52.2	95,900	7.4	62,900	4.8	65,900	5.1	397,200	30.5
Aged 70–74	577,400	48.9	42,000	3.6	30,900	2.6	36,400	3.1	494,400	41.9
Aged 75+	668,900	24.9	35,200	1.3	32,100	1.2	47,500	1.8	1,903,800	70.8

Notes:
1. Data are taken from 5 per cent. extract of PSCS as at 31 March 2005, therefore figures are subject to a degree of sampling. The cases are also adjusted to be consistent with the overall caseload from the WPLS.
2. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and are for Great Britain only.
3. A full basic Category A state pension was £79.60 per week for 2004–05.
4. The figures are for men and women getting either a Category A pension or a Category B pension based on their own or their spouse's or late or former spouse's National Insurance contribution record—it is not possible to identify recipients by marital status.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate five per cent. Sample—GB figures.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of pensioners were living in absolute poverty in *(a)* each constituency in Wales and *(b)* each ward of the Vale of Clwyd constituency in each year since 1994. [39301]

Mr. Timms: No robust geographical breakdown is available of the number of pensioners in absolute poverty in Wales.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's estimate is of the amount paid in rent rebate to pensioners in 2004–05. [37818]

Mr. Plaskitt: An estimated £2,242 million was paid in housing benefit rent rebate to pensioners in 2004–05.

Note:
This figure is rounded to the nearest million and is consistent with the pre-Budget report 2005. The estimate is based on local authority subsidy returns, combined with local authority-supplied statistical data in order to estimate how much is paid to pensioners. Estimates include both rent rebate reimbursed to local authorities by DWP, and that which is met from local authorities' own funds.

Source:
DWP Expenditure Tables.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's estimate is of the amount paid in council tax benefit to pensioners in 2004–05. [37819]

Mr. Plaskitt: An estimated £1,818 million was paid in council tax benefit to pensioners in 2004–05.

Note:
This figure is rounded to the nearest million and is consistent with the pre- Budget report 2005. The estimate is based on local authority subsidy returns, combined with local authority-supplied statistical data in order to estimate how much is paid to pensioners. Estimates include both council tax benefit reimbursed to local authorities by DWP, and that which is met from local authorities' own funds.

Source:
DWP Expenditure Tables.

Pension Reform

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the Pensions Commission second report; [38524]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress on plans to reform the UK pensions system; [38526]

(3) what recent representations he has received on the findings and recommendations of the Pensions Commission report. [38527]

Mr. Timms: The Government welcomes the broad framework of the Pensions Commission's proposals and options which were published on 30 November 2005, and believe they are the right basis for the debate to come.

The Government will now need to reflect on the report and are committed to consulting with the public and stakeholders on these key issues as part of the National Pensions Debate. There is much to be discussed and decided on the detail of that framework and our response must meet the five tests we have set out—that our overall package of reforms must promote personal responsibility; must be fair, affordable, simple and sustainable.

As far as the specific recommendations are concerned, the Government are ruling nothing in and nothing out.

We will launch the next stage of the National Pensions Debate in the new year and will continue to talk with people of all ages, in all parts of the country and across all political parties. We want to continue to listen to everyone's views so that we create ownership of the challenges and the possible solutions.

We will also continue to listen and engage with stakeholders and we are already meeting with key stakeholders as we work towards building a consensus on the way forward.

The Government will work towards the publication of a White Paper in the spring.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Pensions Commission final report. [38525]

Mr. Timms: The Chancellor of the Exchequer and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State speak regularly about a wide range of policy issues.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what role his Department has played in negotiations on the reform of public sector pensions. [38536]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer to the hon. Member for East Antrim (Sammy Wilson) on 31 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 741W.

Performance Development System

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost incurred by the Department in defending and settling Performance and Development System related cases was in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004 appraisal years. [38743]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The Department successfully defended a High Court action brought by the Public and Commercial Services union and recouped its costs.

Approximately £59,000 was spent in defending and settling six individual Employment Tribunal cases. This figure includes counsel fees.

This is the total figure, spanning the 2003 and 2004 appraisal years. The information for each separate year is not available as the cases run across the reporting year and the Department's solicitors branch is unable to break the data down.

Post Office Bank Account

Lorely Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions why the basic Post Office bank account is not able to receive payments through housing benefit and income support benefit cheques. [36209]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account is a simple account with very limited functions. It was specifically designed to receive payments of benefits and pensions administered by central government.

The Post Office card account does not have a facility for the account holder to make payments to a third party (i.e. their landlord) by standing order, so is not a suitable account to receive payments of housing benefit

or the local housing allowance which is currently being piloted. Most housing benefit customers already have a suitable bank account that can be used to receive their payments from which they can make payments directly to their landlord.

The Post Office card account was introduced as a stepping stone for those who did not feel that they were yet ready to make use of even a basic bank account. Should someone feel that they now need an account with more facilities then they should consider moving to an account which better suits their needs. Customers who have opened and operated a card account have demonstrated that they are now capable of using a basic bank account. There are a large number of current and basic bank accounts which can be accessed at Post Offices, if this is important to housing benefit recipients.

DWP cheques are designed for those people who we cannot pay into an account. There is no need for a facility to pay DWP cheques into Post Office card accounts. If customers, including those receiving income support, want to put their money into a card account then we can do this directly for them without needing to issue a cheque.

Public Relations

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts awarded by his Department in 2004–05 in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [35948]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The DWP conducts regular research to monitor customers and the public views of our services.

During the last 12 months the cost for these pieces of work has been £86,000.00.

(b) The DWP has awarded two public relations contracts during the last 12 months.

For the Age Positive campaign the cost has been £420,000.00. (England £252,00.00, Scotland £84,000.00 and Wales £84,000.00). The cost for the Disability Discrimination Act campaign was £140,000.00.

Race Equality Impact Assessments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Race Equality Impact Assessments his Department completed between *(a)* April 2004 and March 2005 and *(b)* April 2005 and November 2005; and how many assessments in each period resulted in a change of policy. [32824]

Mrs. McGuire: During the period from April 2004 to March 2005, 19 race equality impact assessments were completed. From April this year up to the end of September we have completed 24. The figures for October and November will be included in the return we undertake for the quarter ending December 2005.

There have been no major changes in policy as a result of conducting impact assessments; however, as a result we have made more explicit references to diversity principles, particularly in our Human Resource Policies and we have strengthened our monitoring and evaluation processes.

One area where we are undertaking more work is in relation to the Government's efficiency challenge where we have identified the need, particularly in the London area, to ensure that our proposals meet the needs of ethnic minority customers, particularly those with English as a second language.

Rent Service

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the national targets are for The Rent Service; and what the performance of offices in South Devon is in relation to those targets. [36574]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of The Rent Service is a matter for the chief executive, Charlotte Copeland. She will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Charlotte Copeland, dated 12 December 2005:

In reply to your recent parliamentary question about The Rent Service's (TRS) national targets and the performance of offices in South Devon against those targets, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of The Rent Service.

The information is given in the following table.

Type of determination	*National target*	*Exeter office*[1, 2]
Housing benefit		
With an inspection	93% within 15 working days	98.9% within 15 working days
Without an inspection	93% within 3 working days	99.7% within 3 working days
Pre-tenancy	93% within 4 working days	99.7% within 4 working days
Redeterminations	93% within 15 working days	98.2% within 15 working days
Fair rents	93% within 40 working days	99.3% within 40 working days

[1] Exeter is the only TRS office in South Devon.
[2] 1 April to 30 November 2005.

If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Single Women Pensioners

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single women pensioners are receiving assistance to bring them up to the minimum pension level, broken down by constituency; and if he will make a statement. [36466]

Mr. Timms: I have placed the requested information in the Library.

Tax Credits

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria were used to select pilot areas for the pilot work search premium scheme for working tax credit partners; what the take-up to date has been; what the duration of the scheme is expected to be; what the cost of the scheme is; and if he will make a statement. [35067]

Margaret Hodge: The work search premium for working tax credit partners (WSP/WTCP) was introduced on the 31 October 2005. It will be piloted for two years in 31 wards in eight Jobcentre Plus districts: Birmingham, Blackburn, Bradford, Leicester, London City and East, London North East, London South and Luton.

The purpose of the pilot is to test whether paying a £20 weekly payment for up to 26 weeks will increase job entries for partners of people claiming WTC who would otherwise have remained unemployed.

The pilot areas were chosen carefully with the aim of finding a high proportion of people of working age who are not in employment and not claiming benefits.

The exact criteria were that pilot locations should have an unemployment rate of one and a half times the International Labour Organisation rate of unemployment, and one and a half times the national average of people not claiming benefit or working. In addition, in each ward, the number of people not in employment and not claiming benefit should be greater than 2,500 people.

The total estimated costs for this pilot are in the table:

£ million

	Estimated cost for pilot
2005–06	0.86
2006–07	1.65
2007–08	1.03
Total	3.54

It is anticipated that around 6,000 people will benefit from the WSP/WTCP over the two years that the pilot is in operation. However, as it was only introduced at the end of October, statistical data will not be available until the end of December.

Winter Fuel Payments

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received winter fuel payments in each ward in the Vale of Clwyd in 2004–05. [39330]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the following table.

Ward	*Winter fuel payment recipients*
Bodelwyddan	375
Denbigh Central	345
Denbigh Lower	965
Denbigh Upper/ Henllan	590
Dyserth	520
Llandyrnog	480
Prestatyn Central	940
Prestatyn East	985
Prestatyn Meliden	490
Prestatyn North	1,820
Prestatyn South West	1,025
Rhuddlan	1,125
Rhyl East	1,555
Rhyl South	1,160
Rhyl South East	1,455
Rhyl South West	855
Rhyl West	665
St. Asaph East	460
St. Asaph West	385
Trefnant	550
Tremeirchion	350

Notes:

1. All wards based on census wards—those current as at April 2003.
2. All wards nest within Vale of Clwyd parliamentary constituency except Llandyrnog ward which is also partly within Clwyd West parliamentary constituency.
3. All benefit counts at ward level are rounded to a multiple of five.

Source:

Information Directorate

Young People (Support)

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial support is available for young people living independently and participating in further education *(a)* for the first six months and *(b)* after six months. [36439]

Mr. Plaskitt: It is a matter of record that the policy of both this and previous Governments has been to exclude most, but not all, full-time students from entitlement to housing benefit; since 1990 financial support for those students opting to study full-time has been seen as the responsibility of the education system, rather than the benefit system.

Those in full-time education are not supported through the benefits system once they reach the age of 19; the age at which child benefit ceases to be payable. Students in vulnerable groups, mainly those with a disability and those with dependent children retain eligibility for income related benefits.

People in full-time education are not entitled to receive jobseeker's allowance. Successive Governments have taken the view that full-time education is incompatible with the 'work first' nature of the jobseeker's allowance regime. It would be very difficult for someone in full-time education to fully meet the conditions for receipt of jobseeker's allowance.

Young people who are eligible to claim jobseekers allowance receive, like everyone else, help and support to find work. As unemployment lengthens and getting into work becomes more difficult the help provided becomes more intensive. As part of this, young people become eligible for the new deal after six months unemployment. The new deal provides intensive support through a personal adviser and includes, for those people who do not find work quickly, a number of options, including full-time education and training, to help improve their prospects of finding work. Young

people participating in full time education and training as part of the new deal receive an allowance, which is equivalent to their jobseeker's allowance plus a top up of £15.38 per week to cover additional costs incurred through participation. Individuals receiving housing benefit can currently study for qualifications below degree level, as long as it is for less than 16 guided learning hours a week. This is not always a significant barrier as many full time Learning and Skills Council courses are just over 12 guided learning hours a week.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training and guidance is available for Jobcentre Plus advisers for their work with young people living independently. [36440]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question concerning what training is provided to Jobcentre Plus advisers to assist them in working with young people living independently. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus has in place a comprehensive programme to support a client's job search activity, and successful movement into employment or further education.

Advisers receive training on assisting young people via the New Deal for Young People learning package. The focus of this learning is to help staff to support young people's ability to identify realistic job goals, and, if appropriate, a move into further education, as a means of gaining sustainable employment.

The Jobcentre Plus Adviser training helps them to work closely with Connexions in supporting the claimant with any training needs they may have to enter work.

I hope this is helpful.

HEALTH

"Your Health, Your Care, Your Say"

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will respond to the consultation "Your Health, Your Care, Your Say". [35055]

Mr. Byrne: Early in 2006.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she has issued on the minimum acceptable distance patients should be expected to travel to reach a hospital with an accident and emergency department. [38640]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* There is no recommended minimum or maximum patient travelling time to acute hospitals with accident and emergency departments in England.

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions for overseas residents took place after 18 weeks' gestation in 2004–05; and whether her Department requires an anaesthetic or pain killer to be administered to the unborn child before a late abortion takes place. [34687]

Caroline Flint: In 2004, 417 terminations were carried out at over 18 weeks' gestation on non-residents of England and Wales.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) issue guidance on clinical matters relating to abortion. For all terminations at gestational age of more than 21 weeks and six days, the RCOG recommends the method chosen should ensure that the foetus is born dead and that consideration is given to use of foetal analgesia and sedation.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed in *(a)* Great Britain and *(b)* the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority under the Abortion Act, as amended by section 37 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 in each of the last five years; and what percentage were performed to save the life of the mother. [36415]

Caroline Flint: The available information is shown in the table.

Statistics for abortions performed in Scotland are a matter for the Scottish Executive.

Number of abortions and percentage performed to save the life of the pregnant woman[1] for residents of England and Wales and residents of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority, 2000–04[2]

	England and Wales		Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	
	Total	Sections 1(1)(c) and 1(4) of the Abortion Act[1] (percentage)	Total	Sections 1(1)(c) and 1(4) of the Abortion Act[1] (percentage)
2004	185,415	0.1	4,831	[3]—
2003	181,582	0.1	4,641	[3]—
2002	175,932	0.1	4,474	[3]—
2001	176,364	0.0	[2]n/a	[2]n/a
2000	175,542	0.1	[2]n/a	[2]n/a

[1] Section 1(1)(c) that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated. Section 1(4) that the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.

[2] Prior to 2002 information was published by health authority and not directly comparable with SHAs

[3] Suppressed values. Percentages are based on fewer than 10 cases (between 0–9) and for confidentiality reasons are not available for release

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review compliance with section 4 of the Abortion Act 1967. [34785]

Caroline Flint: We have no plans to review compliance with Section 4 of the Abortion Act and I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 28 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 564W.

Acute General Hospitals

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that acute general hospitals retain the full range of medical and surgical specialisms; and if she will make a statement. [29778]

Mr. Byrne: The National Health Service Act 1977 places a duty on the Secretary of State to provide a range of facilities and services to such extent as she considers necessary to meet reasonable requirements. The Secretary of State discharges her duties through delegation to local primary care trusts who can contract with national health service trusts, NHS foundation trusts and other healthcare providers for those services. Should an NHS organisation wish to make a significant change or variation to a service then they are required to consult with local stakeholders including the overview and scrutiny committee before reaching a final decision. In addition, the core services of NHS foundation trusts are protected when they achieve foundation status and these services can only be changed if the regulator is satisfied that any changes are in the interests of the NHS. As medical knowledge advances and new ways of working are developed it is inevitable over time that there will be changes in the location of particular services in the interests of patients.

Acute Myocardial Infarction

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the use of the Goldman algorithm in the assessment of suspected acute myocardial infarction. [37757]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not made an assessment of the use of the Goldman algorithm. However, the Goldman algorithm was first published in 1988 and has been superseded by other algorithms and protocols in the assessment of suspected acute myocardial infarction.

Agency Staff

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much foundation hospitals paid for agency nursing in 2004. [38431]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Information relating to the operational management of national health service foundation trusts can be obtained via the Chairman of each organisation.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of agency *(a)* nurses and *(b)* doctors in Torbay primary care trust has been since 1997. [38483]

Caroline Flint: The Department collects primary care trust expenditure information on non-national health service staff. The table shows the total expenditure of agency nurses and doctors by Torbay primary care trust (PCT) for the period 2000–01 to 2004–05. This is the earliest data available as Torbay PCT only came into existence in 2000.

£

	Cost of non-NHS nurses	*Cost of non-NHS doctors*
2000–01	0	0
2001–02	0	0
2002–03	43,601	0
2003–04	70,887	0
2004–05	89,000	14,000

Source:
Annual financial returns of Torbay primary care trust

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* temporary and *(b)* agency staff are employed in her Department to perform roles previously carried out by permanent staff who have been made redundant. [37217]

Jane Kennedy: No.

Alimta

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost to the NHS of a course of treatment with the drug Alimta was in the last period for which figures are available. [36882]

Jane Kennedy: According to the British National Formulary (BNF), one 500 milligram vial of Alimta costs £800. There is no information in the BNF on the average duration of a course of treatment, this will vary for individuals.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target is for ambulance response times in Torbay; and what percentage of call-outs have met these targets since 1997. [38415]

Caroline Flint: Ambulance response times are set nationally. They are:

Category A which presents conditions which may be immediately life threatening and which should be responded to within eight minutes irrespective of location in 75 per cent. of cases. A fully equipped ambulance should attend incidents classified as category A within 14 to 19 minutes of the initial call, 95 per cent. of the time, unless the control room decides that an ambulance is not required.

Category B which presents conditions which though serious are not immediately life threatening and should be responded to within 14 minutes (urban) and 19 minutes (rural) in 95 per cent. of cases.

Ambulance services are required to take patients to hospital where the need is identified by a doctor as urgent and these patients should arrive at hospital within 15 minutes of the arrival time specified by the doctor in 95 per cent. of cases.

For category C calls, this presents conditions which are not immediately life threatening or serious—local national health service organisations have had responsibility for managing and monitoring the ways in which local services respond to these calls, since 1 October 2004.

The ambulance review, "Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming NHS Ambulance Services" was published in June 2005. The review sets out recommendations which include supporting performance improvement and changes to performance requirements. The report is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/ll/42/70/04114270.pdf.

The percentage of call outs which have met these targets in Torbay is not collected centrally. The data which the Department does collect on ambulance response times is published in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2004–05". This is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/ll/36/79/04113679.pdf.

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the NHS consultation document on the reorganisation of ambulance trusts will be issued; when the consultation will *(a)* start and *(b)* finish; and whether ambulance trusts will have an input into the drafting of the consultation document. [36447]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 December 2005]:* In accordance with the written ministerial statement of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 152–53WS, consultation on the proposed reconfiguration of ambulance trusts began on 14 December 2005 and will finish on 22 March 2006. Strategic health authorities were asked to comment on a draft of the consultation document, and key stakeholders, including ambulance trusts, were involved in the preparation of "Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming NHS Ambulance Services", which made the original recommendation for fewer larger trusts.

Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to issue a reply to the Select Committee on the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill [Lords]; and if she will make a statement. [30411]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The issues raised in the select committee's report were discussed extensively in a debate in the other place on 10 October, during which my noble Friend Lord Warner gave the Government's contribution.

Avian Influenza

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions the Government has had with other countries regarding the devising of measures to prevent the spread of avian influenza among humans. [23276]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is working closely with other countries and international organisations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission (EC), and with other international partners to support international preparedness. We are sharing information on a regional level through events such as the pandemic influenza workshop, jointly hosted by WHO and the EC in Copenhagen in October. As part of its European Union (EU) Presidency responsibilities, the United Kingdom hosted an informal meeting of EU health Ministers in October, at which Ministers stressed the importance of national plans and of EU co-ordination of pandemic preparedness. We are also working on the wider international level through the international partnership on avian and pandemic influenza through such meetings that were co-hosted by WHO, Food and Agriculture Organisation, and the World Organisation for Animal Health in November.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans are in place in East Sussex to combat an avian influenza pandemic; and if she will make a statement. [29304]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal flu, avian flu and pandemic flu. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal flu refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic flu will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans and to which they do not have immunity.

Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority has advised that national health service organisations throughout Surrey and Sussex have robust plans in place to respond to any outbreak of infectious disease. These plans include a contingency response to any infectious pandemic, including avian flu should it ever transfer to human-to-human transmission.

Birth Costs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of *(a)* a home birth, *(b)* an out of hospital birth and *(c)* a hospital birth in each NHS trust providing maternity care in 2004–05; and what assessment she has made of the reference cost for each category of birth. [37422]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 December 2005]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Reference cost data are collected against three specific health care resource groups: normal delivery with or without complications or co-morbidities, assisted delivery with or without complications or co-morbidities and caesarean section with or without complications or co-morbidities.

Reference cost data are assessed annually and it is anticipated that 2004–05 data will be available in the new year.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership Trust

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the policy of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership Trust in relation to direct contact between members of its staff and the media on matters of public concern; and if she will make a statement. [37969]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* The responsibility for the management of local services lies with the local national health service. It is for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust to plan and develop its own internal and external policies and services to meet the needs of the local population.

Cancelled Operations

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients had their operation cancelled *(a)* twice, *(b)* three times, *(c)* four times and *(d)* more than four times in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [35198]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally. However, data on the number of cancelled operations are available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/cancelled_operations.htm

Children's Diet

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 544W, on children's diet, whether the Food Standards Agency's rolling programme of surveys will collect data on daily calorie intake. [38101]

Caroline Flint: Yes. Information on daily energy (calorie) intake by all age groups, including children, will be collected in the rolling programme.

Children's Hospices

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her policy is for the future support of the respite and terminal care of children with life-limiting illnesses. [30392]

Mr. Byrne: Primary care trusts (PCTs), working with their local authority partners and stakeholders, remain best placed to decide the level and range of palliative care needed by the children and young people in their locality and are able to respond directly to their needs. We have made a manifesto pledge to increase funding for end of

life care and this includes care for children and young people. We will make further announcements on this funding in the near future.

In our guide "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services", launched on 29 November, we give commissioners important advice about the key aspects of children's palliative care which will improve the quality of commissioning and provision of services. This practical guide will stimulate improvements in commissioning and promote quality care for children young people and their families in a range of settings, for example, palliative care at home, in hospital or in a hospice.

On 19 October 2005, we announced the setting up of a review of National Health Service Specialised Services. The review, headed by Scotland's former Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir David Carter, will investigate how the NHS currently commissions specialised services and consider ways of tightening these commissioning arrangements so that there is greater consistency across the NHS.

The review will also look at ways of ensuring PCTs work together to commission specialised services so that the financial risk is shared. It will consider whether the balance is right between PCT commissioning collaboration and a more national or regional commissioning approach. The review team will report in spring 2006.

Cholesterol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of adults in England suffers from high cholesterol according to the Joint Society Guidelines. [36611]

Caroline Flint: The new Joint British Societies guidelines on prevention of cardiovascular disease in clinical practice were published on 21 December. They recommend that lipid-lowering therapy should be offered to people with:

clinical evidence of atherosclerotic cardio vascular disease (CVD);

diabetes mellitus (type one or two);

a total CVD risk, greater than 20 per cent. over 10 years;

elevated blood pressure, greater than 160 millimetres of mercury (mm Hg) or greater than 100 mm Hg diastolic, or lesser degrees of blood pressure elevation with target organ damage.

They recommend that the audit standard for this group should be 5.0mmol/litre or less, and that wherever possible the aim should be to reduce cholesterol to 4.0 mm/litre or less.

We do not hold the information in the format requested. However, information from hospital episodes statistics (HES) data for people who suffer from high cholesterol is shown in the table. HES does not hold a standard definition of high cholesterol, which will be clinically determined.

All diagnosis count of finished consultant episodes and patients for high cholesterol.
National health service hospitals, England 2004–05

Finished consultant episodes	*Patient counts*
289,052	195,871

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

We estimate, from prescribing data, that approximately 2.5 million people in England are on statin therapy for the control of cholesterol levels. Statin prescriptions have been rising at 30 per cent. per year.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether her Department plans to run a campaign to raise the awareness of the dangers of high cholesterol levels; [38688]

(2) whether she plans to promote the awareness of the risks of unhealthy levels of cholesterol during the implementation of the Choosing Health White Paper. [38689]

Caroline Flint: Currently, the Department has no plans to run a campaign or promote the awareness of the risks of unhealthy levels of cholesterol among the general population. However, as set out in the Choosing Health White Paper, the Department will launch in 2006 a social marketing campaign to increase consumer awareness of the health risks of obesity and promote practical steps that can be taken through diet and physical activity to improve the health of the general population, with an early focus on children.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's policy is on those adults with cholesterol levels between 4 mmol/l and 7 mmol/l and not eligible for prescribed statins but who are now deemed to have unhealthy cholesterol levels according to the new Joint British Societies Guidelines. [38690]

Caroline Flint: The national service framework for coronary heart disease (NSFCHD) recommends that preventative treatment and lifestyle advice should be offered to patients with established CHD, then to those at a 30 per cent. 10-year risk of developing CHD, with a view to moving on to treating patients at a lower risk once these high-risk groups are treated. One of the key risk factors is high cholesterol and the NSF states that for both groups the target is to use statins and dietary advice to lower serum cholesterol concentrations either to less than 5 millimoles per litre (mmol/litre) or by 30 per cent., whichever is the greater.

The new general medical service contract includes quality indicators for measuring and managing cholesterol in high-risk groups, such as those with CHD. The target is to reduce cholesterol levels to five mmol/litre or less.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is currently consulting on the final recommendation for its health technology appraisal (HTA) of statins. The HTA will identify the level of risk at which statins should be prescribed by the national health service. Publication is due early in 2006.

Contraception

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to facilitate access to condoms free-of-charge *(a)* in NHS institutions and *(b)* through community-based distribution schemes. [26011]

Caroline Flint: Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for local sexual health and HIV health promotion including the provision of free condoms. The NHS Logistics Authority purchases condoms centrally for distribution by the national health service, although PCTs also purchase them direct from condom suppliers.

To support PCTs the Department has produced best practice guidance on sexual health promotion which highlights the need to make condoms accessible to those who need them. The need to ensure people have access to free provision of all methods of contraception, including condoms, is also highlighted in "Recommended Standards for Sexual Health Services", produced by the Department with the Medical Foundation for AIDS and Sexual Health.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter of 28 October 2005 from the right hon. member for Birmingham, Ladywood on behalf of Dr. Felix Burden. [38120]

Jane Kennedy: A reply was sent on Thursday 15 December.

Critical Care Beds

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy that plans by NHS trusts to close critical care beds should be subject to public consultation. [32810]

Mr. Byrne: It is for national health service trusts to assess and manage the number of critical care beds depending on local needs. NHS trusts have various statutory duties of consultation where changes to service provision are being considered and it is a matter for them to determine when these duties arise.

Dentistry

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists per head of population were practising in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [27861]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS), number of dentists and dentists per population in England and the specified areas as at 30 September each year

	England	*West Lancashire PCT*
Number of dentists		
1997	16,670	41
1998	17,199	46
1999	17,755	44
2000	18,167	45
2001	18,722	49
2002	18,946	47
2003	19,260	52
2004	19,722	55
2005	20,890	58

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS), number of dentists and dentists per population in England and the specified areas as at 30 September each year

	England	*West Lancashire PCT*
Dentists per head of population		
1997	2,919	2,646
1998	2,839	2,358
1999	2,762	2,465
2000	2,710	2,411
2001	2,641	2,214
2002	2,620	2,313
2003	2,589	2,096
2004	2,540	1,982
2005	2,398	1,879

Notes:

1. The dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts are excluded from the data.
2. The postcode of the Dental Practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Primary care trust areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics All Fields Postcode Directory.
3. England 2005 data per population has been calculated using 2004 population data, as this is the most up-to-date available.
4. PCT data per population for 1997 to 2000 has been calculated using 2001 population figures as this is the earliest date at which population data at this area is available.
5. PCT data per population for 2004 and 2005 have been calculated using 2003 population data, as this is the most up-to-date available at this area.
6. Data includes all notifications, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 2 November 2005 for England and 19 October 2005 for the PCT. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are used to assess the need for dental services in primary care trust areas. [28353]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Each primary care trust (PCT) has access to the services of a consultant in dental public health, who provides advice on local oral health and the geographical areas that should be a priority for action. The British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry surveys provide information on the numbers of decayed missing and filled teeth by PCT area.

A PCT's ability to respond to local oral health needs will be substantially strengthened by the introduction of local commissioning of primary care dental services from April 2006. PCTs will hold a local budget for dental services. When a dentist leaves the area or reduces his or her national health service commitment, the resources return to the PCT. It is at their discretion to redeploy these resources locally and to agree where new practices are established. This gives the PCT the ability to reflect the oral health needs of their local population in the distribution of NHS primary care dental services.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have left the NHS in each year since 1997–98 *(a)* in terms of headcount and *(b)* as a percentage of the total number of dentists in the NHS (i) in total and (ii) broken down by Strategic Health Authority area. [28690]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Details of dentists leaving the national health service, expressed as both a headcount and percentage figure for England (total) and broken down by strategic health authority is shown in the table. A dentist is assumed to have left the NHS if they had an open general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract in September of the previous year but no GDS or PDS contract in September of the specified year.

The reasons for dentists leaving the NHS are not recorded by Dental Practice Board. The figures presented will include dentists who have retired from practice and those who have moved to private practice.

General Dental Services (GDS) and Personal Dental Services (PDS)

Numbers of complete leavers, and as a percentage of total dentists, in England by strategic health authority area as at 30 September each year

	1998		1999		2000		2001	
	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists
England	972	6	1,037	6	1,206	7	1,207	6
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	50	6	49	5	68	7	67	7
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	34	5	36	5	41	6	36	5
Birmingham and the Black Country	31	4	33	5	46	6	38	5
Cheshire & Merseyside	48	5	48	5	41	4	55	6
County Durham and Tees Valley	18	5	17	4	27	7	20	5
Cumbria and Lancashire	26	4	34	5	56	8	26	4
Dorset and Somerset	18	4	24	5	25	5	34	7
Essex	37	7	35	6	50	8	53	9
Greater Manchester	44	5	51	5	52	6	44	5
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	30	5	37	6	42	6	51	7
Kent and Medway	65	11	56	9	42	7	59	10
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	20	4	21	4	35	7	33	7
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	45	6	37	5	57	7	42	6
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	25	5	26	5	19	3	23	4
North Central London	53	8	47	7	49	7	52	7
North East London	35	6	29	5	38	6	42	7
North West London	54	5	70	6	88	8	76	7
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear	31	6	30	6	32	6	35	7
Shropshire and Staffordshire	16	4	20	4	15	3	20	4
South East London	39	6	56	9	43	6	57	9
South West London	47	7	41	6	53	8	57	8
South West Peninsula	32	5	39	6	45	7	54	8
South Yorkshire	21	5	16	4	15	3	25	5
Surrey and Sussex	56	5	67	6	81	7	75	6
Thames Valley	36	4	41	5	50	6	50	5
Trent	45	6	40	5	54	6	59	7
West Midlands South	22	4	29	5	31	6	34	6
West Yorkshire	27	4	44	6	39	5	21	3

	2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists	Complete leavers	% of total dentists
England	1,352	7	1,236	6	1,224	6	1,097	5
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	81	9	75	8	50	5	54	5
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	64	8	55	7	39	5	31	4
Birmingham and the Black Country	30	4	34	4	33	4	31	3
Cheshire & Merseyside	62	7	40	4	53	5	45	4
County Durham and Tees Valley	19	5	14	4	13	3	28	7
Cumbria and Lancashire	40	6	44	6	20	3	27	3
Dorset and Somerset	36	7	30	6	40	8	40	7
Essex	41	7	49	9	40	7	28	4
Greater Manchester	55	6	45	5	53	5	38	4
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	49	7	49	7	57	8	43	5
Kent and Medway	50	8	50	8	43	7	68	10
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	24	5	15	3	18	3	30	5
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	5	56	7	47	6	59	7	59
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	32	5	29	5	34	6	33	5
North Central London	58	8	56	8	57	8	36	5
North East London	51	9	39	6	37	6	35	5
North West London	111	11	59	6	64	6	58	5
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear	30	6	36	7	42	8	31	5
Shropshire and Staffordshire	26	5	22	4	32	6	26	4
South East London	60	9	35	5	54	8	45	6
South West London	66	10	53	8	60	9	34	4
South West Peninsula	60	9	52	7	65	9	47	6
South Yorkshire	20	4	34	7	27	6	18	4
Surrey and Sussex	85	6	108	8	93	7	86	6
Thames Valley	55	6	65	7	62	6	48	4
Trent	50	5	62	7	42	4	48	5
West Midlands South	36	6	30	5	26	4	31	4
West Yorkshire	52	7	41	5	47	6	31	4

Notes:
1. Complete leaver means the dentist had an open GDS or PDS contract in September of the previous year but no GDS or PDS contract in September of the specified year.
2. Percentages are calculated on the number of dentists with an open GDS or PDS contract as at 30 September in the specified year.
3. The dentist numbers include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts are excluded.
4. A dentist may have a contract in more than one Strategic Health Authority area. Therefore, data at Strategic Health Authority area may include duplications of dentists leaving.
England data excludes duplication.
5. The postcode of the Dental Practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Strategic health authority areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics All Fields Postcode Directory.
6. The numbers of leavers include all notifications, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 8 November 2005.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 17WS, on national health service dentistry, how much Methods Consulting will receive for recruiting 216 dentists from Poland; whether the amount paid has been reduced as a result of the failure to achieve the target of 230; and how many have been offered places in *(a)* general dental service practices, *(b)* the salaried primary care dental service and *(c)* the hospital dental service. [31964]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* Methods Consulting has exceeded their target for the recruitment of dentists. In total they have recruited 237 dentists from Poland. Of these, 216 started employment before 1 November; 15 dentists started work during November 2005; and a further six dentists will be taking up posts shortly. Therefore, there are no grounds to reduce the value of the £3.8 million contract agreed with Methods Consulting for recruitment of dentists from Poland.

We do not collect routine information about the type of national health service dental services in which international recruits are working. However, the vast majority of these are working, either in personal dental service (PDS) or general dental service practices. A small number are salaried PDS dentists.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action she is taking to improve dental services in Ribble Valley; [33041]

(2) how many NHS dentists are operating in Ribble Valley and Fulwood. [33042]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 29 November 2005]:* As at 30 September 2005, there were 65 dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract with Hyndburn and Ribble Valley primary care trust, compared with 54 in 2004, an increase of 11. The number of dental practices is 2003 was 23, of which 12 have opened PDS contracts.

£205.5 million funding was allocated to Hyndburn and Ribble Valley primary care trust (PCT). As additional £130,000 was allocated to the PCT to improve access to national health service dentistry.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the length is of the waiting list for an NHS dentist in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley; and if she will make a statement. [37799]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent dentists were practising in England in the NHS *(a)* in each year since 1997 and *(b)* the most recent period for which figures are available. [38908]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Information about full-time equivalent dentists is not available because a dentist with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract may provide as little or as much national health service treatment as he or she chooses.

The numbers of dentists in England with a GDS or PDS contract as at 30 September 2005 are shown in the table.

	Total GDS and PDS dentists
1997	16,670
1998	17,199
1999	17,755
2000	18,167
2001	18,722
2002	18,946
2003	19,260
2004	19,722
2005	20,890

Note:
Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 2 November 2005.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the age profile of dentists working under NHS contracts; and what assessment she has made of the implications of that age profile for the supply of NHS dental services. [38910]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The percentage of general dental services (GDS) dentists by age band and personal dental services (PDS) contracts by age band of dentist, in England, as at 30 June 2005 is shown in the table.

Age band	*Percentage of GDS dentists in age band*	*Percentage of PDS contracts in dentist age band*
All ages	100	100
under 30	14	20
30–34	14	17
35–39	15	15
40–44	16	14
45–49	15	13
50–54	11	10
55–59	9	7
60 and over	6	4

Source:
Dental Practice Board

The age profile and patterns of retirement were one of the factors that contributed to the analysis of future patterns of supply of dentists in the primary care dental workforce review.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are registered on the central waiting list held by the Herefordshire primary care trust for assigning NHS dentists in Hereford; and how long each has been waiting since submitting their registration. [38914]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Beverley and Holderness are involved in private practice. [37437]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Departmental Estate

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid by her Department in rates to each local authority in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each region and *(b)* London in that year. [35987]

Jane Kennedy: The Department and its executive agencies during 2004–05 paid £5,571,969.

Rates of £5,571,969 was paid in England. No properties are occupied in any other nation of the United Kingdom.

This comprises regional totals of:

	£
North West	123,000
North East	11,240
West Midlands	0
East Midlands	4,881
Eastern	9,000
South West	38,055
South East	102,608
Yorkshire and Humberside	1,079,192

Rates of £4,203,993 were paid for the Department's London properties.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether a Minister in her Department is planned to be nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the Office for Disability Issues; and if she will make a statement. [37077]

Mr. Byrne: Anne McGuire, the Minister with responsibility for disabled people, has overall responsibility for the Office for Disability Issues (ODI). The Minister for disabled people chairs a cross-government steering group which includes ministerial representatives from the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Transport, and Department of Trade and Industry. I am the Minister in this Department nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the ODI.

Launched on 1 December 2005, the Office for Disability Issues is a cross-government unit which supports and reports to the Minister for disabled people who has lead responsibility, in collaboration with colleagues across government, for driving forward the Government's 20-year strategy to improve outcomes for disabled people.

Drug Treatment

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support is given to drug rehabilitation projects which pursue an abstinence approach to drug treatment; and if she will list the projects which have received public funding in 2005–06. [32017]

Caroline Flint: The pooled treatment budget is the Government funding made available for drug treatment and totalled £299.4 million in 2005–06. These allocations are distributed to primary care trusts, who work with local drug action teams to commission treatment services to best meet the needs of the local community. This should provide an appropriate mix of harm minimisation treatment as well as treatment which favours abstinence. We do not hold lists of treatment services centrally.

East Lancashire NHS Trust

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the financial situation of the East Lancashire Hospital Trust; and what steps her Department has taken to alleviate that situation. [30455]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 29 November 2005]*: The latest financial year for which audited financial information for all national health service organisations is available is 2004–05. The audited 2004–05 year-end financial position for the East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust shows a deficit of £4 million. As at month six the 2005–06 financial year, the trust is forecasting to break even as at 31 March 2005.

It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities to deliver both financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure that each and every organisation achieves financial balance. There is, however, a degree of flexibility with regard to the way this is managed at a local level.

Eggs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she has taken in the last six months to ensure that eggs imported into the UK meet the same food safety standards as eggs produced in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [38550]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Eggs sold within the European Union (EU) must meet standards laid down in community legislation. From 1 January 2006, these standards will be incorporated into the consolidated Food Hygiene Regulations.

The Food Standards Agency has also advised me that they have commissioned two surveys, the first of which started in April 2005, looking into the *Salmonella* prevalence in eggs produced outside the United Kingdom. The surveys are looking both at eggs sold at retail and at those used by the catering industry. Further information on the surveys can be found on their website:

www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/foodsurvprog

All member states are now required to establish plans for controlling *Salmonella* in laying flocks. Under provisions of the EU zoonoses directive, surveys of laying flocks are currently being undertaken throughout the EU. These will form the basis for targets for reducing the incidence of *Salmonella* in laying flocks.

Emergency Dental Treatments

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 24 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 174W, on emergency dental treatment, how many finished admission episodes there were for emergency dental procedures in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 1998–99. [35275]

Ms. Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of finished admission episodes, all operations dental procedures in national health service hospitals, England 1997–98 to 1998–99

	Finished admission episodes
1997–98	4,043
1998–99	4,319

Notes:
A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to permit primary care trusts to take powers along the lines of those vested in NHS foundation trusts. [36426]

Mr. Byrne: No.

Gershon Review

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who in the Department has been made responsible for achieving the efficiency objectives set for the Department by the Gershon review. [21308]

Mr. Byrne: The Secretary of State is responsible for the overall delivery of the health efficiency programme.

General Practitioners' Pay

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of general practitioners' pay was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1998, *(c)* 1999, *(d)* 2000, *(e)* 2001, *(f)* 2002, *(g)* 2003 and *(h)* 2004. [24481]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

General practitioners total pay 1997 to 2004

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–00*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
GMS Non-Discretionary	2,198	2,243	2,451	2,510	2,288	2,068	1,903
GMS Discretionary	835	878	897	940	857	840	781
PMS	n/a	37	84	174	569	1,152	1,939
Total GMS Including PMS spend)	3,033	3,158	3,432	3,624	3,714	4,060	4,623
Percentage change total year on year	n/a	4.12	8.68	5.59	2.48	9.32	13.87

Sources:
1. Up to 2001–02 data are from the 95 England Health Authorities. For 2001–02, PCTs were introduced but were only reporting on GMS discretionary expenditure.
2. 2002–03 spend is based on combined 28 SHA Qtr 1–2 and Qtr 3–4 303 PCT spend. Owing to PCTs not having non-discretionary banking rights until September 2003. 2003–04 spend is based on 304 audited PCT returns.
3. PMS Pilots funding covers wave 1–5B funding
4. PMS spend includes both local transfers from the Unified budget discretionary amounts and GMS non-discretionary transfers.
5. Discretionary and non-discretionary GMS figures reflect the growth over the period in GP and practice staff numbers, and the rise in pay and expenses.
6. Note that all figures up to 2001–02 are based on cash only spend. Due to changes in accounting regulations figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 are resource based.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the projected cost of general practitioners' pay in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2006, *(c)* 2007, *(d)* 2008, *(e)* 2009 and *(f)* 2010. [24482]

Mr. Byrne: Estimates of general practitioners' pay for the period 2005 and beyond cannot yet be made and will depend on expenditure incurred by primary care trusts during those financial years.

Health and Social Care Act

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department has issued to *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* strategic health authorities and *(c)* other NHS organisations on their obligations under Section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001

in relation to (i) primary care trust mergers and (ii) strategic health authority reconfigurations; and if she will make a statement. [24396]

Mr. Byrne: There is no duty to consult under section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (the 2001 Act) because the strategic health authority (SHA), primary care trust (PCT) and ambulance trust reconfiguration proposals amount to managerial and administrative changes only. However, if there are any proposals to make changes to service provision put forward in the future by the newly reconfigured organisations, there will be a duty on those organisations to involve and consult patients and the public on those proposals under section 11 of the 2001 Act.

The following regulations apply to the present consultation:

National Health Service Trusts (Consultation on Establishment and Dissolution) Regulations 1996 (Statutory Instrument (SI) 1996/657) (the 1996 Regulations)

Primary Care Trusts (Consultation on Establishment, Dissolution and Transfer of Staff) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2337) (the 1999 Regulations)

Strategic Health Authorities (Consultation on Changes) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1617) (the 2003 Regulations).

Consultation guidance has been issued to all SHAs. Further to this, we are making it clear to SHAs that when preparing their summaries of the consultation responses, all views generated as a result of the consultation must be taken into account, even where these views vary from the options set out in their consultation document.

Health Care Vacancies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* three month vacancy rate percentage, *(b)* three month vacancy number and *(c)* number of staff in post full-time equivalent was for (i) occupational therapy staff, (ii) speech and language staff, (iii) physiotherapists, (iv) district nurses and (v) health visitors in each strategic health authority in England in (A) 1997, (B) 2001, (C) 2004 and (D) 2005. [30742]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested for 2001, 2004 and 2005 has been placed in the Library.

The first national health service vacancy survey was undertaken in 1999 therefore information for 1997 is not available centrally.

Health Protection Agency (Review Panel)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role the Rapid Review Panel of the Health Protection Agency undertakes; and if she will make a statement. [36702]

Jane Kennedy: The rapid review panel (RRP) has been convened by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) at the request of the Department. The RRP provides a prompt assessment of new and novel equipment, materials, and other products or protocols that may be of value to the national health service in improving hospital infection control and reducing hospital acquired infections. The RRP meets every three months and their recommendations are published on the HPA's website at www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/rapid_review/default.htm.

Health Services

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent by the Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust on treating NHS medical patients in the private health sector in each year since 1997. [38095]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children from the West Lancashire constituency have *(a)* attended accident and emergency, *(b)* had an emergency operation, *(c)* had an elective operation and *(d)* attended outpatients at Alder Hey NHS trust in each year between 2000 and 2004. [37320]

Mr. Byrne: The Health and Social Care Information Centre provides data on hospital episode statistics on its website at www.hesonline.org.uk.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* land and *(b)* properties belonging to the NHS in West Lancashire has (i) been sold in each year since 2000 and (ii) planned to be sold in (A) 2005–06 and (B) 2006–07. [37322]

Mr. Byrne: Information on land and property sold or planned to be sold by the national health service is not held centrally.

Health Spending

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what projected per capita Government spending on health in Wiltshire for 2005–06 is; [36879]

(2) what projected per capita Government spending on health in County Durham for 2005–06 is. [36880]

Mr. Byrne: The total spend by national health service organisations in Wiltshire and County Durham for 2005–06 will be reported in the 2005–06 final accounts, which will be published in autumn 2006.

The forecasts for 2005–06 recently published on the Department's publications website are based on unaudited data. The forecasts are available at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

The latest year for which audited financial data are available is 2004–05. The table shows the spend per head for primary care trusts (PCTs) in Wiltshire and County Durham for 2004–05.

£

PCT	*2004–05 spend per head*
Kennet and North Wiltshire	917
South Wiltshire	1,045
West Wiltshire	940
Derwentside	1,263
Durham and Chester-le-Street	1,142
Durham Dales	1,251

£

PCT	2004-05 spend per head
Easington	1,320
Sedgefield	1,236

Sources:
2003 based 2004 Office for National Statistics projections
2004-05 audited summarisation schedules for PCTs

Health Staffing Costs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average cost and *(b)* total cost was of employing (i) consultants, (ii) registrars, (iii) other doctors in training, (iv) general medical practitioners excluding registrars, (v) general medical practitioner registrars, (vi) general practitioner retainers, (vii) qualified nurses, (viii) qualified allied health professionals, (ix) qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff, (x) qualified ambulance staff and (xi) all other professionally qualified clinical staff in England in (A) 2000 and (B) 2004; and how many full-time equivalent posts there were in each category in each year. [31005]

Mr. Byrne: The information available has been placed in the Library.

Information on average cost and total cost of employing general medical practitioners excluding registrars, general medical practitioner registrars and general practitioner retainers is not held centrally. This is a matter for individual trusts.

Hepatitis C

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the more robust estimates for the prevalence of hepatitis C in England mentioned in the recent Health Protection Agency report will be available. [38491]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency is currently developing an epidemiological model to provide more robust estimates of the prevalence of hepatitis C in England. It is anticipated that the work will be completed in mid-2006. The results will be written up and submitted for publication to a peer-reviewed journal.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff hours per month the Health Protection Agency spent on the surveillance of *(a)* hepatitis C and *(b)* HIV/AIDS in 2004-05. [38492]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency (HPA) records its staffing data as whole-time equivalents (wte) rather than man hours per month.

The HPA have 5.5 wte working on the surveillance of hepatitis C. The Department is also providing short-term funding for 3 wte to support hepatitis C surveillance.

The HPA have 18.7 wte working on the surveillance of HIV/AIDS.

Herceptin

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for the funding of *(a)* the provision of HER2 testing and *(b)* the prescribing of Herceptin to women diagnosed with early stage breast cancer in the 2006-07 financial year. [29294]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of HER2 testing and of prescribing Herceptin will need to be met from the existing settlement agreed with the national health service.

Roche, the manufacturer of Herceptin, has undertaken to assist the NHS in ensuring that high quality HER2 testing arrangements are put in place, for example through the provision of training for laboratory staff.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the profits for the manufacturer derived from the prescribing of Herceptin for the treatment of early stage breast cancer will be subject to the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme. [39361]

Jane Kennedy: Herceptin is a branded prescription medicine and is, therefore, subject to the 2005 pharmaceutical price regulation scheme.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures her Department is taking to provide anti-retroviral drugs to young children suffering from HIV/AIDS in England; and if she will make a statement. [38284]

Caroline Flint: Anti-retroviral drugs for the treatment of children with HIV/AIDS in England are provided through the national health service trust delivering the treatment, under the clinical supervision of the specialist paediatrician. Such treatment and care is provided within an inter-disciplinary clinical network.

Hospital Bed Occupancy

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been set for hospital bed occupancy; how many beds have been available in general and acute wards in hospitals in Torbay primary care trust in each year since 1997; and what percentage of these were occupied on average in each year. [38479]

Caroline Flint: Evidence suggests that the optimal bed occupancy rate is around 82 to 85 per cent. These figures however, are merely a guideline and it is up to the national health service locally to decide how best to manage their services.

The number of beds that have been made available in general and acute wards in Torbay primary care trust (PCT), and the percentage of these that were occupied on average since 2000 is shown in the table. This is the earliest data available as the PCT only came into existence in 2000. The data are collected on a provider rather than a commissioner basis.

Average daily number of general and acute beds available and occupancy rate, Torbay PCT, 2000-01 to 2004-05

	Available	Occupancy (percentage)
2000-01	0	0.0
2001-02	0	0.0
2002-03	50	92.5

Average daily number of general and acute beds available and occupancy rate, Torbay PCT, 2000–01 to 2004–05

	Available	*Occupancy (percentage)*
2003–04	54	87.8
2004–05	54	80.8

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Hospital Closures

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in the event of closure of *(a)* Bridgnorth community hospital and *(b)* Ludlow community ospital, which entity would receive what proportion of the proceeds of divestment of the site on which the hospital operates. [38636]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* If Bridgnorth hospital or Ludlow hospital were closed and sold, the proceeds would go to the Shropshire county primary care trust (PCT), providing that the open market value of each site at the time was below the PCT's delegated limit of £8 million.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time jobs would be lost if (i) Ludlow community hospital and (ii) Bridgnorth community hospital were closed; [38638]

(2) what assessment she has made of the impact of the closure of *(a)* Ludlow community hospital and *(b)* Bridgnorth community hospital on community care services in Shropshire; and what assessment she has made of the financial impact on the relevant local authorities. [38639]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* This is a matter for the health community in Shropshire. Any proposals for significant changes to the provision of health services in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin will be subject to formal public consultation.

Hospital Discharge (Terminally Ill Patients)

Angela Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the financial penalty paid by social services departments for late discharge of hospital patients applies to patients who are diagnosed as terminally ill. [37971]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* Patients receiving specialist palliative care are excluded from the system of charging for delays in discharge. In addition, many patients who have rapidly deteriorating conditions or who do not have long to live will continue to be the national health service's responsibility and as such will not trigger any payment from social services. The NHS is responsible for ensuring the patient is safe to discharge, however, some patients will have a strong preference to return home to die. If they, or their carer, need a care package, including services from social services which is not in place by their discharge date, social services will be potentially liable for a charge.

Hospital Mergers

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital mergers have taken place over the last five years; what the projected effects on costs of each merger were; and what actual savings have been achieved in each case in the last relevant financial year. [30577]

Mr. Byrne: 164 national health service trust and primary care trust mergers have taken place in the last five years. A list has been placed in the Library.

Information is not held centrally on the projected effects or actual savings from each merger.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the *(a)* total and *(b)* net cost of (i) integrating the proposed identity card scheme into her Department's IT systems and (ii) the on-going operation of the scheme within her Department. [31110]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has, in consultation with the identity (ID) cards programme, developed its current best estimate of the cost of using the ID cards scheme to support the services which it oversees and these costs have been incorporated into the business case. The Department is represented on the Ministerial Committee on Identity Cards which oversees the work on benefits planning and realisation.

In deriving these estimates account has to be taken of the types of use required to support the particular services which the Department oversees. Not all services will require a high degree of integration between the ID cards scheme and other information technology (IT) systems. There are no plans to use ID cards to access the NHS Care Record Service.

We cannot release the detailed estimated costs for integrating IT systems and the on-going operation of the ID cards scheme within the Department and the services which it oversees at this stage as these elements may be acquired from the market. The estimates are therefore commercially sensitive and to release them may prejudice the procurement process and the Department's ability to obtain value for money from potential suppliers.

Independent Treatment Centres

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated price per procedure paid was to wave 1 independent sector treatment centres in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; and what the NHS tariff was for each procedure offered by such centres in each year. [29780]

Mr. Byrne: The price per procedure paid to wave 1 independent sector treatment centres is commercially confidential.

National health service tariff data for 2003–04 and 2004–05 is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/FinanceAndPlanning/NHSFinancialReforms/NHSFinancialReformsArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4065325&chk=qI6yXO

and at

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/09/15/31/040491531.pdf.

However, the data are not comparable with independent sector contracts as they have to cover a range of costs, which are not applicable to the NHS. NHS equivalent cost, which does take into account the

range of additional costs incurred by independent sector providers, is used to provide a direct comparison between the services procured from the independent sector and the NHS. Details of equivalent cost by procedure cannot be disclosed as it would undermine future commercial negotiations. However, the overall cost for wave 1 schemes in 2003–04 and 2004–05 was less than the NHS equivalent.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been contracted for at each independent treatment centre; of what type; and how many operations each centre has carried out. [21494]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Scheme	*Casemix*	*Interim/full service commencement date*	*Contract end date*	*Total FFCEs*[1]	*Activity to October 2005*	
					Procedures	*Diagnostics*
Ophthalmic Chain	Ophthalmology	1 February 2004	25 January 2009	44,737	18,389	—
East Cornwall	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, Ear, nose and throat, Oral surgery, General medicine, Gastroenterology, cardiology, Dermatology, Thoracic medicine, Rheumatology, Paediatrics, Gynaecology, Dietetics, Physio assessment, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery	1 October 2005 (interim start date) 26 January 2006	31 March 2010	26,767	22	—
East Lincolnshire	Ophthalmology,urology, hernias, varicose veins, colonoscopies and minor skin	20 April 2005	31 March 2010	7,263	437	—
West Lincolnshire	Ophthalmology, gastroscopies, colonoscopies, orthopaedic, urology and minor skin	1 April 2005	31 March 2010	6,365	351	—
North Oxford (Horton)	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, ENT, Ophthalmology, Oral surgery, Plastic Surgery, Gastroenterology, Dermatology, Rheumatology, Gynaecology	1 January 2006	31 March 2010	11,197	—	—
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	General Surgery, Trauma and orthopaedics	1 July 2005 (interim start date) 25 January 2006	31 March 2010	9,964	154	—
Southampton	Orthopaedics	1 April 2005	31 March 2010	12,317	652	—
Northumberland	Upper scopes, hernias, varicose veins, minor skin	25 May 2005	31 March 2010	10,080	316	—
Thames Valley	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, Dermatology, Gynaecology	1 April 2005 (interim start date) 1 August 2006	31 March 2010	14,072	386	—
West Surrey	Subject to negotiation	—	—	—	—	—
Kidderminster	Orthopaedics and general surgery	1 February 2005	31 January 2010	9,000	966	—
Cheshire and Merseyside	Orthopaedics	1 June 2006	31 May 2011	24,817	—	—
Nottingham	Orthopaedic, Gynaecology, General surgical, Dermatology, Endoscopies	1 December 2007	30 November 2012	110,700	—	—
Maidstone Surgical Centre	Chemotherapy, minor surgery and diagnostics	25 September 2006	24 November 2011	12,112	—	—
Outer North East London	Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, ENT, Oral, General Surgery, Urology	1 December 2006	30 November 2011	55,345	—	—
Brighton	Orthopaedics	1 February 2005 (interim start date) 12 June 2006	31 May 2011	27,479	2,451	—
Wycombe	Diagnostics only (MRI, x-ray, echo and ultrasound)	1 August 2005	31 July 2010	74,880	—	1,505
Medway	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Gynaecology, Ophthalmic, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Ultrasound scans—general, Ultrasound scans—doppler, CT scans, MRI scans, Plain films and x-rays, Fluoroscopy	3 October 2005	30 September 2010	19,770	72	—
Portsmouth	Walk in centre/minor injuries unit, day surgery, diagnostics, ophthalmology	1 December 2005	31 December 2010	34,155	—	—
Havant	Diagnostics only	1 January 2008	31 December 2010	78,600	—	—
Lister Surgical centre	Paediatrics, paediatrics ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	1 October 2007	1 October 2012	15,612	—	—
Hemel Hampstead Surgical centre	Paediatrics, paediatrics ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	1 October 2007	1 October 2012	13,943	—	—
Bradford	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Gynaecology, Ophthalmic, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Ultrasound scans— general, Ultrasound scans—doppler, CT scans, MRI scans, Plain films and x-rays, Fluoroscopy	1 July 2005	30 June 2010	27,416	846	4,784
Trent and South Yorkshire	Orthopaedic, MRI, CT scans	1 April 2005	31 March 2010	22,000	4,412	—
Daventry	Ophthalmology, Upper GI endoscopies, Sigmoidscopy, Orthopaedics Dermatology, Urology	1 October 2003	30 September 2006	5,959	4,580	—

Scheme	Casemix	Interim/full service commencement date	Contract end date	Total FFCEs[1]	Activity to October 2005 Procedures	Activity to October 2005 Diagnostics
Shepton Mallet	Orthopaedics, ophthalmology, general surgery and endoscopy	15 July 2005	14 July 2010	56,242	1,647	—
Greater Manchester	Orthopaedic, general surgery and ENT	19 May 2005	18 May 2010	44,863	1,899	—
Plymouth	Orthopaedics	3 May 2005	2 May 2010	2,938	1,382	—
General Supplementary 1	Orthopaedic, ophthalmic, general surgery, ENT, plastic surgery	25 May 2004	30 June 2005	25,000	26,540	—
General Supplementary 2	Orthopaedic, general surgery	1 July 2005	1 December 2005	12,167	12,837	—
MRI	MRI diagnostic scanning	16 July 2004	15 July 2009	630,000	—	82,450
Chlamydia	16–24 year old screening	14 November 2005	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	—	—
Commuter walk-in Centres	Primary care	17 November 2005	Various	2.1 million	—	—

[1] FFCEs—A first finished consultant episode is a first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Infant Readmissions (Norfolk)

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies from the Southern Norfolk primary care trust area were re-admitted to the Norfolk and Norwich University hospital with feeding problems in each month since January 2001. [38274]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department.

Influenza

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the use of common blood-pressure drugs in tackling outbreaks of influenza. [15379]

Caroline Flint: The treatment of raised blood pressure is not related to the treatment for influenza. There is no logical basis for investigating the effect of blood pressure treatments on influenza.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the population of *(a)* Staffordshire and *(b)* the West Midlands can be inoculated against influenza and other viral infections with retro-virus from existing stocks should there be a health emergency; and if she will make a statement. [20879]

Caroline Flint: There is currently sufficient annual influenza vaccine to protect all at risk groups throughout the United Kingdom. In the event of the emergence of a novel influenza or other viral strain representing a significant health risk to humans, any decisions on immunisation would depend on subsequent vaccine development and availability.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department's modelling for the number of extra patients in each primary care trust during an influenza pandemic includes an estimate of the number of people presenting in primary care who fear they may have the virus but do not. [22117]

Ms. Rosie Winterton: Modelling undertaken by the Department and published in the UK influenza pandemic contingency plan looked at the demand for healthcare contacts assuming similar numbers to those with clinical symptoms will require some contact with the health care system. However, the plan also acknowledges the uncertainty surrounding these figures, as we cannot know for definite how many people will fall ill with influenza in a pandemic, as it will depend on the nature of the virus.

We have published operational guidance and a framework for antiviral distribution to help national health service organisations develop plans appropriate for their area. We are working to ensure that the patients who become ill with pandemic flu are given the treatment they need. We are developing plans to deliver this treatment with minimum disruption to normal primary care. We know that primary care will be under pressure from patients who are concerned that they or their families may become infected with pandemic influenza.

The Department's communications plan has been published as annex 1 of the UK influenza pandemic contingency plan, which is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu. The primary aim of the communications plan is to convey accurate, timely and consistent advice to the public and health professionals, and to aid understanding of the pandemic amongst the general population.

If pandemic flu reaches the United Kingdom, there will be an announcement in the newspapers and on the radio and television. Advice will be given on the best course of action to take in order to minimise unnecessary healthcare contacts.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the risk of excess deaths from seasonal influenza if, in the event of an influenza pandemic, manufacturers switch from seasonal influenza vaccine production to the production of a pandemic vaccine. [22120]

Caroline Flint: Any switch from the production of seasonal flu vaccine to the production of pandemic flu vaccine will be carefully assessed to ensure that this will provide the public with the best protection from flu. It is not possible to make an assessment of any impact this may have on excess deaths resulting from seasonal flu as we do not know at what time of the year pandemic flu will start to circulate and whether seasonal flu will be circulating at the same time.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that the supply of influenza vaccinations in England will be adequate to meet demand during the winter. [33708]

Caroline Flint: The Department wrote to general practitioners (GPs) on 23 November to find out what their needs were, to check that enough stocks were left to meet the needs of any remaining flu clinics, and to identify whether any surgeries are holding surplus stocks of vaccine. Primary care trust flu immunisation co-ordinators have already been requested to work with surgeries to redistribute any surplus stocks, where possible. The Department has also ordered an additional 800,000 doses of vaccine for distribution to any GPs that run out. These additional stocks will arrive in January 2006.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons manufacture of the winter influenza vaccine has been delayed. [18373]

Caroline Flint: Some suppliers delayed delivery of their flu vaccine due to problems with part of the manufacturing process.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on advertising the winter influenza vaccine in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [29809]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Spend on publishing and advertising the winter flu programme, 2000–01 to 2004–05

	£ million
2000–01	4.31
2001–02	1.45
2002–03	2.4
2003–04	1.95
2004–05	1.91

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has been informed that any primary care trust has a shortage of influenza vaccines. [29810]

Caroline Flint: We wrote to all primary care trust flu co-ordinators on 3 November with details of how to order vaccine from centrally held Department of Health contingency stock should they need to.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the merits of including people with mental health problems within the priority groups for influenza vaccination; [33232]

(2) for what reasons mental health patients are not included in the at-risk categories of those eligible to receive vaccinations for influenza. [32905]

Caroline Flint: The groups recommended to receive influenza vaccination are based on clinical risk. Individuals with mental health problems can have both physical or mental disabilities. Not all people with mental health problems will therefore be at an increased risk from influenza infection and those that are will likely fall within one of the existing clinical groups.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what month her Department recommends that general practitioner practices place their order for winter influenza vaccine for seasonal influenza; and when her Department informed general practitioners that the seasonal influenza vaccination programme would be extended to cover *(a)* people with chronic liver disease and *(b)* people who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare would be at risk if the carer falls ill. [33265]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not recommend a specific date for general practitioners (GPs) to place their orders for seasonal flu vaccine. GPs contract individually with manufacturers to supply vaccine and they decide when to order their supplies.

The chief medical officer wrote to GPs on 25 July 2005 to inform them that the seasonal flu vaccination programme would be extended to cover people with chronic liver disease and people who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare would be at risk if the carer falls ill.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what circumstances she would seek to impose restrictions on movement of people in order to reduce the risk of spread of pandemic influenza from human to human. [37988]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Travel restrictions are one of the options that may be considered to try to reduce the spread of pandemic influenza, particularly during the initial stages. Any decision will be based on evidence of the possible impact and will be informed by emerging information about the nature of the virus and the at-risk groups.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people in *(a)* West Lancashire constituency, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England who have requested an influenza vaccination this winter but have not yet received one. [38543]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the at-risk population of *(a)* the West Lancashire primary care trust area, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England is expected to be inoculated against existing strains of influenza by 31 December. [38672]

Caroline Flint: Information on seasonal flu uptake by primary care trust will not be available until February 2006.

Based on provisional data from England, it is likely that seasonal flu uptake will increase in those aged 65 years and over, and in other risk groups when compared. The Department will have further information on this in the next year.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people in at-risk groups who have been unable to obtain a seasonal influenza vaccination in each London borough; and if she will make a statement. [39195]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Information Technology

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been spent on information technology systems in the NHS in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [27219]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 November 2005]*: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on Monday 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1063–64W.

Isabel Healthcare

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department plans to meet representatives of Isabel Healthcare; and if she will make a statement. [31292]

Mr. Byrne: Departmental officials have met with representatives of Isabel Healthcare in the past, but there are no current plans for a further meeting.

Latex Allergy

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements she has made to monitor response by NHS trusts to the National Patient Safety Organisation's recent information notice on latex allergy. [37254]

Jane Kennedy: The National Patient Safety Agency's (NPSA) patient safety information on protecting patients with an allergy associated with latex was issued to national health service trusts on 26 May 2005. As it built on existing guidance, this served as a reminder to NHS organisations to put in place policies regarding latex. The deadline for the completion of the recommended action is 27 January 2006.

The information was issued via the Department's safety alert broadcast system (SABS) which is a means of electronically issuing nationally endorsed safety guidance to the NHS.

There are a number of measures to monitor responses by NHS trusts to the National Patient Safety Organisation's recent information notice on latex allergy. These include the following:

SABS will receive feedback from relevant trusts on their compliance with the action required.

The NPSA intend will be undertaking an e-mail sample survey in May 2006.

The Healthcare Commission will be reviewing and assessing NHS organisations against core standard C1 which requires them to ensure that patient safety notices, alerts and other communications concerning patient safety which require action are acted upon within required timescales. Trusts are required to submit self-declarations on performance against this standard (and other core standards) in April 2006.

Leicestershire Acute Hospital Trust

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average length of stay is for patients in *(a)* acute trusts and *(b)* Leicestershire Acute Hospital Trust; and what the upper quartile length of stay is for all trusts; [31711]

(2) if she will list the acute hospital trusts which achieved upper quartile performance on patient stays across *(a)* all specialties, *(b)* all sites and *(c)* all specialties and all sites in 2004–05. [31890]

Mr. Byrne: The average length of stay for all acute trusts and University Hospitals of Leicester national health service trust is shown in the table.

Trust	*Average (mean) length of stay*
All acute trusts (England)	5.6 days
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	5 days

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Health and Social Care Information Centre 2003–04: Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data; that is, the data is ungrossed.

Data are only available by trust, not hospital site. There are 64 main specialty groupings and no trust is in the upper quartile of all trusts for length of stay in all specialties. About 96 per cent. of trusts have at least one speciality in the upper quartile for that speciality.

Management and Administration Savings

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much each strategic health authority will be required to save in order to achieve her target of £250 million savings in management and administration; over what time these savings will need to be achieved to meet her target; and if she will make a statement. [31014]

Mr. Byrne: The target £250 million savings in national health service management and administration costs represents a real recurrent reduction in the cost of management and administration, the savings from which are to be re-invested in patient services recurrently from 2008–09.

The target £250 million savings will be distributed on a fair share basis across strategic health authorities (SHAs). It is for each SHA to determine a methodology for distributing their target saving between the SHA and the primary care trusts in its area. A fair share approach for distribution to SHAs has the advantages of simplicity and it ensures that re-distribution of savings to clinical services will be spread evenly across the country. The distribution of savings required is shown in the table.

Strategic health authority	*Percentage share*	*£ millions*
Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire	4.0	10
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	2.9	7
Birmingham and the Black Country	4.9	12
Cheshire and Merseyside	5.2	13
County Durham and Tees Valley	2.5	6
Cumbria and Lancashire	4.0	10
Dorset and Somerset	2.3	6
Essex	3.0	7
Greater Manchester	5.6	14
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	3.3	8
Kent and Medway	3.0	8
Leicester, Northampton and Rutland	2.7	7
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge	4.0	10
North Central London	2.9	7
North East London	3.6	9
North Yorkshire and Lincolnshire	3.1	8
North West London	4.2	10
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3.1	8
Shropshire and Staffordshire	2.8	7
South East London	3.5	9
South West London	2.7	7
South West Peninsula	3.1	8
South Yorkshire	2.8	7
Surrey and Sussex	5.0	13
Thames Valley	3.7	9
Trent	5.1	13
West Midlands South	2.8	7
West Yorkshire	4.3	11
Total	100.0	250

Marijuana

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her policy is on the medical use of marijuana in the NHS. [22098]

Caroline Flint: The Government have made it clear it would be willing to legalise the scientifically established medicinal use of a medical preparation of cannabis, and would seek Parliament's agreement to make any necessary changes to the law to enable the prescription of cannabis-based medicine for the purposes of relieving pain. However, this could not take place before the granting of product approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

The cannabis-based medicine Sativex has recently been granted a marketing authorisation in Canada where it has been licensed for the relief of neuropathic pain in multiple sclerosis under the terms of a conditional licence. Home Office Ministers have recently made clear that imports from Canada of Sativex will be allowed under licence issued by the Home Office.

Media Monitoring

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the use of broadcast and print media analysis. [36976]

Jane Kennedy: The Department commissions analysis of print media coverage to enables us to measure the impact of our communication activities and plan effective future activity. This is a standard part of best practice in communications in both the public and private sectors as it enables us to measure the impact of our communication activities and so helps us manage future activity more effectively.

In August 2005, the Department published summaries of its national and regional media evaluation and has promised to repeat this every six months as part of its wider commitment to freedom of information. The Department uses its analysis as above, including highlighting inaccuracies in health reporting that can be harmful to public health and sharing analysis with local national health service communication teams, who use it to benchmark the effectiveness of their own activities.

The Department does not, as yet, analyse broadcast media coverage in depth, although judgments are made based on past coverage about the best way to serve broadcast journalists covering health stories.

Medical Careers

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the medical careers reforms on the ability of senior house officers to secure employment in the NHS. [22673]

Mr. Byrne: There is no intention to reduce the number of training posts for junior doctors as a result of the proposed modernising medical careers changes (MMC) to the structure of training programmes. MMC aims to improve patient care by delivering a modernised and focused career structure for doctors and a successful start was made with the introduction of foundation programmes in August 2005.

Medical Graduates

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the mechanisms for matching medical graduates to training slots in the NHS. [34854]

Mr. Byrne: The process for appointment to foundation programmes, the first posts undertaken by medical graduates, is available on the modernising medical careers website at www.mmc.nhs.uk.

Mental Health

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provision her Department has made for a 24-hour telephone support service for the mentally ill and their families. [31063]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In the statutory sector, NHS Direct provides a 24-hour, seven day a week telephone helpline service and its fully-trained staff respond to about 325,000 calls per year from people with mental health issues. NHS Direct works in close partnership with the member organisations of the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP).

The Department has committed funding of £5 million during the period 2004–05 to 2006–07 on developing an infrastructure to facilitate voluntary and community sector mental health helpline providers in England working in partnership in order to achieve increased quality, efficiency, capacity, governance, choice and access in relation to the provision of mental health helpline services. The MHHP includes the majority of the major national and local voluntary and community sector mental health telephone helpline providers (around 50 plus) excluding membership organisations. MHHP member organisations jointly handle over 5 million telephone calls or contacts per year. MHHP member organisations jointly respond to 99 per cent. of all calls made to mental health helplines.

The MHHP is currently in the procurement stage of purchasing a telecommunications solutions package that will enable MHHP members to work more efficiently in terms of call-switching between MHHP members and to work towards overall 24-hour provision of MHHP helpline services and, therefore, improve the overall level of service provision to people with mental health issues.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people, other than the organisers, attended each of the consultation events that formed part of the race equality impact assessment of the Mental Health Bill; and how many of these were black and minority ethnic service users; [36969]

(2) what assessment she has made of the extent to which the race equality impact assessment consultation on the Mental Health Bill satisfied Commission for Racial Equality guidance on the conduct of such assessments; [36970]

(3) whether she has extended the duration of the race equality impact assessment consultation on the draft Mental Health Bill. [36971]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have consulted widely as part of the race equality impact assessment (REIA) on the Mental Health Bill in the past few months. Consultation events were held in Leeds, Birmingham and London in early November. Approximately 180 people attended these events, excluding organisers and speakers, and around a third of these were service users, mostly of a black and minority ethnic background (BME) background. Other attendees included BME carers, mental health professionals and voluntary organisations representing BME service users and carers.

Other consultations included:

establishing an advisory group of stakeholders and experts in the field, which has provided its own recommendations, based on existing consultation material on the Bill, and on the basis of a workshop with stakeholders that was held in July;

interviews and focus groups with detained patients, of which around 80 per cent, were BME patients, conducted on behalf of the Department by the Mental Health Act Commission;

written submissions from the Mental Health Act Commission's service user panel, which included BME and non-BME patients;

a written consultation with professional groups who will be operating the Bill; and

a web-based opportunity for people to submit their own comments and views on the issues that have arisen out of earlier consultation.

We have also taken account of the views expressed in previous consultation on the Bill, including evidence submitted to the pre-legislative scrutiny committee.

We have, however, listened to stakeholders' views and agreed that there should be further consultation as part of the REIA on the Bill. We will be discussing with stakeholders what further consultation should be undertaken.

The process we have followed in undertaking the REIA has had close regard to the Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE's) guidance. Officials and CRE staff met early in the process to discuss the guidance. We have also seconded, part-time, a former CRE employee who is familiar with the REIA guidance to work on the REIA, and we have also involved the Home Office race equality unit, which has the lead across Whitehall for REIA work. We will continue to take the CRE guidance into account in any further work on the REIA and we are confident that the REIA which we publish alongside the Bill, when this is introduced, will satisfy the guidance.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children and young adults suffered from depression in each of the last five years. [37105]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the form requested.

In 2004, it was estimated that 2.4 per cent. of five to 10-year-olds and five per cent. of 11 to 16-year-olds had an emotional disorder. Emotional disorders in this context include depression, generalised anxiety, social and other phobias, and separation anxiety.

Source:
Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain 2004, Office of National Statistics, 2005, www.statistics.gov.uk.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Department has taken to identify depression in children and young adults. [37106]

Mr. Byrne: The Department submitted a proposal to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to develop guidelines on the identification and treatment of depression in children and young people. These guidelines were published by NICE in September 2005 and include advice on detection and recognition of depression. The document, Depression in children and young people is available on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what services are available to families with children who suffer from depression. [37107]

Mr. Byrne: Child and adolescent mental health services are available in all areas nationally and will routinely treat children with depression and provide support to their families.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to be in a position to present the Mental Health Bill to Parliament. [28048]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Leicestershire (David Taylor) on 21 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1286–87W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for publication of the findings of the Mental Health Bill Race Equality Consultation; and if she will make a statement. [30911]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The race equality impact assessment (REIA) on the Mental Health Bill will incorporate the issues that arise out of consultation, and set out the plans to mitigate any concerns about the potential for adverse impact. We will publish the REIA alongside the Bill when it is introduced.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding was allocated in *(a)* Chorley and *(b)* Lancashire for mental health services in each of the last three years. [37797]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally. Allocations are made direct to primary care trusts who are responsible for commissioning services to meet the needs of their local populations.

Methadone

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she has issued on the prescription of methadone in prisons; and if she will make a statement. [37324]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Prison Service Order 3550, "Clinical Services for Substance Misusers" includes the provision that prisons will have evidence-based guidelines on maintenance prescribing, including methadone prescribing, in line with departmental guidelines.

Minimally-invasive Technologies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to encourage the use of

minimally-invasive technologies in the NHS, with particular reference to *(a)* the training of staff in the use of such technologies and *(b)* building incentives into the system of payment by results. [27545]

Mr. Byrne: The Department recognises that the use of minimally-invasive technologies can be effective in improving outcomes for patients, including through reduced length of time in hospital and reduced pain and scarring after surgery.

Setting curricula for health professional training is the responsibility of the statutory and professional bodies. The Department shares their commitment to ensure that all health professionals are trained to have the skills and knowledge they need to deliver high-quality health care to the population. This would include training in the use of minimally-invasive technologies.

Post-registration training needs for national health service staff are determined against local NHS priorities, through appraisal processes and training needs analyses informed by local delivery plans and the needs of the service. Local authorities and health service providers decide how best to provide services to meet the needs of individuals.

The Royal College of Surgeons has started a programme of work to train clinicians in minimally-invasive surgical techniques and are currently in discussions with the Department to examine the options.

The current payment by results programme takes account of the impact of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) technology appraisals when calculating an uplift on average reference costs for the national tariff. For example, the 2004–05 tariff included an uplift for the costs of implementing a NICE appraisal of drug eluting stents, which was published in October 2003. The combination of incentives under payment by results and patient choice will reward providers that attract people by responding to their needs and preferences.

Minor Illness Injury Units

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether patient group directions cover practices in minor illness injury units; and if she will make a statement. [38504]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* Patient group directions can be used in any national health service service, including minor injury units.

Patient group directions may be used to supply and administer medicines to patients by certain registered health care professionals, for example, nurses, pharmacists or ambulance paramedics. They may be used in the NHS including those services which are funded by the NHS but provided by the private, voluntary or charitable sectors. They may also be used by independent hospitals, agencies and clinics registered under the Care Standards Act, prison health services, police services and the defence medical services.

Necrotising Fasciitis

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire, *(d)* Greater London and *(e)* England have (i) contracted and (ii) died of necrotising fasciitis in each of the last 10 years. [34293]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the answer the Under-Secretary with responsibility for community care, my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne) gave the hon. Member for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans) on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1230–31W.

NHS Bursaries

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to reduce the amount of time student nurses wait for their NHS bursaries. [35430]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1233W to the hon. Member for Billericay (Mr. Baron).

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons eligible students who apply for NHS bursaries in advance do not receive their bursaries before their courses start. [38473]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The NHS Student Grants Unit does not release any funds to students until universities have confirmed that students have turned up on the first day of their course, in order to avoid fraudulent claims.

NHS Commissioning

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the basis of payment to the provider of management services to a primary care trust will be under the reforms proposed by Commissioning a Patient-led NHS where that provider is *(a)* an NHS team, *(b)* a voluntary sector body and *(c)* a private sector body. [18721]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* As part of the proposals for primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration, one strategic health authority (SHA) proposed to procure an external management team to run one of their newly proposed PCTs. However, this proposal will not be considered during the forthcoming local consultation as it is for the new PCTs, not the current SHAs, to decide how best to manage their responsibilities after reconfiguration.

In the event of a PCT in future wishing to outsource some aspect of their management services they would need to use recognised contracting processes and ensure proper value for money irrespective of the source of those services. They would not be able to outsource or delegate the public accountability for the financial responsibility placed on them as a statutory body.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with Mr. Roy Lilley on opportunities for the independent and voluntary sector arising from the proposals set out in Sir Nigel Crisp's paper on commissioning a patient-led NHS. [19150]

Mr. Byrne: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no discussions with Mr. Roy Lilley on this issue.

NHS Direct

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with representatives of NHS Direct staff on regrading of staff due to restructuring of the service. [31650]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has had no such discussions with representatives of NHS Direct staff. NHS Direct special health authority is responsible for staffing matters and will be able to provide information on their consultative process with staff.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have used NHS Direct in each year since its introduction, broken down by region. [36868]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not collected centrally on the number of people who have used NHS Direct in each region.

Information from 1998–99 onwards on the number of calls received nationally and the number of visits to NHS Direct Online are available in the statistical supplement to the chief executive's report to the national health service, which is available at www.dh.gov.uk.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether there is a correlation between NHS organisations' deficits and the number of agency staff they employ. [36348]

Mr. Byrne: We do analyse agency spend and deficits, but deficits are usually due to poor performance across a range of areas leading to inefficiency rather than one single factor.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the NHS net financial deficit in 2004–05 was financed, broken down by area of her Department's activity from which funds were diverted to meet that deficit. [36427]

Mr. Byrne: The NHS Litigation Authority declared reductions to provisions for clinical negligence during 2004–05. These central savings were used to offset the national health service deficit.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of NHS income from charges was in 2004–05; and how much was accounted for by income from *(a)* fees and charges from health authorities, *(b)* fees and charges from district health authorities, *(c)* road traffic accident income, *(d)* fees and charges from NHS trusts, *(e)* NHS Supplies Authority fees, *(f)* dental charges, *(g)* prescription charges, *(h)* nursing home inspection fees, *(i)* subsidised dried milk, *(j)* Medicines Control Agency licences and inspections, *(k)* youth treatment service income, *(l)* NHS Pension Agency fees, *(m)* Medical Devices Agency fees, *(n)* Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority licence fees, *(o)* English National Board for Nursing registration fees and *(p)* other charges. [36431]

Mr. Byrne: National health service income figures from fees and charges are shown in the table. The table includes fees and charges to bodies outside the NHS, charges to private and overseas patients and charges to NHS patients.

The only charges to NHS patients are those for dental and prescription charges.

Breakdown of NHS income from charges by charge type 2004–05

Charges	*£ million*
(a) Strategic health authority—fees and charges	33.7
(b) District health authorities	[1]—
(c) Road traffic accident income	110.3
(d) NHS trusts—fees and charges	669.4
(e) NHS Logistics fees	1.0
(f) Dental charges	451.8
(g) Prescription charges	424.6
(h) Nursing home inspection fees	—
(i) Subsidised dried milk	—
(j) Medicines Control Agency—licences and inspections	[1]—
(k) Youth treatment service income	[1]—
(l) NHS Pensions Agency fees	0.6
(m) Medical Devices Agency fees	[1]—
(n) Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority—licence fees	4.1
(o) English National Board for Nursing—registration fees	[1]—
(p) Other	316.1
Total	2,011.6

[1] Organisations no longer exist.

(a) Health authorities became strategic health authorities in 2002–03. Figures include fees and charges for primary care trusts.

(e) Previously the NHS Supplies Authority.

(h) From April 2002, the National Care Standards Commission regulated nursing homes. Health authorities no longer collect the fee income.

(i) Not collected after 2002–03 (following a review with the NAO to eliminate non-material items).

(p) Information relating to charges for private patients and overseas visitors has been provided for NHS trusts and primary care trusts.

Source:

Information on fees and charges has been provided from the audited accounts of the relevant NHS bodies.

NHS Reconfiguration

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the total cost of structural reorganisations to primary care trusts and strategic health authorities as set out in her Department's letter of 28 July on commissioning a patient-led NHS. [36344]

Mr. Byrne: Ministers have given the go-ahead for all 28 strategic health authorities (SHAs) to begin local consultations on boundary changes to SHAs and primary care trusts. Consultations started on 14 December for a period of 14 weeks (until 22 March). No decisions on boundary changes will be taken until these local consultations have been completed and their outcomes considered by Secretary of State. Once boundary changes are agreed and new organisational structures determined, the cost of the structural reorganisation can be calculated.

NHS Settlement

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much of the £6.1 billion increase in

Total NHS Settlement for 2004–05 was spent on *(a)* additional or increased salaries, *(b)* employers national insurance contributions and *(c)* additional pension contributions and costs; and if she will make a statement. [24726]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table. We cannot determine what proportion of the £6.1 billion was spent on additional pension scheme contributions and costs. From 2003–04 to 2004–05, employer pension scheme contributions rose from £3.588 billion to £3.890 billion, subject to audit.

Staff costs expenditure, by English strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts

£000

	2003–04	2004–05	Increase
Salaries and wages	25,432,668	25,501,898	69,230
Social security costs	1,794,765	1,868,389	73,624
Pension costs	1,359,634	2,721,225	1,361,591
Total staff costs	28,587,067	30,091,512	1,504,445

Notes:

1. Figures for NHS foundation trusts are not included in 2004–05 as the Department does not collect data from foundation trusts.

2. Salaries and wages: this is the total gross pay of all full and part-time employees. Social security costs: this is the total employer's national insurance contributions net of statutory maternity pay deductions. Pension costs: this is the employer's pension scheme contributions.

Sources:

Audited summarisation schedules of the NHS trusts 2003–04 and 2004–05

Audited summarisation schedules of the primary care trusts 2003–04 and 2004–05

Audited summarisation forms of the strategic health authorities 2003–04 and 2004–05

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will break down the NHS Settlement for 2005–06 allocated to centrally funded initiatives by main budget heading; and if she will make a statement; [24727]

(2) if she will break down the NHS Settlement for 2005–06 allocated to other programmes (including DH Admin) by main budget heading; and if she will make a statement. [24729]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Disposition of programme funds 2005–06	£ millions
Revenue	
Centrally funded initiatives services and special allocations	12,518
Personal social services—centrally financed services	259
Personal social services—grants	1,892
Central health and miscellaneous services	1,135
Family health services non discretionary	1,660
Department of Health administration	249
Total	17,713
Capital	
National Health Service programme capital	1,989
Centrally funded capital allocations and spending 2005–06	2,314
Central health and miscellaneous services	11
Personal social services—centrally financed services	3
Personal social services—grants	51
Total	4,368

NHS Staff

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses, *(b)* general practitioners, *(c)* surgeons, *(d)* ward support staff and *(e)* administrative staff were employed in the NHS in each year since 19[illegible]: what the total share of the budget attributed to each was in each year; and what the projected figures are for 2006. [32190]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested on staff numbers is shown in the tables.

National health service staff in England by each specified staff group as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
All medical staff within the surgical group of specialties	13,394	13,786	14,189	14,594	15,267	16,035	16,892	18,290
of which:								
Consultants	4,094	4,186	4,431	4,640	4,893	5,088	5,389	5,754
All general medical practitioners (excluding retainers)[1,2]	29,389	29,697	29,987	30,252	30,685	31,182	32,593	34,085
Total qualified nursing staff	318,856	323,457	329,637	335,952	350,381	367,520	386,359	397,515
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	300,467	304,563	310,142	316,752	330,535	346,537	364,692	375,371
General practitioner practice nurses[2,3]	18,389	18,894	19,495	19,200	19,846	20,983	21,667	22,144
Support to clinical staff	283,871	289,363	296,619	307,225	325,890	344,524	360,666	368,285
Healthcare assistants and support staff	181,049	184,480	189,085	194,000	204,925	210,462	221,904	223,526
Other support to clinical staff	23,772	23,466	23,709	24,847	26,691	33,151	29,755	30,086
Administrative support to clinical staff[4]	79,050	81,417	83,825	88,378	94,274	100,911	109,007	114,673
Administrative staff	92,820	93,772	98,283	102,884	108,863	118,000	127,578	137,557
Central functions	70,647	71,079	73,996	77,628	81,439	85,706	92,257	99,831
Manager and senior manager	22,173	22,593	24,287	25,256	27,424	32,294	35,321	37,726

[1] General medical practitioners, excluding retainers, includes contracted GPs, general medical service (GMS) others, personal medical service (PMS) others and GP registrars. Prior to September 2004 this group included GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career Scheme GPs and GP returners.

[2] Data as at 1 October 1997–99 and 30 September 2000–04.

[3] Headcount practice nurse figures are estimated for 1998 and 1999 based on the 1997 full-time equivalent to headcount ratio.

[4] Administrative support to clinical staff are administrative staff who work closely with clinical staff. They are staff such as medical secretaries, patient services staff and ambulance control staff.

Information on expenditure cannot be provided in the format requested. The percentage of total NHS expenditure in England between 1997–98 and 2004–05 for the categories of staff available is shown in the table. Figures for 2004–05 remain provisional and expenditure by NHS foundation trusts cannot be included; hence the decreases shown.

Total (England) expenditure by staff categories, shown as a percentage of total NHS expenditure[1,2]

Percentage	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Nursing midwifery and health visiting staff	19.1	19.1	19.1	19.0	19.1	18.9	17.3	16.1
Medical staff	8.5	8.8	8.9	9.2	9.4	9.8	10.1	9.5
Healthcare assistants and other support staff	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.1	1.9
Administration and estates staff	8.6	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.5	8.7	8.3	8.3
General practitioners	7.8	7.6	8.4	8.3	7.8	7.5	7.3	8.5

[1] Data used is in each case the combined expenditure of NHS trusts, health authorities/strategic health authorities, and primary care trusts, where applicable.
[2] All staff expenditure data, other than for general practitioners, relates to both NHS and non-NHS staff.
Sources:
Audited health authority summarisation schedules 2000–01 and 2001–02.
Audited strategic health authority summarisation schedules 2002–03 and 2003–04.
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules 2000–01 to 2003–04.
Annual financial returns of the health authorities 1997–98 to 2001–02.
Annual financial returns of the strategic health authorities 2002–03 to 2004–05.
Annual financial returns of the primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05.
Annual financial returns of the NHS trusts 1997–98 to 2004–05.

Future projections depend on the recommendations of pay review bodies which have yet to be made.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average income from the NHS of *(a)* a general practitioner, *(b)* a junior doctor and *(c)* a nurse was in each year since 1997. [33739]

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average income from the NHS was for a *(a)* general practitioner, *(b)* dentist, *(c)* junior doctor and *(d)* nurse in each year since 1997. [34360]

Mr. Byrne: Figures based on information for general practitioners (GPs) in Great Britain are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Average income of GPs 1996–97 to 2003–04

Financial year	Intended average net remuneration (IANR) (£)
1996–97	44,483
1997–98	46,031
1998–99	48,037
1999–2000	52,606
2000–01	54,219
2001–02	56,510
2002–03	61,618
2003–04[1]	67,040

[1] The IANR equivalent figure for 2003–04 is a forecast agreed by the technical steering committee (TSC), which is a United Kingdom wide committee incorporating representatives from all UK health departments, the NHS Confederation and the British Medical Association.

The estimated average annual net incomes, between 1997–98 and 2004–05, of general dental service (GDS) dentists with a reasonable commitment to the GDS are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Estimated average GDS net income for dentists with a reasonable GDS commitment[1], *1997–98 to 2004–05, England and Wales*

Financial year	Estimated average net income (£)
1997–98	51,200
1998–99	54,300
1999–2000	55,700
2000–01[2]	[3]59,200
2001–02	60,500
2002–03	63,300
2003–04	66,700
2004–05	70,000

[1] Dentists with a reasonable commitment to the GDS are defined as dentists with GDS earnings equivalent to at least £40,000 in 1993–94 in fees for treatments and patient capitation. This equivalent is calculated each year by adjusting figures to take into account the effect of fee increases. The equivalent figure for 2004–05 is £59,100.
[2] Commitment payments started in 2001.
[3] Figures since 2000–01 use a different methodology to calculate the contribution from other non-fee/capitation payments.
Source:
Department of Health and Health and Social Care Information Centre analysis of Dental Practice Board payments and HMRC tax data.

Figures for junior doctors and nurses are available from 1998 to 2004 as these are the years when the NHS Staff Earnings survey was undertaken.

Average estimated total earnings for doctors in training and their equivalents and qualified nurses and midwives—England

£

	Estimated annualised average total earnings	
	Doctors in training and their equivalents	Qualified nurses and midwives
1998	31,200	19,600
1999	33,600	21,400
2000	35,000	22,600
2002	44,100	24,500
2004	47,900	26,400

Notes:
1. The NHS Earnings Survey is based on a sample of payroll data from approximately 50 per cent. of NHS trusts.
2. Averages are calculated by dividing total payments by total full time equivalents.

3. Figures are rounded to the nearest £100.
4. Doctors in training and their equivalents. This staff group includes house officers, senior house officers and the registrar group. This staff group contains a number of staff who while working at this level do not hold educationally approved training posts.

Source:
Department of Health's August NHS Staff Earnings Survey (1998 to 2002) and NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre August 2004 NHS Staff Earnings survey.

NHS Trusts

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS trusts she expects not to be able to become foundation trusts by 2008; [37312]

(2) what future she envisages for trusts who are not foundation hospitals by 2008. [37313]

Mr. Byrne: We have made a commitment that all national health service trusts should be in a position to apply for national health service foundation trust (NHSFT) status by 2008. To assist in that process we are rolling out a national programme to assess the readiness of all acute trusts for NHSFT status, in the context of their wider health communities. This whole health community diagnostic project will see trusts developing action plans with their strategic health authorities which set out any challenges or performance issues they need to overcome to become authorised as an NHSFT, as well as an indication of when trusts might be ready to apply for foundation status. The project will be completed by summer 2006.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the NHS trusts where in 2005 her Department has had to intervene in the financial management. [29970]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* Following the recommendation of the Healthcare Commission, the Secretary of State placed two organisations on special measures (Mid Yorkshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust and North West London Hospitals NHS Trust). The Department works with these trusts, the strategic health authorities (SHAs) and the primary care trusts to improve performance. The recommendations of the Healthcare Commission include both service quality improvements and delivering financial balance.

It is the responsibility of SHAs to deliver both overall financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. The Department works with SHAs to support them in this task. As part of this support, I have recently announced the formation of finance turnaround teams. These teams will be initially working with 63 NHS organisations. The teams will work with the chief executives of the organisations in delivering the key targets and financial stability. The chief executives will remain responsible for delivery in their organisations.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how her Department ensures that quality of service is not affected when NHS trusts face monetary shortfalls. [38162]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* All national health service organisations have minimum standards of quality they must deliver, including meeting the targets for maximum waiting times. These are dramatically better than the standards of the NHS in the past and there can be no trade-off between these quality standards and removing deficits. All areas of the country have seen dramatic improvements in services, and all areas of the country will continue to see improvements as additional investment is made. Progress in a particular hospital or service has to be achieved within what is affordable, otherwise the local NHS would be spending other people's money to deliver an improved service which would be unfair to the other parts of the country.

NHS-funded Operations

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS-funded operations have taken place in *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private health sector establishments in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [18914]

Mr. Byrne: Data on national health service funded operative procedures in different settings are published in the "Chief Executive's Report to the NHS, Statistical Supplement—December 2005".

Data on the number of first finished consultant episodes (FFCEs) which have taken place in centrally procured independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) schemes for the years 2003–04 and 2004–05 are shown in the table.

	ISTC FFCEs
2003–04	3,663
2004–05	67,928

Source:
Department of Health

Nurses

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses currently on extended sick leave are within *(a)* six months, *(b)* one year, *(c)* 18 months and *(d)* two years of the official retirement age. [36904]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Osteoporosis

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to reduce the numbers of fractures due to osteoporosis in *(a)* women who have had previous fractures and *(b)* women with no previous fractures. [19397]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 31 October 2005]:* Osteoporosis can often be prevented by a healthy lifestyle including exercise and a balanced diet and, in people at particular risk, by drug therapy. Cases of established osteoporosis can be treated both to prevent further fractures and to improve an individual's quality of life. All treatment of osteoporosis can be regarded as secondary prevention. Much of this can be managed in primary care, even in cases of advanced disease.

The national service framework (NSF) for older people published in March 2001 required integrated falls services to be in place locally by April 2005. The NSF also provided a detailed description of what an integrated falls service should look like; the different elements and people required for integrated service planning and provision. In addition to this, to increase capacity in osteoporosis services in Dexa scanning for bone density as a guide to treatment, the Department has made £20 million available for investment in Dexa scanning services and equipment to build capacity. In 2005–06, £3 million has been allocated from a centrally held revenue budget for purchasing of additional scans, mainly from independent sector providers, in strategic health authorities where there are the most pressing shortfalls. Capital provision of £17 million has been made available in 2006–07 and 2007–08 to improve national health service capacity through investment in new Dexa scanning equipment.

Out-of-hours Services

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with strategic health authorities about the funding of out-of-hours general practitioner services in rural areas. [36641]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* In recognition of the fact that the cost of out-of-hours services vary, in 2003–04, £14 million additional funding was available to support primary care trusts facing the biggest challenge in developing out-of-hours services, half to very rural and half to very urban areas. In this financial year, £11.5 million additional funding has been made available.

Palliative Care (Children)

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to passport the medical costs of providing palliative care to children's hospices. [36732]

Mr. Byrne: In line with our guidance "National Standards, Local Action" in the three years to March 2008 80 per cent. of national health service funding will go direct to primary care trusts (PCTs) to give them control in shaping services to meet local needs. PCTs, along with their local partners and stakeholders, are in the best position to judge how the available funding can be used effectively in providing a range of palliative care services for children and young people.

On 29 November, we launched a guide for the commissioners of palliative care for children and young people "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services". This practical guide will stimulate improvements in commissioning and promote quality care for children, young people and their families, in a range of settings, for example, palliative care at home, in hospital or in a hospice.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been allocated to children's hospices serving West Sussex in each of the last eight years. [36733]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not collect information on the funding of children's hospices and palliative care services for children.

Children's hospice services are funded from a number of sources, including services commissioned by primary care trusts (PCTs) based on their assessment of children's needs and their priorities. They are best placed to make decisions on the local need for palliative care and are able to take into account the needs of individual families and their preferences.

In our recently published guide, "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services", launched on 29 November, PCTs are advised to engage with local children's hospices over the contribution hospices can make to the overall pattern of palliative care commissioned for children and young people in their localities.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessments she has made of the medical costs of providing palliative care in children's hospices. [36736]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not available centrally on the medical costs of palliative care in children's hospices.

Her Majesty's Treasury's 2002 cross cutting review on the role of the voluntary and community sector in service delivery recommended that funders should recognise that it is legitimate for voluntary and community sector providers to include the relevant element of overheads in their cost estimates for providing a given service under a contract or service agreement. This recommendation was drawn to the attention of primary care trust commissioners through the Chief Executive Bulletin published on 14 April 2005.

Parliamentary Questions

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to answer the question on private management of new primary care trusts (19208) tabled by the hon. Member for Romsey on 13 October. [30999]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2293W.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to answer the Questions *(a)* 21145, *(b)* 21220, *(c)* 21219 and *(d)* 21776 tabled by the hon. Member for Romsey on 19 and 20 October. [31000]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1715W for question 21219; on 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2282W for questions 21145 and 21220; and on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2125–26W for question 21776.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to question reference 28481 from the hon. Member for Hertsmere, tabled on 10 November. [33445]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave him on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1802W and 1817W.

Patient Travelling Times

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the maximum recommended patient travelling time is to acute hospitals in England. [35162]

Mr. Byrne: There is no recommended maximum patient travelling time to acute hospitals in England.

Physical Agents Directive

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on the use of magnetic resonance imaging scans in the NHS when the EU physical agents directive comes into force. [18374]

Mr. Byrne: An initial impact assessment carried out by the Health Protection Agency suggests that the European physical agents directive may affect about 3.5 per cent. of all magnetic resonance imaging scans in England. The Department are considering how to handle the impact of this on the national health service.

Plagiocephaly

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects guidelines to be issued to assist the early detection of positional plagiocephaly by health professionals; [37211]

(2) what plans her Department has for publicising the methods available to avoid positional plagiocephaly; [37212]

(3) how much was spent by her Department on publicising advice to *(a)* parents and *(b)* health professionals on how to avoid positional plagiocephaly in each year since 2001. [37214]

Mr. Byrne: The child health development programme, which provides for health and development checks for young children, is informed by professional guidelines, "principally Health for all children" edited by Professor David Hall and Dr. David Elliman. This includes guidance on detecting abnormalities in skull development.

Positional plagiocephaly is caused by allowing consistent pressure to be applied to one part of a baby's skull over a period of time. This is commonly remedied by enabling babies to experience a range of positions rather than remaining in one position. The Department's guidance to parents on the first five years of their child's life "Birth to five", and on reducing the risk of cot death, advocates this procedure.

Funding associated with avoiding positional plagiocephaly is not separable from the overall funding of child health in the community.

Plastic Water Bottles

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research her Department has evaluated on the transfer of chemicals through plastic water bottles; and if she will make a statement; [38425]

(2) what discussions she has had with the bottled water industry about *(a)* labelling and *(b)* information to consumers on storage of plastic water bottles; [38426]

(3) what regulatory body is responsible for dealing with complaints from the public about possible contamination of bottled water *(a)* during (i) retail and (ii) wholesale storage and *(b)* after purchase; [38427]

(4) what regulatory body is responsible for requirements on *(a)* the labelling of bottled water and *(b)* information to consumers about the storage of water in plastic bottles. [38428]

Caroline Flint: I have had no direct discussions with bottled water producers, but I am advised that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has been in contact with producers regarding the recent press reports of taints of bottled waters stored near household chemicals. There have been some studies on the transfer of chemicals through food packaging, because of the possibility of taint. The thinner and more porous the packaging material, the greater the possibility of taint. The FSA advises that food is not stored near cleaning products or other strongly smelling chemicals.

The FSA is responsible for food labelling, including the requirements that apply to bottled waters. Local authorities are responsible for enforcing food legislation and for investigating any complaints from the public about possible contamination of bottled water both before and after purchase.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with representatives of professions allied to medicine on her proposals to divest primary care trusts of their provider status; and if she will make a statement. [21610]

Mr. Byrne: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Warrington, North (Helen Jones) on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2162W.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultations were held with *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* primary care trusts (PCTs) and *(c)* strategic health authorities before the publication of 'Commissioning a Patient-led NHS'; who will make the final decisions on merger of PCTs; and what research was commissioned on the optimum size for PCTs. [22451]

Mr. Byrne: The document issued by Sir Nigel Crisp on 28 July entitled 'Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS' was the beginning of a process whereby strategic health authorities (SHAs) were asked to engage their stakeholders to develop proposals for reconfiguration which would then be subject to consultation. The draft proposals from the SHAs were submitted to the Department by 15 October so that they could be assessed before being sent out for full local consultation.

SHAs submitted their proposals for the reconfiguration of primary care trusts (PCTs) and these proposals were assessed by an independent external panel drawn from and representing a wide range of interests, to determine whether the SHA proposals met the criteria stipulated in 'Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS'. Following consideration by the external panel and Ministers, all proposals for reconfiguration of SHAs have gone forward for local consultation and a wider range of proposals for PCT reconfigurations has

also gone forward for local consultation. These local consultations will last for 14 weeks and began on 14 December.

The Department commissioned a piece of research earlier in the year which concluded that there is no blueprint for the optimum size of PCTs but the criteria for reconfiguring PCTs were clearly set out in the document published on 28 July.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set up discussion groups of NHS staff affected by her proposals for primary care trusts, moderated by Opinion Leader Research; and if she will pay participants for attendance. [24814]

Mr. Byrne: A 14 week local consultation on the proposed reconfiguration of primary care trusts began on 14 December. Strategic health authorities have received guidance on the consultation process, which stresses the importance of involving a range of stakeholders in consultation, including staff. The most effective way of involving those staff is a matter for local determination.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her written statement of 18 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 49WS, on primary care trusts/strategic health authorities and to the oral answers of 25 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 151–52, on primary care trusts, whether the statements made in the chronology placed in the Library in relation to new primary care trusts divesting themselves of the majority of service provision have been superseded. [25421]

Mr. Byrne: My right hon. Friend's written ministerial statement of 18 October and oral answers on 25 October supersede the statements made in the chronology placed in the Library in relation to new primary care trusts (PCTs) divesting themselves of the majority of service provision.

Since the document issued on 28 July we have listened to stakeholders and the policy moving forward, in relation to service-provision, is that this will be a matter for PCTs to determine locally. Any move away from direct provision of services by PCTs will be a decision for the local national health service within the framework set out in the forthcoming White Paper and after local consultation, including professions allied to medicine.

We will support PCTs which want to do that, but we will not instruct PCTs to do it, nor will we impose any timetable. What matters is getting the best services for each community—and that is what the White Paper will focus on.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to make a decision on the reorganisation of Hertfordshire primary care trusts; and if she will undertake a public consultation on the matter. [25814]

Mr. Byrne: On 15 October, strategic health authorities (SHAs) submitted their proposals for the reconfiguration of primary care trusts (PCTs), which set out how they intend to strengthen their commissioning function. These proposals were assessed by an independent external panel drawn from and representing a wide range of stakeholder interests, to determine whether the SHA proposals meet the criteria stipulated in the document, "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS" (July 2005).

Following consideration by the external panel and Ministers, proposals for PCT reconfiguration were notified to all SHAs and hon. and right hon. Members. Consultations began on December 14, running for 14 weeks. No decisions on the reorganisation of PCTS, including those in Hertfordshire, will be taken until this process has been completed.

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely effect of allowing varying sizes and configuration of primary care trusts on the level of consistency and equality of access to services across England. [29007]

Mr. Byrne: The criteria for assessing proposals for the reconfiguration of primary care trusts (PCTs) was set out in the document, "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS". These included improving health and reducing inequalities, improving commissioning and effective use of resources and improving co-ordination with social services. I expect overall the new PCTs to improve consistency of performance and equality of access as a result.

Prisons (Contraceptives)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make condoms generally available to all people in prisons. [28559]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1505–06W.

Private Finance Initiative Projects

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the assets and liabilities of each private finance project approved by her Department is recorded on the Government balance sheet. [34665]

Mr. Byrne: A small number of national health service private finance initiative schemes are regarded under accounting standards as on balance sheet. These are shown in the table where 100 per cent. of the capital value of these schemes and the corresponding liabilities are on the national health service's balance sheet.

£000

NHS trust	*Capital value on balance sheet*
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	44,562
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	114,909
Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup NHS Trust	4,500
Oxleas NHS Trust	17,612
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	35,306

The great majority of national health service private finance initiative schemes are regarded under accounting standards as being off balance sheet which means that the facilities built by the private sector are off the national health service's balance sheet. There may be deferred assets and liabilities in the accounts of the individual bodies arising from these transactions, but these are not separately identifiable from the accounts.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* location, *(b)* cost and *(c)* completion date is of each private finance initiative project within her responsibility in each health authority area. [36893]

Mr. Byrne: A list has been placed in the Library of all private finance initiative projects in England where the capital value is £10 million or greater, the scheme is operational or financial close has been reached and work has started on site. The list shows location, cost and operational dates.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* location and *(b)* capacity is of each completed private finance initiative hospital project; what the cost was of each; and what the (i) location, (ii) planned capacity and (iii) expected cost is of each planned private finance initiative hospital project. [25256]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave today to the hon. Member for Vale of Clwyd (Chris Ruane). The information shown in the tables gives details requested of schemes that have not yet reached financial close with an estimated capital value of £25 million and above. The Department does not hold centrally full information for schemes below £25 million.

Private finance initiative schemes in negotiation but not yet reached financial close

Trust	*Location*
Barts and the London National Health Service Trust	East London
University Hospital/South Birmingham MH NHS Trust Birmingham	Birmingham
University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	Stoke
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	Leicester
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Cottingham
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals	Wakefield
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	Portsmouth
St. Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust	St Helens
North Middlesex Hospitals NHS Trust	Edmonton
Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust	Chelmsford
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	Oxford
Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trusts	Salford
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	Tameside, Great Manchester
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	Colchester
Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust	Peterborough
Whipps Cross Hospitals NHS Trust	London
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	Walsall
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells/ Invicta Community Care NHS Trusts	Pembury and Maidstone
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	Torquay
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	across Leicestershire
Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	Middlesbrough

Schemes finalising options and scope prior to going out to tender

Trust	*Location*
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	Bristol
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	Barnet
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	Wolverhampton
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	Southampton
East and North Hertfordshire/West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Hertfordshire
Bristol North/South Gloucester PCTs	Yet to be determined
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	Cambridge
Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust	Birmingham
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	Leeds

Schemes finalising options and scope prior to going out to tender

Trust	*Location*
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	Uxbridge
Royal national Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	Stanmore
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	Taunton
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	Westcliff on Sea
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health Trust	Sunderland
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	Northwick Park
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals	East Berkshire
Aintree Hospitals	Liverpool
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals	Liverpool
Mersey Care	Merseyside
Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital	Liverpool
Plymouth Hospitals	Plymouth

Private Sector NHS

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many private patients were treated in NHS hospitals in each of the last 10 years. [36035]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1577W.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her Oral Statement of 19 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 283W, in the Westminster Hall debate on private sector NHS, whether she has responded to the dossier of patient complaints about independent sector treatment centres. [23665]

Mr. Byrne: The dossier provided by the British Orthopaedic Association (BOA) in November of 2004, included 18 letters from their members, of which only two related to clinical governance or quality assurance issues for national health service patients treated within independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) programme.

The two letters from the BOA that referred to clinical governance issues related to results obtained by overseas surgeons operating on NHS patients at the Nuffield Hospitals in Derby and Cambridge, respectively. In both circumstances, local clinical governance arrangements had rapidly ensured that the surgeons discontinued working, and formal service investigations were performed at both sites. Learning points from these investigations were used to inform on-going governance arrangements in this sector, and were outlined to the BOA in May of this year.

The remaining 16 letters from November 2004 comprised a diverse group of issues not directly relating to clinical governance issues in this sector, referring instead to issues of local capacity planning, waiting list issues and discontent over broader policy matters.

In September of this year, 11 further letters were sent to the Department by the BOA. Five of these letters relate to the ISTC programme, and all clinical incidents were already known to the Department, and have been or are being reported on. A response is being issued to the BOA and further information will be shared as it becomes available.

Processed Foods

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the proportion of processed foods on sale in England which do not contain added *(a)* sugar and *(b)* salt. [38261]

Caroline Flint: No estimate has been made of the proportion of processed foods that do not contain added sugar or salt. The Department and the Food Standards Agency have held discussions with the food industry in line with public commitments to reduce levels of salt, sugars and fat in foods.

Public Relations

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts awarded by her Department in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London in 2004–05. [35939]

Jane Kennedy: During 2004–05, the Department spent £364,425.74 on public opinion research. This total includes media evaluation, large-scale surveys and qualitative research, for example, focus groups. The work was undertaken on a national basis. Of this £21,831 was spent on regional media evaluation, that is, analysing messages in the regional media.

During the same period, the Department spent a total of £2,908,812.97 on public relations agencies delivering campaigns in England. The Department does not break the figures down regionally. The agencies concerned ran campaigns covering tobacco and drugs control, sexual health, flu immunisation, hepatitis C awareness, breastfeeding awareness, healthy eating, social care or social work and national health service recruitment campaigns. This figure includes both agency fees and costs such as literature, posters and other materials produced for the campaigns.

The figures quoted above do not include value added tax.

Quality and Outcomes Framework

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the outcome of the review of the quality and outcomes framework of the General Medical Services contract will be announced; and if she will make a statement; [29390]

(2) what consideration has been given to including indicators for osteoporosis within the new quality and outcomes framework. [29391]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 November 2005]:* NHS Employers, working on behalf of United Kingdom health Ministers, and the British Medical Association's general practitioners committee have finalised an agreement on the general medical services contract for 2006–07 which includes the review of the quality and outcomes framework and an announcement will be made shortly. It would be inappropriate to pre-empt the announcement.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of general practitoner practices in *(a)* England, *(b)* each primary care trust and *(c)* each strategic health authority achieved Med 5 and Med 9 of the Quality and Outcomes Framework on medicines management in 2004–05. [37007]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Radiology

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many interventional radiologists have been employed by the NHS in each year since 1997; and what plans she has to expand this number; [31897]

(2) what assessment she has made of the optimum number of interventional radiologists needed by the NHS, with specific reference to the numbers needed to fully utilise minimally invasive technologies of proven clinical and cost-effectiveness. [31898]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not collected centrally on the number of interventional radiologists employed in the national health service. The table shows the number of hospital medical staff in the radiology group of specialties in each year since 1997.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services: all medical staff and consultants within the radiology group of specialties by specialty

Number (headcount)

	All staff			*Consultant*		
		of which:			*of which:*	
	Radiology Group	*Clinical radiology*	*Nuclear medicine*	*Radiology Group*	*Clinical radiology*	*Nuclear medicine*
1997	2,064	2,014	50	1,473	1,442	31
1998	2,127	2,075	52	1,514	1,481	33
1999	2,214	2,164	50	1,540	1,507	33
2000	2,347	2,303	44	1,616	1,585	31
2001	2,508	2,454	54	1,683	1,645	38
2002	2,595	2,538	57	1,745	1,702	43
2003	2,760	2,693	67	1,860	1,810	50
2004	2,911	2,836	75	1,928	1,876	52
June 2005	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,017	1,967	50

n/a—not available.

Note:

1997 to 2004 data as at 30 September each year, data for 2005 as at 30 June.

Data for June 2005 was taken from the Medical and Dental mini census which collected consultants only.

Source :

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Between September 1997 and June 2005, the number of consultants in the radiology group of specialties increased by 544 or 37 per cent. Between 2002–03 and 2004–05, 166 new centrally funded specialist registrar posts were allocated. An additional 60 new posts were allocated in 2005–06, including posts for the new clinical radiology academies.

It is the responsibility of NHS organisations to analyse their local situation and develop plans to deliver high quality NHS services and recruit the appropriate staff required to deliver these services.

Restraint Procedures

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have *(a)* died and *(b)* been injured under restraint in mental health institutions in each of the last eight years. [37572]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not held centrally by the Department. The confidential inquiry into suicide and homicide, which is funded by the National Patient Safety Agency, has been extended to cover all sudden, unexplained deaths in psychiatric units. It will report on the use of control and restraint in due course.

From 1 January 2004, the Mental Health Act Commission, as part of its programme of monitoring vulnerable patient groups, has asked providers of acute mental health services to notify every occasion when a detained patient sustains an injury which requires medical intervention as a consequence of an incident of restraint. Findings from the notifications received and visits undertaken will be included in their next report.

The National Patient Safety Agency has developed a national reporting and learning system to promote comprehensive national learning about patient safety incidents. This includes reporting of patient safety incidents involving control and restraint. This information will facilitate feedback on identified issues.

The new annual census of mental health inpatients records incidents of restraint as well as recent injuries. The first report, which was published by the Healthcare Commission and the Mental Health Act Commission on 7 December 2005, provides information about the use of restraint in mental health settings.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has undertaken on the effects of restraint measures in the NHS. [37573]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such assessment has been made by the Department. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence reviewed the available evidence on physical interventions in producing its clinical guidelines on the short-term management of disturbed/violent behaviour in in-patient psychiatric settings and emergency departments.

Individual authorities are required to have clear policies on the use of restraint which include provision of a review of each incident of restraint; and its application audited and reported to hospital managers. This is set out in the Code of Practice of the Mental Health Act 1983.

The Health and Safety Executive commissioned research from Nottingham university on the effectiveness of training in the prevention and management of violence which is due to be published in 2006.

One of the key objectives of the National Institute for Mental Health in England and National Patient Safety Agency project on the prevention and management of violence is to identify gaps in research in the area of recognising, preventing and managing aggression and violence. A full report will be produced in 2006.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many different restraint procedures are approved for use in psychiatric hospitals. [37574]

Ms. Rosie Winterton: Best practice around the use of physical interventions for adults presenting disturbed/violent behaviour in in-patient psychiatric settings is set out in the clinical guidelines published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in 2004. When determining which interventions to employ clinical need, safety of service users and others, and, where possible, advance directives should be taken into account. The intervention selected must be a reasonable and proportionate response to the risk posed by the service user.

The National Institute for Mental Health in England and National Patient Safety Agency project on the prevention and management of violence will publish guidance and a checklist early in 2006 to ensure that all restraint procedures meet rigorous standards. The project team is also developing proposals for the accreditation and regulation of physical intervention trainers.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what methods of restraint are approved for use on children in *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* secure hospitals. [37575]

Mr. Byrne: Guidance on the use of restraint is set out in the Mental Health Act Code of Practice, paragraphs 19.6 to 19.15. This states that restraint by physical means should take place only as a last resort and never as a matter of course. In addition the guidance states that any restraint used should be reasonable in the circumstance; apply the minimum force necessary to prevent harm to the patient or others; be used for only as long as is necessary; and be sensitive to gender and race issues. The advice applies in all healthcare settings and to all age ranges. Trusts should regularly audit their physical restraint procedures consistent with the framework of clinical governance and safeguarding children arrangements.

SANELINE

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health to what services have the funds formerly provided to SANELINE been diverted. [30955]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The funding provided for SANELINE under the Department's contract with SANE, was a specific allocation made for a time-limited period only.

Sexual Health

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by the Government to increase awareness of the risks of sexually transmitted diseases. [26236]

Caroline Flint: Measures to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were set out in the "National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV" (2001) and the public health White Paper "Choosing Health", published last November, available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

The White Paper also announced a new high profile national campaign, to promote safer sex messages, aimed at reducing the prevalence and spread of all STIs. The campaign will focus on younger men and women. It will be a high profile media campaign, focusing on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid the risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and unintended pregnancies.

Measures also include targeted HIV prevention and health promotion work with those most at risk of HIV infections, such as gay men and African communities, provided through community organisations such as the Terrence Higgins Trust and the African HIV policy network.

In addition to these national measures, primary care trusts are responsible for providing sexual health promotion and services which meet the needs of their local populations. To support them in this role, the Department, working with professional bodies, has published recommended standards for sexual health services; a toolkit of best practice for sexual health promotion, and guidance on commissioning.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research projects on *(a)* abortion, *(b)* contraception, *(c)* reproductive health and *(d)* the effects of abortion on women have been commissioned by her Department in each of the last five years for which information is available; and what the publication arrangements were in each case. [35969]

Caroline Flint: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. The remainder funds health and social care research through the Department's central research programmes. Details of relevant individual projects are listed as follows:

Health technology assessment (HTA) projects

A randomised preference trial of medical versus surgical termination of pregnancies less than 14 weeks' gestation (TOPS).

The clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of routine anti-D prophylaxis for rhesus negative women in pregnancy.

Amniocentesis results: investigation of anxiety (ARIA)

Methods of prediction and prevention of pre-eclampsia

Systematic reviews of accuracy and effectiveness literature with economic modelling

Accuracy and cost effectiveness of rapid diagnosis of Group-B streptococcus during labour

Prenatal screening and treatment strategies to prevent group B streptococcal and other bacterial infections in early infancy: cost effectiveness and expected value of information analyses.

Systematic review of early pregnancy screening tests for Down Syndrome

Screening to prevent pre-term birth—systematic reviews of accuracy and effectiveness literature with economic modelling

The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of microwave and thermal balloon endometrial ablation for heavy menstrual bleeding: a systematic review and economic modelling

Liquid-based cytology in cervical screening: an updated rapid and systematic review and economic analysis

A systematic review of diagnostic tests and algorithms used in the investigation of haematuria

A systematic review of the clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness of topotecan, pegylated liposomal doxorubicin hydrocholoride and paclitaxel for second-line or subsequent treatment of advanced ovarian cancer (up-date)

A randomised trial of human papilloma virus testing in primary cervical screening (ARTISTIC)

Methods of prediction and prevention of pre-eclampsia—Systematic reviews of accuracy and effectiveness literature with economic modelling

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of Levonorgestrel containing intrauterine system in primary care against standard treatment—The ECLIPSE Trial

Antidepressant drug therapy versus a community-based psychosocial intervention for the treatment of moderate postnatal depression: a pragmatic randomised controlled trial

A comparison of automated technology and manual cervical screening (MAVARIC)

Treatment for fibroids: uterine artery embolisation (UAE) or hysterectomy (HOPEFUL)

Systematic review of early pregnancy screening tests for Down Syndrome

Screening to prevent pre-term birth—systematic reviews of accuracy and effectiveness literature with economic modelling

The HTA programme aims to publish the results of every project in the monograph series Health Technol Assess (ISSN 1366 5278). As well as printed versions, full electronic versions of all titles in the monograph series are made available free of charge on the HTA programme website and on a free compact disc which is updated three to four times per year.

Policy Research Programme Projects

The following projects are funded through the allocation of departmental policy research programme budget to the Medical Research Council (MRC). The research is commissioned by the MRC on behalf of the Department.

The second national survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles (2000). Initial results from this large-scale survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles were published as reference tables and summary report by the National Centre for Social Research in 2002. This publication has been followed by a high volume of peer-reviewed journal articles and a number of papers are forthcoming.

Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Evaluation Team. Final Report Synthesis. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. June 2005.

French, R et al. Exploring the attitudes and behaviours of Bangladeshi, Indian and Jamaican young people in relation to reproductive and sexual health. University College London. November 2005.

Berrington, A et al. Consequences of Teenage Parenthood: Pathways which minimise the long term negative impacts of teenage childbearing. University of Southampton. November 2005.

Viner, R et al. Protective and risk factors for early sexual activity and contraception use among Black and Minority Ethnic adolescents in East London. University College London, City University and Queen Mary, University of London. October 2005.

Higginbottom, G et al. An Exploration of the Teenage Parenting Experiences of Young People of Black and Minority Ethnic Origin in England. University of Sheffield. October 2005.

Dawson, N et al. The Education of Pregnant Young Women and Young Mothers in England. University of Bristol and University of Newcastle. September 2005.

(forthcoming in December 2005 DfES research release)

Wiggins, M et al. Teenage Parenthood and Social Exclusion: a multi-method study. Summary report of findings. Social Science Research Unit.

Long-term consequences of teenage births for parents and their children (2004) Ermisch, J. University of Essex (publication: TPU website, Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), University of Essex website and academic journals)

Analysis of data from the national surveys of sexual attitudes and lifestyles (NATSAL I and II) relevant to an exploration of outcomes of teenage motherhood. Wellings, K. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (unpublished).

Living on the edge: sexual behaviour and young parenthood in rural and seaside areas (2004). Craig, G. University of Hull (publication: TPU website, University of Hull report)

'Young People's Perceptions of Contraception and Seeking Contraceptive Advice' A Report on the Key Findings from a Qualitative Research Study (2001). Counterpoint Research (publication: TPU website)

These publications are available from the Teenage Pregnancy Unit's pages of the Department for Education and Skills website, at www.dfes.gov.uk unless otherwise stated.

The following policy research programme projects have been commissioned and are currently ongoing:

Developing and piloting a sexual health communication tool.

Translating effective behavioural interventions—replicating a proven intervention to meet the sexual health and reproductive health needs of young black Caribbean women in sexual health services.

Exploring strategies to increase chlamydia screening volume in general practice.

Diversity of Chlamydia trachomatis in young people.

Measuring the impact of the Chlamydia trachomatis epidemic: new serological assays to assess disease burden.

These will be published through peer-reviewed journal articles and dissemination to targeted audiences.

Senior House Officers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior house officer jobs have been available in each of the last eight years; and if she will make a statement. [30311]

Mr. Byrne: The Information requested is not available centrally.

Information is however available on the number of medically qualified senior house officers (SHO) and equivalents in post in each of the last eight years and this is shown in the table.

Medically qualified[1] senior house officers and equivalents 1997 to 2004, England

	Number (headcount)
1997	14,580
1998	14,774
1999	14,812
2000	15,081
2001	15,409
2002	16,685
2003	18,212
2004	20,094

[1] Excludes all staff with a dental specialty.

Source:
NHS Health & Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental workforce census.

Between 1997 and 2004, the number of medically qualified SHOs and equivalents has increased by 5,514 or 38 per cent.

Sleep Apnoea

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) by what date she expects sufferers of obstructive sleep apnoea to be diagnosed within one month of referral by their general practitioner in accordance with the national service framework for long-term conditions quality requirement 2; [32526]

(2) how many obstructive sleep apnoea patients have access to continuous positive airway pressure treatment within one month of diagnosis in accordance with the national service framework for long-term conditions quality requirement 7 for people with long-term conditions; [32527]

(3) what proportion of suspected obstructive sleep apnoea sufferers wait for longer than one month to see a specialist after referral by their general practitioner; and how many of these have to travel for more than two hours to reach a specialist sleep centre for diagnosis and treatment; [32528]

(4) what percentage of NHS trusts commission specialist services for diagnosing and treating sleep disorders including obstructive sleep apnoea; [32529]

(5) what estimate she has made of the average waiting time for treatment for diagnosed sufferers of obstructive sleep apnoea in the last year for which figures are available; [32530]

(6) what statistics her Department collects on the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* treatment of obstructive sleep apnoea; [32531]

(7) what estimate she has made of the number of adults with *(a)* diagnosed and *(b)* undiagnosed (i) obstructive sleep apnoea and (ii) other sleep disorder sufferers; [32532]

(8) what research her Department has undertaken into the medical status of individuals involved in sleep-related accidents. [32574]

Mr. Byrne: Data on the number of people with sleep apnoea is not available centrally but the British Snoring and Sleep Apnoea Association estimates that 4 per cent. of men and 2 per cent. of women are affected by the condition.

Hospital episode statistics (HES) contains details of patients admitted to and treated in national health service hospitals in England. In 2003–04, there were 12,162 finished consultant episodes in NHS hospitals in England for people with a primary diagnosis of sleep apnoea. HES data does not reflect the number of patients with a particular condition as a person may have more than one finished consultant episode (FCE) in the year. A FCE is defined as the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider.

The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions is a 10-year programme intended to stimulate long term and sustained improvement in services principally for people with neurological conditions. It is for the NHS locally to set their own pace of change. Through the regular review and inspection processes the NHS and local authorities will need to demonstrate that they are making progress in planning and developing the level of service quality described in the NSF.

Information on waiting times for inpatient and outpatient treatment in England is collected by consultant speciality rather than for specific conditions. Depending on the clinical needs of the patient, a range of consultants can undertake the treatment of sleep disorders, including neurological and respiratory specialists. As specialty level data for relevant specialties would include data for a number of conditions it is not possible to determine what proportion of suspected obstructive sleep apnoea patients wait for longer than one month to see a specialist.

By the end of 2005, the maximum waiting time for first outpatient appointment with a consultant will fall to 13 weeks and the maximum waiting time for inpatient treatment will fall to six months. By 2008, patients will be admitted for treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral by their general practitioner, and those with urgent conditions will be treated much faster.

Information on the percentage of NHS trusts commissioning specialist services for diagnosing and treating sleep disorders is not available centrally. It is for health professionals in primary care organisations, in consultation with other stakeholders, to determine which services their populations need and to ensure the appropriate level of provision. In terms of sleep disorders, this would include, where appropriate, the provision of continuous positive airway pressure equipment as well as other treatments and interventions such as advice to promote weight loss. It is for health professionals to decide what treatment to offer patients, in consultation with the patient and informed by the patient's medical history. The Department does not collect information on the number of sleep apnoea patients with access to continuous airway pressure treatment.

The Department has not undertaken any research into the medical status of individuals involved in sleep-related accidents. In 2002, the Department for Transport held an expert workshop into the medical causes of daytime sleepiness in respect of driving and, as a result, strengthened the advice it provides to doctors.

Smoking

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of those *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations that took part in the consultation on the Health Bill favoured (i) the exemptions on the smoking ban as on the face of the Health Bill and (ii) a ban which excluded (A) private clubs and (B) pubs where food was not sold. [32174]

Caroline Flint: The consultation report was published on 24 November 2005. A copy of the publication is available in the Library.

Of those who responded, some 57,000 plus, around 90 per cent. supported legislation on smoke free premises. Of those 90 per cent., exact figures are not available. However, of the 41,833 responses on the specific proposals, the report notes that "over 90 per cent. were against any exemptions for pubs not serving food".

Of the 41,641 responses on the membership clubs proposal the report notes that "the vast majority believe that, since membership clubs are a workplace then there should be no exemptions".

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to encourage implementation of World Health Organisation guidelines on smoking in pregnancy. [34431]

Caroline Flint: Departmental officials have contacted the World Health Organisation regarding guidelines on smoking during pregnancy; we have been told that there are none.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* organisations and *(b)* individuals were consulted by her Department before publication of her Department's White Paper on smoking; and if she will make a statement. [35968]

Caroline Flint: The Department has recently held two recent major public consultations where the subject of smoking was included.

The "Choosing Health" consultation was held between March 2004 and June 2004. A consultation on the smoke free proposals set out in the public health White Paper "Choosing Health" was held between June 2005 and September 2005.

The "Choosing Health" consultation analysis final report was published on 9 March 2005. Chapter three of the report gives information on the responses received by organisation type, not named organisations nor individuals. A copy is available in the Library.

A list of organisations and individuals in England, who were sent the consultation on the smoke free elements of the Health Bill, will be placed in the Library. The results of the consultation, including a summary of the types of organisations responding, was published recently and a copy is available in the Library.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the month six forecast 2005–06 year-end financial position of each strategic health authority area. [31905]

Mr. Byrne: The 2005–06 forecast financial position at month six for all national health service organisations was announced on 1 December and has been placed in the Library. This information is also available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/40/49/04124049.pdf.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what powers she proposes to give to strategic health authorities to allow them to intervene in the running of primary care trusts; whether she intends to give powers to strategic health authorities to insist that primary care trusts outsource and market-test services; and if she will make a statement; [33846]

(2) what discussions she has had on giving strategic health authorities the powers to remove the chief executives and board members of trusts; and if she will make a statement. [33847]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 December 2005]:* There are no proposals or plans to give strategic health authorities (SHAs) additional powers to intervene in the running or plans of primary care trusts (PCTs) as a result of the reconfiguration exercise or to insist that PCTs outsource or market test services.

SHAs do not have the power to remove the chief executives and board members of PCTs and there are no plans to change this situation. Under Section 13 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 the Secretary of State can make an intervention order if she is not satisfied that an national health service body is performing one or more of its functions adequately.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the temporary staff costs were for *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* other healthcare professionals, *(d)* managers and *(e)* administrative staff in each strategic health authority in England in each of the last 10 years. [35159]

Mr. Byrne: The Department collects expenditure information on non national health service staff for local NHS organisations including strategic health authorities (SHAs). Non-NHS staff expenditure figures include all agency staff and any other staff not directly employed by these bodies. Information relating to spend for the relevant staff groups in each SHA in England from 2002–03, when these were established is shown in the tables. Information relating to the costs of temporary managers is not collected centrally.

The rise in agency staff spend over the years covered in the tables has tracked the rise in established posts over the period. Data for 2004–05 has not yet been verified but it suggests that expenditure in agency staff in the NHS has dropped significantly.

Reducing agency spend is part of the Department's contribution to the £6.5 billion Gershon efficiency target and the 10 human resource high impact changes as highlighted in, "A workforce response to local delivery plans: a challenge for NHS Boards".

HFR 25B: Salaries and wages non NHS staff (agency, etc.)—expenditure (£)—England 2003–04

		Non NHS staff (agency etc.)			
SHA code	*SHA name*	*Medical*	*Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff*	*Scientific, therapeutic and technical staff*	*Administrative and clerical*
		151	153	154	160
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	0	0	0	76,571
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	—	—	—	221,983
Q03	Essex Strategic HA	—	—	—	187,248
Q04	North West London Strategic HA	—	—	—	318,325
Q05	North Central London Strategic HA	—	4,024	—	425,939
Q06	North East London Strategic HA	—	—	—	614,906
Q07	South East London Strategic HA	73,083	—	—	88,577
Q08	South West London Strategic HA	—	—	—	49,899
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic HA	—	—	—	154,736
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	—	—	—	76,336
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and N Lincs SHA	0	0	0	29,997
Q12	West Yorkshire Strategic HA	—	—	—	60,269
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	0	0	0	108,334
Q14	Greater Manchester Strategic HA	—	—	—	119,610
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	—	—	—	53,300
Q16	Thames Valley Strategic HA	—	—	—	119,316
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic HA	—	—	—	134,793
Q18	Kent and Medway Strategic HA	—	—	—	146,107
Q19	Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	—	—	—	370,204
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire And Wiltshire SHA	0	0	0	56,830
Q21	South West Peninsula Strategic HA	—	—	—	172,476
Q22	Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	—	—	—	97,104
Q23	South Yorkshire Strategic HA[1]	—	—	—	52,797
Q24	Trent Strategic HA	—	—	—	80,758
Q25	Leics, Northants and Rutland SHA	0	0	0	161,367
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	—	—	—	76,685
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country SHA	0	0	0	155,312
Q28	West Midlands South Strategic HA	—	—	—	36,124
	England total	73,083	4,024	0	4,245,903

[1] Due to being host for Shared Business Services has resulted in £6 million expenditure for temporary staff.

Source:

Annual Financial Returns of Strategic Health Authorities

HFR 25B: Salaries and wages non NHS staff (agency, etc.)—expenditure (£)—England 2002-03

SHA code	SHA name	Non NHS staff (agency etc.)			
		Medical	Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	Scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	Administrative and clerical
		151	153	154	160
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	—	—	5,334	48,068
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	—	—	—	99,105
Q03	Essex Strategic HA	17,609	—	—	185,961
Q04	North West London Strategic HA	—	—	—	246,788
Q05	North Central London Strategic HA	—	20,391	—	276,659
Q06	North East London Strategic HA	427	—	—	303,374
Q07	South East London Strategic HA	0	0	0	141,432
Q08	South West London Strategic HA	—	—	2,668	243,574
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	0	0	0	111,995
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	0	0	0	198,649
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and N Lincs SHA	—	—	—	39,171
Q12	West Yorkshire Strategic HA	—	—	—	158,511
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	54,000	0	0	9,379
Q14	Greater Manchester Strategic HA	0	0	0	174,108
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	—	—	—	68,361
Q16	Thames Valley Strategic HA	—	—	—	114,647
Q17	Hampshire and Isle Of Wight Strategic HA	—	—	—	272,340
Q18	Kent and Medway Strategic HA	—	—	—	205,286
Q19	Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	—	—	—	922,225
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	0	0	0	0
Q21	South West Peninsula Strategic HA	—	—	—	191,420
Q22	Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	1,557	—	723	53,831
Q23	South Yorkshire Strategic HA	—	—	—	21,703
Q24	Trent Strategic HA	—	—	—	111,248
Q25	Leics, Northants and Rutland SHA	0	0	0	434,765
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	—	—	—	—
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country SHA	0	0	0	120,547
Q28	Cov, Warks, Herefordshire and Worcs SHA	—	—	—	28,883
	England total	73,593	20,391	8,725	4,782,080

Source:
Annual Financial Returns of Strategic Health Authorities

Student Nurses

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many student nurses are waiting to receive a 2005–06 NHS student bursary; and what the average waiting time for receipt of bursaries is. [27398]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* 11,941 student nurses have applied for bursaries for nursing courses which started in September 2005, all of which have now been processed.

The average waiting time for receipt of bursaries in 2005–06 for those student nurses who have been paid was 11 days from course start date. This figure does not reflect any delays in receiving information from the university. Payment cannot be made until the student grants unit receives confirmation of enrolment of individual students from the university and this process can take several days.

Suicide Chat Rooms

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with internet service providers about suicide chat rooms. [36590]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 12 December 2005]:* I will be having discussions with internet service providers, through the Internet Service Providers Association, in the new year to discuss the issue of websites and chat rooms that make information available about suicide.

Taxis

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent by her Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37486]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has spent £335,709.59 on its central contract for taxis up to the end of November 2005.

Other taxi fares may be claimed through staff expenses but the information cannot be made available without disproportionate cost.

The proportion of taxi travel undertaken in each nation and region of the United Kingdom cannot be made available without disproportionate cost.

Tuberculosis

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new tuberculosis cases have been recorded in the UK in each year since 1990. [36048]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of tuberculosis case notifications for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland from 1990 to 2004.

	Number of notifications
1990	5,898
1991	6,078
1992	6,442
1993	6,565
1994	6,230
1995	6,176
1996	6,238

	Number of notifications
1997	6,367
1998	6,605
1999	6,701
2000	7,033
2001	7,113
2002	7,214
2003	6,922
2004	7,180

Sources:
Health Protection Agency Centre for Infections: Statutory Notifications of Infectious Diseases (NOIDs).
Health Protection Scotland: Data from 1990–1999 from Statutory Notifications of Infectious Diseases (NOIDs). Data from 2000–04 from Enhanced Surveillance of Mycobacterial Infection Scheme.
Notifications of Infectious Diseases (NOIDS) 1990–2004
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre Northern Ireland.

Turnaround Teams

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS trusts will be subject to visits from turnaround teams. [38579]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The Secretary of State announced on 1 December 2005 that teams of financial and management experts are to be sent to support the strategic health authorities (SHAs), national health service trusts and primary care trusts that have the biggest delivery problems.

An initial assessment is under way to ensure that the organisations that are forecasting the most significant deficits, expected to number 63, have financial control and there are an agreed set of actions to restore financial balance.

Following the initial assessment, the SHA, the Department and the organisation will agree on a tailored package of turnaround support. The chief executives of the most challenged organisations will then be supported in delivering turnaround by turnaround teams.

The turnaround teams will support the NHS in identifying opportunities to deliver services with greater cost-effectiveness and to make financial savings. They will help the local NHS ensure that the NHS delivers both its key targets and financial balance.

Underactive Thyroid

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make funding available for regular blood tests for those with an underactive thyroid. [39240]

Mr. Byrne: Funding is already available for regular blood tests for those diagnosed with an under-active thyroid.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether outpatient waiting lists in England include referrals other than general practitioner letter referrals. [39266]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The current outpatient waiting time target only applies to patients waiting for their first outpatient appointment with a consultant following a general practitioner or dental practitioner referral. It does not include follow-up appointments, consultant to consultant referrals or appointments with non-consultants.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for an appointment to see a general practitioner was in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland in the last period for which figures are available. [31603]

Mr. Byrne: The requested data are not collected or held centrally. Since 2001, data has been collected each month from primary care trusts and general practitioners (GPs) on the availability of access to a general practitioner. This data shows whether access is or is not available in line with "The NHS Plan" target that patients should be able to be seen within 48 hours but do not provide information on actual waiting times. Overwhelmingly patients are able to see a GP within 48 hours if they wish.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times were from general practitioner referral to receipt of counselling services in *(a)* Blackpool, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [37657]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on waiting times for counselling services is not routinely captured by the Department. The Department collects such information for consultant-led services only.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2300W, on waiting times, if she will break the figures down into *(a)* those admitted, *(b)* those transferred and *(c)* those discharged within four hours of arrival in an accident and emergency department since 2002–03. [37950]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not collected on waiting times in accident and emergency (A&E) departments broken down by the reason for leaving A&E. We only collect total time spent in A&E from arrival to departure.

Winter Excess Deaths

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many winter excess deaths there have been in each of the last 25 years *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a percentage of the elderly population, broken down by region; and what recent measures the Government have taken to reduce the number of winter excess deaths. [18657]

Mr. Byrne: Excess winter deaths are available by the Government Office Regions since 1991–92, and are shown in the table. They represent the excess deaths which occurred in the four months December to March, compared with the number expected if the average rate of the four months either side of the winter months applied.

Government Office Regions in England	1991–92	1992–93	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98
Under 85							
North East	1,700	990	1,180	800	1,420	1,550	1,000
North West	3,500	2,580	1,890	2,600	3,690	3,840	1,760
Yorkshire and Humber	2,660	1,410	1,980	1,670	2,510	2,750	1,550
East Midlands	2,050	1,390	1,490	1,670	1,780	2,000	1,190
West Midlands	2,310	1,760	1,460	1,550	2,710	2,800	1,560
East	1,890	1,430	1,730	1,910	2,040	2,670	1,510
London	2,710	2,090	1,910	2,280	2,980	3,540	1,400
South East	2,810	2,360	1,960	2,240	3,480	4,060	1,810
South West	1,930	1,190	1,450	1,750	2,260	2,730	1,220
85 plus							
North East	560	420	440	420	650	680	550
North West	1,480	1,320	1,080	1,190	1,940	2,520	1,010
Yorkshire and Humber	1,320	1,060	1,120	1,100	1,530	1,800	910
East Midlands	1,090	790	980	660	1,140	1,540	820
West Midlands	1,060	830	950	760	1,460	1,740	900
East	1,240	940	1,220	1,090	1,830	2,320	1,030
London	1,540	1,260	1,240	1,230	1,840	2,390	1,120
South East	1,760	1,400	1,780	1,750	2,670	3,600	1,410
South West	1,420	990	1,150	1,100	1,880	2,320	1,020

Government Office Regions in England	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Under 85						
North East	1,450	1,790	1,020	830	940	900
North West	4,460	3,570	2,110	2,450	1,810	2,300
Yorkshire and Humber	2,870	2,720	1,510	1,530	1,220	1,600
East Midlands	2,420	2,210	1,230	1,220	1,030	1,100
West Midlands	2,950	3,200	1,620	1,580	1,430	1,500
East	2,360	2,800	1,240	1,420	1,280	1,300
London	2,780	3,450	1,390	1,430	1,460	1,100
South East	3,450	4,150	1,530	1,740	1,800	1,800
South West	2,030	2,510	1,050	1,360	1,140	1,200
85 plus						
North East	920	880	530	690	330	400
North West	2,880	2,520	1,620	1,590	1,370	1,300
Yorkshire and Humber	1,890	1,900	1,060	1,300	1,010	1,100
East Midlands	1,680	1,620	980	1,080	1,020	800
West Midlands	1,920	2,090	970	1,100	1,170	1,100
East	2,440	2,070	1,190	1,360	1,210	1,000
London	2,160	2,430	1,380	1,310	1,350	1,000
South East	3,260	3,530	1,620	2,390	1,870	1,600
South West	2,100	2,220	1,220	1,370	1,210	1,100

Excess winter mortality as percentage of population as at January 1

Regions in England	1991–92	1992–93	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98
Under 85							
North East	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
North West	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Yorkshire and Humber	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
East Midlands	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
West Midlands	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
East	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
London	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
South East	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
South West	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
85 plus							
North East	1.7	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.4
North West	1.5	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.7	2.2	0.9
Yorkshire and Humber	1.8	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.8	2.1	1.0
East Midlands	1.9	1.3	1.6	1.0	1.7	2.3	1.2
West Midlands	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.8	2.1	1.1
East	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.3	2.0	2.5	1.1
London	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.7	2.1	1.0
South East	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.7	2.3	0.9
South West	1.6	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.8	2.1	0.9

Regions in England	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Under 85						
North East	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
North West	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Yorkshire and Humber	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
East Midlands	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
West Midlands	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
East	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
London	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
South East	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
South West	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
85 plus						
North East	2.3	2.1	1.2	1.6	0.8	0.9
North West	2.4	2.1	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.1
Yorkshire and Humber	2.1	2.1	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.2
East Midlands	2.3	2.2	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.0
West Midlands	2.2	2.3	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2
East	2.5	2.0	1.1	1.3	1.1	0.9
London	1.9	2.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	0.9
South East	2.0	2.1	0.9	1.4	1.1	0.9
South West	1.8	1.9	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9

A wide range of measures has been taken, including:

Flu and pneumococcal immunisation programmes. The United Kingdom has the highest uptake of flu immunisation among eligible groups of any in Europe.

The Keep Warm Keep Well Campaign, launched this year with the flu immunisation campaign, comprising leaflet and helpline based advice on what simple measures older people can take to preserve their health in winter time.

Direct encouragement to the national health service to increase further the many fuel poverty reduction partnerships between the NHS, local authorities (LAs) and, for example, EAGA. These lead to primary care staff being trained and supported, simplified referral routes and rapid response from Warm Front and others. A large proportion of referrals to Warm Front originate from the NHS.

Funding the evaluation of an important collaboration between the NHS and the Met Office, testing the value of health forecasting in the management and self-management of those with chronic chest disease, many of whom are older people.

Helping to set up the health, housing and fuel poverty forum in March 2005 to raise the profile of cold, damp homes, and to mainstream the many innovative activities the NHS is engaged in to address this issue.

Establishing the £60 million partnerships for older people projects fund, against which LAs and their partners have been bidding this year. The focus of these projects is on improving outcomes for older people through preventive interventions. Fuel poverty reduction forms a part of several of the short listed bids.

Close collaboration between the Department and the Energy Retail Association in developing a national home heat advice line, about to be launched.

Assisting with the production of the popular fuel poverty and health toolkit, produced in 2003 by the National Heart Forum, EAGA, the Faculty of Public Health, Help the Aged, and the Met Office.

Women's Health Services

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to improve women's health and fertility services in the NHS. [31502]

Caroline Flint: The Department is committed to improving the health and well being of the general population, including the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The Department is currently taking forward a number of initiatives, including gender specific screening programmes.

Some initiatives address particular aspects of women's health. Examples include work related to the maternity standard of national service framework for children, young people and maternity services. The standard contains a number of recommendations including ones to address improving maternal health and the needs of pregnant women experiencing domestic violence.

The guideline on the assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems, published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in 2004, provides advice to people concerned about delays in conception, including advice on alcohol and drug use, smoking and body weight. It also recommends screening for chlamydia before treatment begins.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received regarding the application of the European working time directive to junior doctors; [33312]

(2) if she will make a statement on the application of the EU working time directive to junior doctors. [33314]

Mr. Byrne: The working time directive (WTD) was implemented for the vast majority of national health service staff groups in 1998 in accordance with regulations. The Government negotiated an extension to the WTD for doctors in training to enable local implementation from August 2004.

This Government are committed to the overall aims of the WTD and to ensuring fair working hours for all NHS staff.

Representations have been received regarding the application of the WTD from the medical Royal Colleges.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Airspace (Extraordinary Rendition)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1653W, to the right hon. and learned Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell), on terrorist suspects (renditions), what *(a)* records and *(b)* agencies were consulted by officials researching whether the United States had requested permission for a rendition through UK territory or airspace; whether he has asked the US Administration (i) how many US flights carrying detainees have passed through UK territory or airspace to other countries for questioning and (ii) whether the US Administration maintains records of requests for permission for renditions since 1997; and what plans he has to reform the system of record keeping in this area in the future. [38961]

Dr. Howells: Officials have consulted relevant records, and individual recollections, in the Home Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and intelligence agencies. They continue to check further. Any future United States (US) request for permission to rendite an individual through UK territory or airspace will be carefully recorded by British officials. Maintenance of records by US officials is a matter for the US Administration.

We have discussed rendition with the US Administration. The US Secretary of State made clear in her statement of 5 December available at www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/57602.htm that:

> The United States has respected—and will continue to respect—the sovereignty of other countries.
>
> The United States does not transport, and has not transported, detainees from one country to another for the purpose of interrogation using torture.
>
> The United States does not use the airspace or the airports of any country for the purpose of transporting a detainee to a country where he or she will be tortured.
>
> The United States has not transported anyone, and will not transport anyone, to a country when we believe he will be tortured. Where appropriate, the United States seeks assurances that transferred persons will not be tortured.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government has asked the United States Administration whether the Gulfstream V aircraft that transited at Prestwick on 15 January 2002 was a rendition flight. [38963]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear in his response to the right hon. Member for Ross, Skye and Lochaber (Mr. Kennedy) at Prime Minister's Question Time on 14 December 2005, it would be absurd for the Government to investigate every flight transiting the UK which may have a connection to the United States Government.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the annual agreement between the US and the UK about flights into the UK originating in the US was last agreed; what changes if any were made; and if he will make a statement. [37218]

Ian Pearson: There is no annual agreement of the kind mentioned by the right hon. and learned Member. Administrative arrangements have been in place since 1949 under which on a reciprocal basis US and UK military and State aircraft have clearance to land at military airfields in each other's territory.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1043W, on airspace (extraordinary rendition), what the *(a)* terms and *(b)* procedures are of the bilateral Air Services Agreement between the US and UK relating to (i) flights originating in the US into the UK and (ii) flights originating in third countries into the UK on their way to the US; when this agreement was last renewed; what changes have been agreed to it, on what dates, in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [37276]

Dr. Howells: The Air Services Agreement (ASA) between the Governments of the United States (US) and United Kingdom was signed on 23 July 1977 and has been subject to a number of amendments, some of which have been the subject of formal exchanges of notes and some of which are applied administratively between the two Governments. Copies of the agreement and of the formal exchanges of notes amending it are available in the Library of the House (Command Papers 7016, 7332, 8222, 9720, 792 and 793). The most recent amendment to this agreement was made in April 2000.

The ASA sets out the framework for commercial air services between the two countries. It deals with matters such as designation and authorisation of airlines, security, competition, tariffs and other matters. It sets out the routes (city pairs) that can be operated and imposes certain restrictions on services operated from Heathrow and Gatwick. Negotiations between the EU and US about the possible replacement of the national bilateral agreements with a single agreement between the European Community, the member states and the US are at an advanced stage.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for North East Fife of 9 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1652–53W, on terrorist suspects (rendition), whether the US Administration has ever *(a)* sought permission for and *(b)* conducted extraordinary rendition of terrorist suspects via the UK's (i) dependent territories and (ii) sovereign bases. [39407]

Dr. Howells: As far as we are aware, the US Administration has neither sought permission to conduct, nor actually conducted, extraordinary rendition of terrorist suspects via the UK's Overseas Territories, including the Sovereign Base Areas.

Arms Trade

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions his Department has had with his counterparts in *(a)* the US and *(b)* the EU regarding the arms trade, with particular reference to (i) arms reduction and (ii) a total global arms ban. [40397]

Dr. Howells: We have regular bilateral and multilateral contacts both with our EU partners and with the United States to discuss the global trade in conventional arms, including our shared concerns over the irresponsible proliferation of these weapons.

While we have had no discussions about a total global arms ban, which we do not support, the Government are championing the elaboration of an international treaty on the arms trade and is working to secure the broad international consensus required to make this a reality. The G8 Summit at Gleaneagles in July agreed that

> "the development of international standards in arms transfers . . . would be an important step toward tackling the undesirable proliferation of conventional arms".

On 3 October, EU Foreign Ministers added the European Union's voice to the growing support for international treaty, and called for a formal process of negotiation to begin at the United Nations at the earliest opportunity. Commonwealth Heads of Government echoed the call for the start of a UN process toward a treaty when they met for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta in November.

Bangladesh

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest assessment is of human rights in Bangladesh; and if he will make a statement. [39612]

Dr. Howells: The human rights situation in Bangladesh is not good and appears to be deteriorating. We have serious concerns about reports of extra-judicial killings and torture by the Rapid Action Battalion and the civilian police. The persecution of religious and ethnic minorities, including the Ahmadiyyas, Hindus and Christians and indigenous groups is also a serious issue. We also have ongoing concerns about use of the death penalty and legal and penal systems that do not have the appropriate probity or capacity and about the safeguarding of women's and children's rights along with those of the disabled and other vulnerable groups.

During my visit to Bangladesh in November 2005, I underlined the UK's commitment to support human rights in Bangladesh during discussions with senior government representatives, human rights campaigners and representatives of religious and ethnic minorities. I also drew attention to this in a widely reported speech.

We accord human rights related work a very high priority in Bangladesh. The British high commission in Dhaka is actively engaged in promoting human rights in Bangladesh and raises human rights issues with the Government of Bangladesh on a regular basis. They have frequent contacts with human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and provide funding to NGOs for human rights based programmes.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Bangladesh concerning the security of high commission staff following the attempt on the life of the British high commissioner. [39617]

Dr. Howells: The security of staff is a top priority and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) makes every effort to manage the risk and fulfil its duty of care to all its staff world-wide. Since the grenade attack in Sylhet in May 2004 in which the British high commissioner was injured, we have taken every available opportunity to stress to the Government of Bangladesh the importance of bringing the perpetrators to justice, not least for the relatives of those who tragically died. It is obviously vital for the Government of Bangladesh to conclude credible investigations into this, and other attacks, as soon as possible.

Most recently, during my visit to Bangladesh in November 2005, I spoke to senior members of the Government of Bangladesh about our concern at the failure so far to bring the perpetrators to justice. Before that on 4 October 2005, Sir Michael Jay, permanent under secretary at the FCO raised this with his direct counterpart Mr. Hemayetuddin. The high commissioner in Dhaka and other officials continue to raise the case on a regular basis at senior level with the Government's representatives.

Brazil

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Brazil on *(a)* reform of the police service, *(b)* extra-judicial killings and *(c)* respect for human rights. [40589]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government regularly raises with the Brazilian Government, bilaterally and with our European partners, the importance we attach to human rights, including police reform and tackling extra-judicial killings. The then Under-Secretary of State responsible for relations with Latin America, my hon. Friend the Member for Harlow (Bill Rammell) raised human rights issues with the Brazilian Government at the UK-Brazil High Level Political talks in February 2005 and our ambassador in Brasilia discussed these issues with senior members of the Brazilian judiciary and Ministry of Justice at a seminar in Brasilia funded by the British Government in December 2005.

Although serious abuses of human rights continue to take place in Brazil, we believe that the Brazilian authorities recognise the scale of the problem. Combating extra-judicial killings by law enforcement officials is a priority for Brazil's Sub-Secretariat for Human Rights. In addition, the Government support various projects with Brazilian partners to combat torture and improve the police and penal system. Our work enjoys the full support of the authorities both at local and federal level. We will continue to work with the Brazilian authorities and with Brazilian civil society to help address the various root causes of these problems.

China

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last discussed the lifting of the EU embargo on arms exports to China with the US Secretary of State. [37279]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary last discussed this issue, with the US Secretary of State, in May 2005. We have since established an EU-US Strategic Dialogue for discussion of security issues in East Asia.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of China about its persecution of practitioners of Falun Gong. [39670]

Ian Pearson: We continue to raise human rights abuses against Falun Gong practitioners with the Chinese Government, for example at the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in June 2005, and among individual cases of concern on which we have sought responses from the Chinese authorities. Cases of Falun Gong practitioners were also raised at the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in October 2005.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of China on the use of torture. [40430]

Ian Pearson: The Government urge China to end the use of torture. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised the visit to China of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak, with Premier Wen Jiabao at the EU-China summit in September 2005. The EU, under the UK Presidency, raised the use of torture at the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in October 2005. The issue was also discussed at the EU-China seminar on the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in December 2005, and at the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in June 2005. We have raised individual cases of alleged torture with the Chinese Government, most recently in Beijing in December 2005. We will continue to raise this issue with the Chinese authorities.

Coca Cultivation

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the statement by Bolivian Presidential candidate, Evo Morales, that he will lift the ban on coca cultivation in the Chapere region. [40429]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: It is for the new Bolivian Government to establish the overall direction of policy on coca cultivation but the UK hopes Bolivia will continue to respect international agreements already committed to. Where possible, we hope to continue to assist the Bolivian Government in its efforts to tackle drug trafficking.

Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on its proposed constitutional referendum. [39626]

Ian Pearson: The referendum on the new Congolese constitution took place on the 18 and 19 December 2005. Prior to the referendum, the UK, together with EU partners, pressed the Congolese authorities to work towards a peaceful and successful outcome. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development emphasised this point during his November visit to the region.

We have congratulated the Congolese authorities on the referendum's successful completion. We continue to urge the Congolese Government and National Assembly to complete parliamentary consideration and ratification of the draft Electoral Law. This will maintain the momentum of the political process and ensure that the envisaged timetable for elections before 30 June 2006 can be met.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the demobilisation process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [40367]

Ian Pearson: The UK continues to support the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (MONUC), which is working with the DRC armed forces to demobilise militias. MONUC has already demobilised 17,500 former combatants and repatriated over 13,000 foreign combatants. The process has slowed in recent months and we continue to press the DRC Government to accelerate its efforts to disarm militias and integrate all combatants into the national army or civilian life.

The UK has committed £25 million to the Multi-Donor Regional Programme for Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration. We have also contributed two of the eight officers in the EU's Security Sector Reform Mission, which offers advice and assistance to the Government in integrating rebel factions into a unified army prior to elections.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what monitoring of the recent referendum in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was undertaken by UK representatives; and if he will make a statement. [40368]

Ian Pearson: The EU sent an official Electoral Observation mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UK representatives from the British embassy in Kinshasa also observed the constitutional referendum across the country on 18 and 19 December 2005. Despite the logistical challenges of organising a referendum in such a vast country, it took place in a largely peaceful and positive atmosphere, and the turnout was high.

We welcome the outcome of the referendum: the strong endorsement of the draft constitution underlines the desire of the Congolese people for completion of the transition to full democratic government as soon as possible.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of respect for human rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [40558]

Ian Pearson: The human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains poor. Years of conflict, exacerbated by corruption, illegal exploitation of resources, the collapse of the state

and chronic poverty, have led to human rights violations and abuses of humanitarian standards by all sides.

The UK continues to remind the DRC authorities of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups and to bring to justice all perpetrators of abuse. An EU-led Security Council Resolution on the DRC, adopted at last year's UN General Assembly, makes clear that the DRC Government must take action to improve human rights conditions, through better command and control of the armed forces, improved freedom of expression and better protection for human rights defenders.

The DRC is undergoing a process of political transition, which is expected to culminate in the election of a fully democratic government by mid-2006. This should provide the framework for sustained improvements in the human rights situation.

Correspondence

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill of 13 December 2005 concerning the case of the late James McInally, who died in Turkey. [39467]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right. hon. Friend's letter was received by consular directorate on 21 December 2005 and a reply issued on 4 January 2006.

Departmental Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many secondees there have been to his Department from consultancy firms, including the Big Four accountancy firms, in each of the last three years; and what areas of the Department they have worked in. [37358]

Mr. Straw: There has been one secondment in the past three years. The secondee came from PricewaterhouseCoopers and worked in the Inward Investment Group, United Kingdom Trade and Investment from 27 March 2002 until 31 March 2005.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39065]

Mr. Straw: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total administrative costs of his core Department were in the last year for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39836]

Mr. Straw: The total administration out turn for 2004–05 as shown in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Resource Accounts was £752,907,000. For the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses, these costs are non-identifiable, being in the general national interest and not identifiable against particular individuals or regions.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39851]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has responsibility for Wilton Park, which is run as an Executive Agency. Wilton Park's Resource Accounts are published for financial year 2004–05 as part of the Wilton Park Executive Agency Annual Report and Accounts, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House (publication reference HC 234).

Within the Financial Statements section of the Annual Report, the Operating Cost Statement shows Total Administration Costs of £3,332,000-comprising Staff Costs of £1,932,000 and Other Administration Costs of £1,400,000. Details of what is included under this category are provided in Note 5 to the Accounts.

These costs are regarded as identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analysis.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40335]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Guidance (Evidence/Documentary Access)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is with regard to *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department giving evidence to the (i) Scottish Parliament, (ii) National Assembly for Wales and (iii) Northern Ireland Assembly committees; and to what categories of document he gives (A) full access, (B) restricted access and (C) no access to the (1) Scottish Parliament, (2) National Assembly for Wales, (3) Northern Ireland Assembly and (4) House of Commons select committees. [37415]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no obligation for Ministers or officials to give evidence to Parliamentary Committees of the Devolved Assemblies. However, Ministers for Europe have appeared before the European and External Relations Committee of the Scottish Parliament. Most recently, the former Europe Minister, my right hon. Friend for Rotherham (Dr. MacShane) appeared before the Committee on 7 January 2004. Foreign and Commonwealth Office

(FCO) officials attended the European and External Affairs Committee of the Welsh Assembly also in September 2005. We would consider requests to appear before all Devolved Assembly Committees on a case by case basis.

Official documents are released to the Devolved Assemblies on an "as necessary basis", based upon the 2001 Memorandum of Understanding which agrees that each administration will aim to provide any information that may be reasonably requested by another administration to enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively, provided that *(a)* this is practicable, *(b)* it would not involve disproportionate cost and *(c)* the information is available in reasonably accessible form (Part 1 para 10).

The FCO always seeks to respond positively to all requests to provide documents to select committees of the House in accordance with Ministers' general duties to account to Parliament for the policies, decisions and actions of their Departments. Special arrangements are made for classified documents.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40290]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not hold this information centrally and disproportionate time and resources would be needed to answer this question fully. However, the FCO does have a flexible working scheme which enables all staff to request to work flexibly. Examples of flexible working which our staff currently do include job-sharing, working from home and other remote locations, reduced hours, and condensed hours. As part of the FCO's work to improve the diversity of its workforce, we are constantly looking at ways to encourage more flexible working opportunities for staff.

Diplomatic Staff (Complaints)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* complaints and *(b)* grievances made by diplomatic staff to the management and individuals in the Senior Management structure of his Office *(a)* remain to be determined and *(b)* are unresolved; and what the duration of each outstanding complaint or grievance was from the date it was first lodged. [40490]

Mr. Straw: There are no grievances made by diplomatic staff that remain to be determined or that are unresolved under the Department's internal Grievance Procedure, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Grievance Procedure encourages informal resolution of complaints in accordance with best practice guidelines. No record is kept centrally of such complaints unless attempts at informal resolution are unsuccessful and the formal procedure is invoked.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions in the past five years complaints or grievances made by diplomatic staff against the management and individuals in senior management of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been withdrawn following the payment of money in full and final settlements; and if he will make a statement. [40505]

Mr. Straw: No grievances invoked under the Department's internal procedure, a copy of which is in the Library of the House, have been withdrawn following the payment of money in the past five years.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Joint Committee (EEC-Andora), *(b)* EC-Armenia Co-operation Committee and *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-Estonia) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39036]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The first ever EC-Andorra Joint Committee meeting was held on 25 November this year, chaired by the European Commission. No UK representatives were present.

There have been no meetings of the Co-operation Committee with Armenia during the UK presidency and the EEC-Estonia Joint Committee no longer exists.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Joint Committee (EC-Romania) and *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-Bulgaria) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39037]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There are no Joint Committees as such, but there are EU-Association Committees for both Bulgaria and Romania. One meeting of the EU-Romania Association Committee has taken place under the UK presidency, on 15 July in Bucharest. This was chaired by the European Commission. A representative of the UK presidency was present as an observer. The EU-Bulgaria Association Committee has not met under our presidency. No provision was made for representation of the devolved governments at these meetings.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* EC-Kazakhstan Co-operation Committee, *(b)* EC-Azerbaijan Co-operation Committee and *(c)* EC-Kyrgyzstan Co-operation Committee have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39042]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: During the UK presidency, there were no meetings of the Co-operation Committees with Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

A Co-operation Committee with Kyrgyzstan took place on 27 September in Brussels. Mr. Kurt Juul, European Commission, led the EU delegation. Mr. Kadyrbek Sarbaev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, led the Kyrgyzstan delegation. For the Presidency, Mr. Simon Smith, Director Russia, South Caucasus and Central Asia at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, attended. No provision was made for representation of the devolved administrations at this meeting.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* EC-Uzbekistan Co-operation Committee, *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-Turkey) and *(c)* Joint Committee (EC-Albania) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39043]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There were no meetings of the Co-operation Committee with Uzbekistan during the UK Presidency.

One meeting of the EC-Turkey Customs Union Joint Committee was held in Ankara on 13 December. The delegations were led by a Director-General from the European Commission and a Director-General from the Turkish Under-secretariat for Foreign Trade. British embassy officials in Ankara attended the meeting as observers.

There were no Joint Committee (EC-Albania) meetings held during the UK Presidency.

No provision was made for representation of the devolved administrations at these meetings.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on financial and technical assistance and economic cooperation with developing countries in Asia and Latin America, *(b)* Committee on the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law and on the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms and *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-Mongolia) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39048]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Asia/Latin America Committee met four times during the UK Presidency, in July, September, October and November. The EU Committee on Human Rights and Democracy met once, in October. All these meetings were chaired by senior officials from the European Commission, with attendance by officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development. No provision was made for representation of the devolved administrations at these meetings.

There have been no meetings of the EC/Mongolia Joint Committee during the UK Presidency.

Foreign Decorations

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Lewis) of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1558W, on foreign decorations, what the outcome of the Committee's considerations was. [39263]

Mr. Straw: The Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals' recommendations will be presented to the Queen shortly. An announcement about the Pingat Jasa Malaysia will be made as quickly as possible.

Immigration

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many applications to the UK visas section in Islamabad by persons seeking *(a)* work permits and *(b)* visas to come to the UK to take up employment in the restaurant trade have been (i) granted and (ii) refused in each of the last five years; and how many of those refused were granted an appeal. [38363]

Dr. Howells: It is not currently possible to break down UKvisas statistics on work permit applications by the type of work permit the applicant holds. There are various types of work permit and schemes, of which the Sectors Based Scheme (SBS) is one. The SBS was introduced in May 2003. However, the total number of work permit holder applications received, issued and refused by the visa section in Islamabad in each of the last five years is given as follows. The figures refer to applications for all types of work permit.

	Received	*Issued*	*Refused*
2000	512	474	38
2001–02	863	768	95
2002–03	1,197	1,079	118
2003–04	3,997	2,969	1,028
2004–05	4,496	2,442	2,054

Source:
UKvisas published statistics (www.ukvisas.gov.uk). Please note that prior to financial year 2001–02, statistics were published by calendar year.

All applicants for entry clearance as a work permit holder are granted the right of appeal, providing the work permit is valid and the applicant meets any age requirements.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment is made of the knowledge of the restaurant trade of persons seeking *(a)* work permits and *(b)* visas from the UK visa section in Islamabad to travel to the UK to take up employment in that trade; [38364]

(2) what assessment is made by the UK visas section in Islamabad of the requirement of sponsoring persons in the UK restaurant trade to employ people with knowledge of Asian cuisine when considering applications by those seeking *(a)* work permits and *(b)* visas. [38365]

Dr. Howells: People who wanted to come to the UK to work in the restaurant trade had to acquire an immigration employment document (a form of work permit) under the Sectors Based Scheme (SBS). The SBS allowed workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) to take up low skill jobs within certain industry sectors for up to 12 months in the UK. On 31 July 2005, the Home Office announced the closure of the hospitality sector of the scheme, which encompasses the restaurant trade.

All work permit schemes are administered by Work Permits UK (WP (UK)), a division of the Home Office, and they decide all work permit applications by assessing the application against certain criteria of the labour market. For example, WP (UK) will check that the job exists, has been adequately advertised locally and within the EEA and that the proposed job complies with UK labour law and the national minimum wage. As the SBS is for low skill jobs, there is no requirement to employ people with extensive knowledge of a trade. An employer needs only to be aware that a potential employee has a basic understanding of the job they have been offered.

Once an immigration employment document has been issued under the SBS, the holder should apply for entry clearance. An Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) at one of our visa sections must assess this application against the requirements of paragraph 135 (I) of the Immigration Rules, which are available at www.indhomeoffice.gov.uk.

ECOs are not asked to assess an applicant's job skills, although they should defer an application and consult WP (UK) if there are obvious doubts about the applicant's physical and/or professional ability to undertake the employment specified and the applicant is unable to give a satisfactory explanation.

Interrogation

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what inquiries his Department has made of the use of sensory deprivation as an interrogation technique in foreign countries; whether his Department's travel advice for such countries takes account of such practices where there is sound evidence that they are carried out; and if he will make a statement. [38820]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) takes a keen interest in the security and human rights situations in foreign countries. The FCO's travel advice is produced on the basis of all available information relating to risks to British nationals in the country concerned. These will include risks from crime, terrorism and traffic accidents, as well as any other key relevant concerns.

Iran

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the E3 have had with Iran since 20 December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [40420]

Dr. Howells: E3/EU officials met an Iranian delegation in Vienna on 21 December 2005. The aim was to explore the scope for re-establishing an acceptable framework under which negotiations on long-term arrangements for Iran's nuclear programme might resume. The E3/EU pressed Iran to take steps that would build international confidence that its nuclear programme is for solely peaceful purposes and to address in full the requests of the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors. The two sides agreed to hold a further exploratory meeting in January.

Israeli Activities (West Bank)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what factors underlay the decision at the recent EU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Brussels not to publish the report by the British Consulate in Jerusalem on Israel's expansionist activities in East Jerusalem and the West Bank; and if he will make a statement. [39875]

Dr. Howells: As my right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said after the 12 December 2005 General Affairs and External Relations Council,

> "we discussed the EU analysis on East Jerusalem submitted to Ministers by heads of mission in the region as well as by various committees here in Brussels. We decided given the changed circumstances in Israel and the Occupied Territories that this would not be endorsed or published and instead that we would continue to make strong representations to the Government of Israel about the matter."

Jamaica

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Jamaica on the legality of homosexuality. [40553]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There has been no recent discussion of the issue but our position is well-known. Homosexuality is not illegal in Jamaica, although the country's sodomy laws criminalise certain sexual acts. The Jamaican Deputy Education Minister recently proposed a parliamentary debate on the possible repeal of the relevant legislation. The Government continue to monitor the situation and would welcome such a debate.

Kenya

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Kenya on *(a)* tackling corruption and *(b)* promoting good governance. [40534]

Ian Pearson: The British High Commissioner in Nairobi met with President Kibaki on 7 November. On Friday 25 November they met again, along with the High Commissioner's US, Canadian and Swedish colleagues.

Governance issues were discussed as well as the outcome of the referendum vote on the draft constitution on 21 November. The referendum was professionally and fairly administered and the outcome promptly accepted by the President, an important step for democratic accountability in Kenya. At the meeting on 25 November we highlighted the opportunity before the President to constitute a government that was committed to reforms, implementing services and acting against corruption.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the defeat of the proposed new constitution in Kenya in November. [40551]

Ian Pearson: In a referendum on a new constitution held on 21 November, 57 per cent. of the Kenyan electorate rejected the draft. As noted in a statement issued on 24 November by a number of diplomatic missions in Nairobi, the Electoral Commission of Kenya conducted a professional referendum process, the outcome of which was accepted by the Kenyan people and the President.

On 23 November President Kibaki dissolved his cabinet. On 7 December he announced a new team having declared the need for a more cohesive, balanced cabinet, better placed to deliver services and broad based development. Although this process is still on-going, we believe President Kibaki has a renewed opportunity to commit his government to on-going reform and the drive against corruption.

Northern Cyprus

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on the purchase and development by British citizens of misappropriated land in Northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [39408]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government warn British citizens of the risks of purchasing property in northern Cyprus that arise from the international community's non-recognition of the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", the property implications of any future settlement and the claims to ownership of Cypriots displaced in 1974.

We further warn British citizens that they may face legal proceedings in the Cypriot courts and elsewhere in the EU, including the UK. The Government strongly advises British citizens to seek independent legal advice. This information is publicly available through our Travel Advice on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website (www.fco.gov.uk) and given in response to all inquiries.

Norway (Whaling)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Norwegian Government regarding cleaning up of Norwegian former whaling stations in South Georgia. [40758]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In April 2003 the Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands visited Norway to discuss this matter with the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment and the Directorate for Cultural Heritage. There have been a number of discussions since. Norway has not been involved in environmental clean-up work on South Georgia, but the Ministry of the Environment signalled last year its intention to contribute to projects for preserving the cultural heritage of its whaling activities on the Island. As a contribution to this work, last June the Norwegian County of Vestfold pledged £50,000.

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has put forward names of British women to the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues to the Secretary General to be placed on the central roster of candidates in accordance with Article 3 of the Security Council Resolution 1325. [39307]

Ian Pearson: The UK Mission to the United Nations in New York has forwarded the CVs of 11 British women, received from the Women's National Commission, to the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI). OSAGI has contacted successful applicants direct.

Orhan Pamuk

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Turkey on the prosecution of Orhan Pamuk; [40428]

(2) what assessment he has made of the implications of the prosecution of Orhan Pamuk for Turkish membership of the EU. [40494]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given in another place by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, on 20 December to the noble Lord Judd (HL2879).

Public Relations Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39066]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, its Diplomatic Missions overseas and its non-departmental public bodies occasionally employ public relations companies but details are not recorded centrally. To provide a breakdown listing individual PR contracts signed by the Department and the bodies for which it is responsible could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Russia (Missiles Sales)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Russia on the sale of missiles to Iran. [40588]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We are in close touch with the Russians about Iran, both bilaterally and through the EU, and as part of the E3/EU. We have made clear our concerns about Russian arms sales to Iran in a number of recent exchanges at official level, including on 6, 9 and 13 December. The established policy of the EU is not to sell arms to Iran.

Uganda

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps the Government are taking as chair of the UN Security Council towards a resolution of the conflict in Northern Uganda; and if he will make a statement; [38232]

(2) what discussions his Department has had with the Government of Uganda on the access of UK non-governmental organisations to the north of Uganda; [38233]

(3) how many *(a)* letters, *(b)* faxes and *(c)* emails his Department has received from members of the public about the conflict in Northern Uganda since 1 December; and if he will make a statement; [38234]

(4) what support the UK Government are giving the Government of Uganda to facilitate a peaceful solution to the conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army; and if he will make a statement. [38235]

Ian Pearson: Assisting in the resolution of the conflict in Northern Uganda, and addressing its humanitarian impact, are priorities for the Government. During the UK's presidency of the United Nations (UN) Security Council in December 2005, we invited Jan Egeland, the UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, to provide a briefing on humanitarian issues in Africa. This took place on 19 December and included the situation in Northern Uganda. A group of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have written to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary advocating a UN Security Council Resolution. This has since been supplemented to date by correspondence from about 1,000 members of the public. We are currently considering their ideas and how we can most effectively continue to address the situation in Northern Uganda.

In our discussions with the Ugandan Government, we emphasise the need to bring peace to Northern Uganda, provide adequate protection for the people of the North and those NGOs and aid agencies working there, and encourage those Lord's Resistance Army members not indicted by the International Criminal Court to seek amnesty and reintegration into their communities.

The UK has also provided support for specific peace initiatives, including the recent mediation effort led by Betty Bigombe, a former Ugandan Minister. We provide practical help to the Ugandan Amnesty Commission, which is helping to reintegrate former combatants, and have also helped establish a local radio station, MEGA FM, which, through its programming, helps promote peace.

UK Embassies/Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British *(a)* embassies and *(b)* consulates there are. [39863]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The United Kingdom has 102 embassies, 40 high commissions, and 76 consulates.

United States (Treatment of Prisoners)

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made to the United States Administration about the amendment to the US 2006 Defence Appropriations Bill which would forbid the use of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment against any person in the custody of or controlled by the United States in any part of the world. [39315]

Dr. Howells: We welcome the recent agreement in the US to incorporate language into the Defence Appropriations Bill explicitly prohibiting the use of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by US personnel anywhere in the world. This sends a positive message that the US is committed to fighting terrorism while reaffirming its adherence to the rule of law and its respect for human rights. All forms of torture are of course strictly prohibited under US law and, as Secretary Rice and President Bush both recently clarified, this applies to all US personnel around the world.

We continue to engage fully and frankly with the US on these issues.

World Trade Organisation

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the EU's proposal for World Trade Organisation negotiations. [35753]

Ian Pearson: The European Commission is bound by a negotiating mandate granted by the Council of Ministers but has the freedom to determine strategy and tactics within the parameters of that mandate. The assessment of Her Majesty's Government is that the "offers" tabled by the European Commission on 10 and 28 October are within the remit of the negotiating mandate.

Her Majesty's Government continues to give its full backing to Trade Commissioner, Peter Mandelson, in his conduct of the negotiations and is committed to achieving an ambitious, pro-development conclusion to the DDA by the end of 2006.

I refer the hon. Member to the Statement to the House made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 20 December 2005.

Zimbabwe/Congo

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on recent developments in Zimbabwe. [40617]

Ian Pearson: Zimbabweans continue to suffer from the failure of their government's policies: the economy is shrinking, inflation is over 500 per cent. and millions require international food aid. Six months after mass housing demolitions, many Zimbabweans remain homeless. Meanwhile, the November 2005 Senate elections have done nothing to restore democratic governance.

The Government have responded by: providing further humanitarian aid to Zimbabweans, £40 million in 2005; maintaining a firm EU approach; focusing United Nations Security Council attention on the

matter; and pressing Zimbabwe's neighbours to address the continuing economic, humanitarian and political crisis created by the Government of Zimbabwe.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the safety and security of civilians in *(a)* Zimbabwe and *(b)* the Democratic Republic of Congo. [40556]

Ian Pearson: Zimbabweans continue to face politically motivated violence and intimidation perpetrated by the state. For instance, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Non-Governmental Organisations Forum estimates that there were 43 cases of assault in October 2005, most by the army or police. On 5 December, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted a resolution expressing concern about the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. This is available at http://www.zlhr.org.zw/media/releases/jan_02_06.htm

Years of conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), exacerbated by corruption, illegal exploitation of resources and the collapse of the state, have led to human rights abuses and a high level of crime. Security Sector Reform is one of the primary aims of the EU's support to the DRC transitional government. We hope that the political transition in the DRC will culminate in the election of a democratic government by mid-2006, which should provide the framework for sustained improvements in the security and human rights situation.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office website (www.fco.gov.uk) provides travel advice for Zimbabwe and the DRC, warning of the risks to travellers, and providing background information on the human rights situation.

CABINET OFFICE

Central Information Office

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many civil service persons are employed in the Central Information Office; and how many were employed in 1997. [39656]

Mr. Jim Murphy: At the end of November 2005 there were 646.7 full-time equivalent staff, including fixed term contract staff employed in the Central Office of Information.

The corresponding figure for 1997 (1996–97 outturn) was 500.8.

Civil Service

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when he expects to be in a position to bring forward a Civil Service Bill. [39654]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I provided on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 159 to the my hon. Friend the Member for Cannock Chase (Dr. Wright).

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40342]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The provision of water dispensers/coolers in the Cabinet Office, which are located in reception and common areas, are provided as part of the total facilities management contract. The cost in 2004–05 was £23,000. The figure excludes the National School for Government in Sunningdale and the Emergency Planning College in York as such costs are included within an overall service charge paid as part of a public private partnership/private finance initiative and multi-activity facilities management contract, respectively.

Costs identified for the provision of bottled water for hospitality purposes would not fully reflect the Cabinet Office as a whole as other such costs are either included within an overall service charge and therefore cannot be separately identified or obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40297]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Cabinet Office does not hold figures on the number of employees who have worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year.

Cabinet Office recognises occasional working from home as an option available to employees within our flexible working policy. The policy also includes flexi-time, condensed hours and part-time/term time working. Employees agree their work patterns with line managers, and these are managed at local unit levels. Employees can participate in a formal departmental staff network for those working part-time and alternative working patterns.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster which companies provided sponsorship towards the cost of his Department's getsafeonline website; how much each provided; and if he will make a statement. [39426]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Get Safe Online is a joint public and private sector initiative to raise awareness of internet security among the general public and micro-businesses. Its main emphasis is a new website, www.getsafeonline.org, which provides reliable, trustworthy and up-to-date information about online safety to give home users and small businesses the advice they need to use the internet safely.

There are 10 founding sponsors of Get Safe Online including the Cabinet Office. Each of the following organisations has contributed £150,000 including advertising/public relations contributions to the promotion of the campaign: BT, Cabinet Office, Dell, eBay, HSBC, Lloyds TSB, Message Labs, Microsoft, Secure Trading and Yell.com.

Both industry and Government have an interest in making the internet a safe place for people to go about their business. Just as the retail and financial sectors need to ensure that their customers feel secure in shopping and banking online so do we in Government want to make sure that people have the necessary trust and confidence in using Government services online.

We are very pleased to be involved in Get Safe Online. It has been a very good example of Government, private sector and law enforcement coming together to address an issue that affects us all. We are continuing our involvement and will work with the other sponsors to ensure the ongoing success of the campaign.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many IT companies have provided sponsorship for his Department's getsafeonline website; and which of these companies are UK-based. [39734]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Get Safe Online is a joint public and private sector initiative to raise awareness of internet security among the general public and micro-businesses. Its main emphasis is a new website, www.getsafeonline.org, which provides reliable, trustworthy and up-to-date information about online safety to give home users and small businesses the advice they need to use the internet safely.

The campaign is driven by sponsorship in from Government as well as the retail, financial and technology sectors. There are three sponsor organisations which could be broadly termed as information technology companies. These are: Dell, Message Labs and Microsoft. Of these, Message Labs is the only UK based company. The sponsorship provided by these companies and the other sponsors is not only for the website but for the marketing and public relations activity to promote awareness of internet security as well as the website.

Government Information Service

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the running costs of the Government Information Service were in each year since 1997. [39657]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Government Communication Group (GCG) in the Cabinet Office is the central unit now responsible for standards in Government communication, the professional network for Government communicators and cross-departmental co-ordination of communications. Its expenditure and that of its predecessor the Government Information and Communication Service are shown in the table; no figures are available for years before 1998–99. GCG's budget allocation for 2005–06 is £2,388,000.

Expenditure of Government Information and Communication Service

£000

	Expenditure
1998–99	543
1999–2000	513
2000–01	570
2001–02	805
2002–03	4,510
2003–04	2,374
2004–05	1,295

Costs have varied significantly over this period as various functions have been transferred into and out of GCG/GICS and it has taken on new projects. The most significant changes have been:

responsibility for emergency communications co-ordination from 2001–02 to 2003–04;

organising HM Queen's Jubilee media facilities in 2002–03;

the 2005–06 Budget reflects the impact of implementing the Phillis review, an independent review of Government communications, which the Government accepted in 2004 and which established a new Government communication network and a Government communication group, including responsibility for co-ordinating cross-departmental communication issues.

Ministerial Committee on London

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many times the Ministerial Committee on London has met in the last 12 months. [39484]

Mr. Jim Murphy: It has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees, including the number of times they have met.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

African Parliaments

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the Government have taken to establish partnerships to strengthen *(a)* parliaments in Africa and *(b)* the pan-African Parliament since the publication of the Commission for Africa report; and if he will make a statement. [39415]

Hilary Benn: In support of partnerships to strengthen African Parliaments, DFID has recently provided £282,000 to the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (PNoWB) to support the establishment of three new African 'Chapters' (or regional networks). The PNoWB will help build the capacity of parliamentarians in Africa to be more effective advocates for national policies and plans focused on tackling poverty. This will be achieved through enhancing their role as legislators, and strengthening their capacity to hold their Governments to account and scrutinise the role of donors. Our support will also help build links with developed country Parliaments and development partners, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the African Union (AU) and the African Union-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU/NEPAD), and other parliamentary organisations in Africa.

The PAP receives its core funding from the AU's regular budget. It held its first inaugural session in March 2004, and as a young organisation is still primarily focused on adopting its rules and procedures. DFID has not, as yet received any request for funds for support to the PAP, but would be happy to consider such a request in due course.

Coca Production

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department has given to facilitate sustainable alternatives to coca production in the Andes region. [40591]

Hilary Benn: The most recent bilateral project supported by DFID on coca production in the Andes region was in the Lower Huallaga Valley of Peru, which aimed to promote economic and institutional development and increase rural incomes in order to reduce the illegal cultivation of coca. This six year project with a commitment of £3.2 million ended in December 2004. Assistance in the Andes region is now part of DFID's Regional Assistance Plan for Latin America, working closely with International Finance Institutions (particularly the World Bank and Inter American Development Bank) to improve the poverty impact of their programmes in the region.

Programmes to develop sustainable alternatives to coca production are an important element of the European Union's assistance to the region, which DFID supports through its 18 per cent. contribution. The EU has Country Assistance Strategies with each Andean region country that are consistent with EU policies and those of country governments. The fight against drugs takes a special place in the EU's relationship with the Andean region, with a unique EU-Andean region High Level Specialised Dialogue on Drugs. The EU has welcomed the recent Comprehensive Andean Strategy on Alternative Development.

Congo

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total staffing level is of his Department's office in Congo; and what the expected level is for 2006–07. [39925]

Hilary Benn: The DFID office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) currently has a complement of 33 permanent members of staff. Staff numbers are due to increase to 35 during 2006.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support has been given to the rehabilitation of child soldiers in Congo; and if he will make a statement. [39928]

Hilary Benn: In April 2002 DFID, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) agreed to use the Africa Conflict Prevention Pooled Fund to channel US$25 million over 5 years, to the World Bank-led regional Multi-country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (MDRP). This multi-country initiative finances the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Re-integration (DDR) programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) among others in the region. The MDRP funds four special sub-projects in the DRC that focus specifically on the demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers, both boys and girls, into their home communities.

The most recent review of the MDRP in the DRC, states that as of September 2005, 14,478 child soldiers had been released from armed forces and entrusted to child protection agencies; some 7,794 had been reunified with their families, 5,895 had been reintegrated in the education system, and 4,001 were receiving vocational training.

Consultants

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list departmental projects conducted by consultants in each year since 2000; what the cost was in each case; and what the total cost of employing consultants was in each year. [29065]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Cheltenham to the answer given on 21 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 850W, which lists DFID consultancy contracts for the Development Programme to 31 March 2004. I have arranged for the document entitled 'Consultancy Contracts issued from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005' to be placed in the Libraries of the House. This does not include lower-value contracts issued by DFID's overseas offices, of which there is no consolidated central record. It would incur a disproportionate cost to produce a list of those contracts.

The total cost of consultants in each year is shown in the following table.

	Total cost of consultants (£ million)
2000–01	194
2001–02	210
2002–03	222
2003–04	215
2004–05	219

Source:
Statistics on International Development—Date: 3 November 2005.

Darfur

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) whether the World Health Organisation intends to conduct a mortality survey in Darfur; [39703]

(2) what representations have been made within *(a)* the EU and *(b)* the UN in support of a mortality survey in Darfur; [39702]

(3) what steps have been taken by his Department to conduct a comprehensive mortality survey in Darfur. [39701]

Hilary Benn: The UN released the report of its second mortality survey in Darfur in October 2005. The overall findings, which cover the period from November 2004 to May 2005, are that mortality rates are below crisis levels, but still elevated. The only exception is in South Darfur, where under-five mortality was above crisis levels. When compared to the previous survey in August 2004, it can be concluded that the international humanitarian response has had a significant impact in saving lives. However the situation remains precarious.

Estimates of deaths in Darfur vary from 70,000 to 400,000. Accurate figures are not available. The two mortality surveys, which the World Health Organisation (WHO) co-ordinated, only provide a snapshot of the situation and we are unlikely ever to get a full picture of deaths from this conflict. The undertaking of mortality surveys has proved difficult in Darfur due to the security situation. While not comprehensive, these WHO surveys do provide a useful understanding of the situation and how it is changing.

DFID contributed to the funding of this last survey as these offer a means to gauge the effectiveness of the relief operation and, specifically, to improve the healthcare response. The UN has indicated it would be

desirable to do further surveys in Darfur in the future. DFID will continue to support the UN to undertake these.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39088]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not hold a separate advertising budget. Spend on advertising, including VAT, for the five calendar years 2000–04 is as follows:

	£
2000	751,972
2001	1,208,192
2002	914,571
2003	849,196
2004	700,077

Expenditure figures prior to 2000 are not available and figures for 2005 have still to be finalised. DFID does not directly fund advertising by non-departmental public bodies, Executive agencies or independent statutory bodies.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40331]

Hilary Benn: DFID spent £2,432 on bottled water in the UK during 2004–05. This sum relates to, and includes the rental cost of, the provision of water coolers. Information on bottled water supplied at meetings, or similar expenditure in overseas offices, is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many and what percentage of the jobs in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which his Department is responsible are located in (A) Scotland, (B) England, excluding Greater London, (C) Greater London, (D) Wales, (E) Northern Ireland and (F) overseas. [39871]

Hilary Benn: The figures regarding job locations are published in Civil Service Statistics and this information is available at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp.

Within these figures some 453 staff, around a quarter of DFID's home based civil service work force, are currently serving in our offices overseas.

In addition to the above numbers, DFID also employs 917 staff appointed in country overseas.

There are no other non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies or other public bodies for which DFID is responsible.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40287]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not hold centrally comprehensive data on all staff who work from home for at least one day a week and this information could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

DFID is committed to providing a working environment which values our work force. One of the ways in which we do this is to make it possible for all staff to balance the demands of work and their commitments outside the office. Flexible working in various forms, including access to home working on a regular or occasional basis, has existed in DFID for some years.

Developing Countries

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the aid and debt relief for developing countries in the Communiqué following the G8 summit at Gleneagles is targeted at people living in extreme poverty. [39762]

Hilary Benn: Agreement was reached on increasing the volume of official development assistance (ODA) provided by the G8 and other donors by US$50 billion a year by 2010. ODA is defined as aid flows to the poorest countries, as set out in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of ODA recipients. Under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, relief will be delivered to heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) that have demonstrated their commitment to poverty reduction. The additional aid and debt relief will be used to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals that aim to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2010.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people he estimates will be living in extreme poverty in developing countries by 2015 by *(a)* country and *(b)* continent. [39764]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not produce any estimates of the number of people living in extreme poverty. The World Bank produces annual estimates at regional and global level of the numbers of people living in extreme poverty. These estimates are based on the number of people living on less than $1 per day. They do not publish country level estimates, except for China. The latest estimates were published in Global Economic Prospects 2006, table 1.3, as follows.

Millions of people living on less than $1 per day

	1990	2002	2015
East Asia and the Pacific	472	214	14
China	375	180	11
Rest of East Asia and the Pacific	97	34	2
Europe and Central Asia	2	10	4
Latin America and the Caribbean	49	42	29
Middle East and North Africa	6	5	3
South Asia	462	437	232
Sub-Saharan Africa	227	303	336
Total	1,218	1,011	617

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the number of people lifted out of extreme poverty as a result of pro-poor funding by his Department in developing countries in each of the past 10 years for which records are available, broken down by *(a)* country and *(b)* continent. [39765]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not produced such an assessment. Globally over 200 million people have been lifted out of poverty between 1990 and 2002[1]. DFID funding has directly contributed to this through funding to developing country governments, civil society, the private sector as well as to multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies, and the European Commission.

[1] Table 1.3, Global Economic Prospects 2006, World Bank.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funds his Department has provided for pro-poor programmes in developing countries in each of the past 10 years for which records are available, broken down by *(a)* country and *(b)* continent. [39766]

Hilary Benn: I have arranged to place copies of a document entitled "Expenditure by the Department for International Development on Development Assistance to Developing Countries from 1995/96 to 2004/05", setting out the bilateral expenditure by DFID on Development Assistance to developing countries over the past 10 years in the Libraries of the House. DFID also provides funding to-multilateral institutions which will benefit these developing countries.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on implementation of humanitarian aid operations and *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-Côte d'Ivoire) have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38776]

Hilary Benn: The Humanitarian Aid Committee (MAC) operates independently of the Presidency. It is convened and chaired by the Commission and is constituted for member states to assist the Commission with implementation of Council Regulation No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid. The EC's humanitarian aid programme provides assistance, relief and protection to victims of natural disasters and man-made crises in third countries, as well as preparedness for risks of natural disasters. It approves annual allocations ("global plans") to countries suffering chronic humanitarian crises, as well as emergency response to disasters. The HAG meets on average, once a month, excluding August. In addition to this, each Presidency usually holds an informal MAC to discuss issues of substance in more detail.

The Humanitarian Aid Committee has met four times during the UK Presidency, in September, October, November and December. The UK was represented by officials from DFID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department. These meetings were chaired by the Commission, either the Director General or Deputy Director of DG the EC Humanitarian Office (ECHO). In October it also met in informal session in London and was then chaired jointly by the ECHO Director General and by DFID's Director of UN Conflict and Humanitarian Division.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12- 15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister, of which copies are available on the internet and can be found at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

We are not aware of any meetings of a joint EEC - Cote d'Ivoire committee.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many meetings of the *(a)* European Development Fund Committee, *(b)* Advisory Committee on the special system of assistance to traditional ACP suppliers of bananas, *(c)* Committee on co-financing operations with European non-governmental organisations in fields of interest to developing countries and *(d)* Committee on food security and food aid have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; why other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38043]

Hilary Benn: The European Development Fund Committee met four times during the UK presidency, in July, September, October and November 2005. The Advisory Committee on the special system of assistance to traditional African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) suppliers of bananas met once, in November 2005. All these meetings were chaired by senior officials from the European Commission, with attendance by officials from the Department for International Development and the United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the European Union.

There have been no meetings of the Food Security and Food Aid Management Committee or the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Co-financing Management Committee during the UK presidency.

As a matter of law, all foreign policy issues and relations with the European Union are non-devolved and are the responsibility of the Parliament and Government of the United Kingdom as a member state. It is the responsibility of the lead Whitehall Department formally to notify the devolved administrations at official level of any new EU obligation which concerns devolved matters. The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters.

GM Crops

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of *(a)* departmental expenditure and *(b)* departmental funding for research was allocated to the development of GM crops in each of the last three years. [40592]

Hilary Benn: The proportion of *(a)* DFID departmental expenditure and *(b)* departmental funding for research allocated to the development of GM crops in each of the last three years is as follows:

(a) No departmental expenditure with the exception of research figures below.

(b) Research commissioned by DFID as a proportion of DFID's research budget: 2003–04 0.37 per cent; 2004–05 0.35 per cent.; and for 2005–06 0.23 per cent. (predicted).

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of GM crops on *(a)* least developed countries and *(b)* middle income countries. [40594]

Hilary Benn: Our approach to GM crops and their potential impact on developing countries very seriously. Our approach is based on the principle that the health of people and of the environment is of primary concern. We recognise that GM technology in itself will not solve the problem of world hunger. Our assessment of the impact of GM crops is that they can however be used safely and effectively to promote development and reduce poverty, if managed responsibly and applied to those crops on which the poor rely.

DFID does not actively promote or not promote the use of GM technologies in developing countries.

Recognising that there are both potential benefits and risks associated with GM crops, developing countries should be able to make their own informed choices about whether to adopt GM technologies. To this end, DFID has helped fund research into Genetically Modified crops and their potential use in developing countries. The proportion of DFID's research spent on GM crops research has been 0.37 per cent. in 2003–04 and 0.35 per cent. in 2004–05 and is predicted to be 0.23 per cent. for 2005–06. This research has not involved assessing either *(a)* least developed countries or *(b)* middle income countries as a whole; projects have looked at more specific issues.

DFID also worked with the Department for the Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFRA) and other Government Departments to support international negotiations to establish the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Protocol will work to ensure that countries are provided with the information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the import of genetically modified organisms. It will also facilitate the exchange of information on living modified organisms even if there is a lack of scientific certainty on the extent of such potential adverse effects.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the oral answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 984 on HIV/AIDS, what policy measures his Department are implementing to ensure that the target of universal access to antiretroviral drugs is met by 2010. [38336]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* Gleneagles secured an important agreement

"to develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010".

Progress has been made since Gleneagles. The universal access commitment was also agreed by members states at the Millennium Summit in September. Building on these commitments, the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) have set up a Global Steering Committee (GSC), co-chaired by the UK and UNAIDS. The focus of the GSC will be to clarify and prioritise the major obstacles that impede scale-up of prevention, treatment, care and support services in individual countries and communities and to identify appropriate solutions and actions. The GSC will meet for the first time in Washington DC on 9–10 January 2006 and is expected to provide a progress report to the High Level UN General Assembly Special Session in mid 2006.

The initial GSC discussions will focus on:

Adequate financing for scaled up AIDS responses (including addressing the macroeconomic constraints).

Human resource capacity and health, social and education system constraints.

Affordable commodities and low-cost technologies.

Human rights, stigma, discrimination and gender equity.

The role of targets and milestones in driving national efforts to scale up AIDS responses.

Internationally, there is a strong, shared commitment to joint action on universal access and that efforts must:

be country-owned and country-led;

develop a package which balances treatment, prevention and care—a comprehensive response is essential to achieve the ambitious 2010 goal;

situate actions to achieve Universal Access in wider efforts to eradicate poverty, strengthening broader services, including health services;

involve all key players: civil society, private sector, donors and affected countries.

Humanitarian Programmes

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department in support of the UN's appeal for $4.7 billion to fund humanitarian programmes in 2006. [40597]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations Humanitarian Appeal 2006, covers 26 countries and seeks to support some 231 million people worldwide. We are considering the various Consolidated Appeals and Country Plans in consultation with other donors and will decide on an appropriate United Kingdom contribution to the respective Appeals and Plans shortly.

In conjunction with some other donors, DFID is piloting a more flexible way of funding the appeals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan. We intend to provide significant contributions to both, as unearmarked funding for the United Nations Humanitarian Co-ordinator to deploy on the highest priority unmet needs in the appeal. We have also pledged £40 million to the reformed Central Emergency Response Fund that was launched at the United Nations Millennium Review summit, as a way of promoting faster response and greater equity in humanitarian funding. This will be available for the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator to deploy on underfunded appeals, as well as on new crises that arise.

Millennium Development Goals

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Millennium Development Goal 1 is met in sub-Saharan Africa by 2015. [39763]

Hilary Benn: DFID assistance to Africa will be over £1 billion in 2005–06 rising to at least £1.25 billion in 2007–08, targeted on the Millennium Development Goals. The G8 agreed at the Gleneagles summit to double aid to Africa by 2010.

In addition, boosting economic growth is fundamental to making progress with eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (Millennium Development Goal 1). This requires more private sector investment, better roads to link producers to markets, and increasing the benefit Africa receives from regional and global trade. These are all areas in which DFID is actively engaged. For example, DFID will provide £21 million to the African Union—New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU-NEPAD) Investment Climate Facility which will help improve the environment for the private sector. DFID also acts to help ensure growth benefits the poorest—such as helping to increase the productivity of agriculture and creating jobs in non-agricultural labour markets.

DFID is also working to halve the number of people facing hunger in Africa by 2015. This often means providing humanitarian support for the effects of drought. During 2005 for example, DFID provided £64 million humanitarian relief to southern Africa alone.

While continuing to respond promptly to crises, we are working to tackle chronic hunger more effectively. Poverty is an important factor. When large numbers of people live below the poverty line, even the smallest of shocks can lead to destitution and hunger. DFID is aiming to help countries that suffer from chronic hunger to establish safety nets to protect the most vulnerable from hunger (such as the elderly or orphans) and stop others falling into destitution as a result of shocks like drought or illness.

For example, in Ethiopia we are giving £70 million over three years to support a programme which aims to provide people with predictable and regular transfers of cash and food. This helps meet food gaps while also allowing households to invest in health, education or increase their farm production. In this way, safety nets can also serve as a springboard for poor households which can otherwise struggle to participate in economic growth. We aim to scale up this approach in Zambia, Kenya, Malawi and Lesotho over 2006.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many parliamentary questions to his Department in the period November 2004 to April 2005, were answered with the response that the information requested *(a)* is not held centrally and *(b)* could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost; how many were referred on to an agency chief executive; and what percentage of the total number of questions asked this constituted in each case. [16637]

Hilary Benn: For the period between November 2004 to April 2005, there were 834 parliamentary questions tabled to DFID; of which none were referred to an agency chief executive for answering and eight were answered with the response that the information is not held centrally or that the response could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Public Relations Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39087]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) use consultants to cover a range of activities The following public relations companies have been used since 1997:

Brunswick Group
Weber Shandwick
LLM Communications
Financial Dynamics
Cubitt Consulting
Bell Pottinger Public Affairs

Public Service Agreements

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what systems are in place

to measure his Department's progress against its public service agreement targets; and what baselines are used. [39767]

Hilary Benn: Progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets is assessed twice-yearly in DFID's autumn performance reports and departmental reports. The most recent analysis of progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets for the period 2003 to 2006 was published in the autumn performance report 2005, which was laid before Parliament on 9 December 2005. It is available both in hard copy in the Libraries of the House and electronically on DFID's website (http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/autumnperfreport05.pdf).

The technical note to DFID's 2005–08 public service agreement provides full details of the indicators and methodologies which are used to monitor performance against the targets. The technical note is available on DFID's website www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/PSA/technicalnotes.pdf

Both the twice-yearly reports and the technical note contain information on the baselines used for DFID's PSA targets.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of its progress towards reaching its 2003 to 2006 public service agreement targets. [39768]

Hilary Benn: Progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets is assessed twice-yearly in DFID's autumn performance reports and departmental reports. The most recent analysis of progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets for the period 2003 to 2006 was published in the autumn performance report 2005, which was laid before Parliament on 9 December 2005. It is available both in hard copy in the Libraries of the House and electronically on DFID's website (http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/autumnperfreport05.pdf). Updated assessments of performance against all PSA targets and sub-targets will be provided in DFID's departmental report 2006, which we expect to be published in late April.

Rwanda

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the cost to Rwanda of refugees from the war in eastern Congo; and if he will make a statement. [39611]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Rwanda have established a National Council for Refugees, linked to the Ministry for Local Government and Community Affairs. The Council has responsibility for verifying the status of refugees, for refugee welfare and safety including resettlement, and where appropriate for repatriation. The Council estimates that there are up to 40,000 Congolese refugees currently in Rwanda.

The Council does not have a large budget but relies mostly on funding from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR's office in Rwanda estimates costs related to the care and maintenance of Congolese refugees in Rwanda to be about US $26,826,000 over the past five years. Annual programme expenditure figures (in US$) are as follows:

	US$
2000	3,619,591
2001	4,143,936
2002	3,634,261
2003	3,736,246
2004	3,894,721
2005	4,178,046

These figures do not include Government of Rwanda or UNHCR staff costs.

Western Sudan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of the withdrawal of UN staff from western Sudan on *(a)* the humanitarian situation and *(b)* the internally displaced persons camps. [39704]

Hilary Benn: The UN has gradually reduced its staff in West Darfur in the last quarter of 2005 due to the deteriorating security situation. On 5 January, the UN also raised their security levels to Phase IV in some parts of West Darfur. An estimated 450,000 people are thought to be affected in this area.

This change instigates the move for the UN to emergency operations and life-saving humanitarian relief activities only. The change requires humanitarian agencies to reduce the number of staff in the area, and limit movement areas into designated as insecure. Non-essential staff will be redeployed within the Darfur region to continue operations in key locations. Many UN agencies have already substantially reduced non-essential staff, so further reductions due to the rise in the security level are likely to be limited.

The UN is continuing to make every effort to provide life-saving assistance, including emergency food and health services, as well as the provision of water and shelter to people in camps and other affected populations throughout Darfur. The current insecurity will, however, inevitably have an impact on their capacity to do so.

The UN are currently assessing their operational needs, and are finalising contingency plans in the event of any further deterioration of the situation in West Darfur and Eastern Chad.

DFID remains particularly concerned about this situation and are ready to provide assistance if required.

World Trade Organisation Summit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people he estimates will be lifted out of poverty as a result of the agreements made at the World Trade Organisation summit in Hong Kong. [39700]

Hilary Benn: Despite the modest progress made at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks in Hong Kong, it is not possible at this stage to give any meaningful estimate of the numbers of people that could be lifted out of poverty as a result for two broad reasons. First,

the nature of the agreement reached in Hong Kong, and second because the ministerial conference was just a staging post along the way to conclusion of the Doha Round of talks as a whole. For example, although Ministers agreed that developed countries would give duty and quota free access to their markets for the least developed countries (LDC), there is some flexibility to exclude 3 per cent. of tariff lines during a transition period of indeterminate length. The risk is that developed countries will apply them to precisely those products where the poorest countries have the best chance to export.

On cotton, although agreement was reached on granting duty and quota free access to LDC cotton producers, the bigger problem of tackling US domestic support has not yet been resolved. Although there was agreement on ending agricultural export subsidies and other equivalent measures, this will not be complete until 2013, it is not clear precisely how the phasing out will be achieved, and the more critical issue of agricultural market access for developing countries has also not been resolved, yet despite these uncertainties, the WTO director general, Pascal Lamy, has judged that we are now more than half way to the final deal, and it has set out a potential route-agreement of the final architecture of a deal in agriculture and industrial goods by the end of April 2006; and the substantive conclusion of the round by the end of 2006.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the outcome of the recent World Trade Organisation talks. [39736]

Hilary Benn: I refer my hon. Friend for Coventry South to the statement made to the House on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1710-12, by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

DEFENCE

Administrative Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total administration costs for his core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39834]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence budget does not include a formal administrative costs control. Defence administrative costs are regarded as 'non-identifiable' for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses and are contained within this heading in the PESA.

Armed Forces Helpline

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what timetable has been agreed for each stage of development of armed forces helpline standards; on what date he intends to issue a Ministry of Defence policy letter on the issue; and if he will place a copy of the letter in the Library. [38682]

Mr. Touhig: A number of options have been identified for the development of Service helplines. These options are now subject to further discussion with the Equal Opportunities Commission and I will write to my hon. Friend when a course of action has been decided upon.

Armour Land Rovers

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision is made to armour land rovers in the Gulf. [37235]

Mr. Ingram: Both armoured and non-armoured vehicles are available for use in Iraq. The choice of vehicle for a particular task on an operation will depend on the Commander's assessment of the current threat level and nature of the task.

Bicester Storage Site

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many civilian staff are employed at the storage and distribution site at Bicester; and how many of these are employed by *(a)* contractors and *(b)* agencies. [38017]

Mr. Ingram: As at 1 November 2005, the number of civilian staff employed in the Defence Distribution and Storage Agency, in the South East Government Office Region was 1,130 Full Time Equivalent (FTE). The number of civilian staff employed in the South East Government Office Region was 16,900 Full time Equivalent (FTE).

Robust data on contractors and agency staff are not held centrally by the Department.

However, local information indicates that as at 1 November 2005, the number of civilian staff employed in the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, on the Bicester site was approximately 800 people with approximately 40 agency staff. No local records are kept of the number of contractors employed.

Congo (Peacekeeping Forces)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contribution has been made by the UK to the UN peacekeeping forces in the Congo for each of the last two years; and if he will make a statement. [39927]

Mr. Ingram: The UK provided five officers to the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in 2004. Our contribution increased to six in early 2005 on the reorganisation of the force structure and remains at that level. The British officers fill key influential posts, notably that of Chief of Staff in the eastern division headquarters in Kisangani and military adviser to the force commander. On short term attachments, we provided two officers to assist in training the eastern division headquarters staffs in late January 2005 and one officer to an UN intelligence assessment mission to MONUC in mid-April 2005.

Defence Systems and Equipment Exhibition

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which companies at the Defence Systems and Equipment International 2005 exhibition exhibited *(a)* stun guns, *(b)* leg irons and *(c)* stun batons; and if he will make a statement. [32638]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The DTI is not responsible for authorising displays at this exhibition, and the question should be referred to the organisers.

The DTI's role is limited to the issue of export licences where these are required, e.g. for the re-export of goods on display after the exhibition, or the promotion of trade in controlled or restricted goods between third countries. On that basis, we are not aware of the display of any of the goods specified.

Defence Training Review

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether an employment impact assessment has been made in relation to the Defence Training Review as it relates to Cosford and St. Athan. [39133]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review Programme is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. This includes reviewing the possible implications for employment in any of the regions in the United Kingdom affected by the DTR Programme. Such an assessment, however, cannot be concluded until the evaluation process is complete and this is not expected before spring 2006.

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what opportunities the Defence Training Review will provide for employees affected by the closure of ABRO in Telford. [39134]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. Until this phase is complete and a decision has been taken to select a preferred training partner, I am not in a position to make any detailed comment on the wider impact of the DTR solution.

Departmental Research

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [33003]

Mr. Ingram: Details of the Ministry of Defence's research programme are contained in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts. A copy of this document is available in the Library of the House.

The Ministry of Defence placed research work worth around £524 million in 2003–04, the last year for which figures are available. Most research projects generate classified data and are not published in the open literature but form the basis of decisions on policy, planning and future equipment procurement. Areas of general academic interest, where appropriate, are published in relevant journals.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what proportion of each Civil Service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35888]

Mr. Touhig: My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Cabinet Office will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are taken by his Department to support staff with mental ill health. [36269]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence is supportive of all staff with mental ill health. The support provided varies dependent upon whether the individual is a member of the armed forces or a civil servant.

The Department has over the last three years operated a stress policy laid down in Joint Service Publication 375. This publication can be found on the internet, (www.mod.uk/dsc/ohs/jsp375.htm). This policy is supplemented by procedures that were designed to assist with mental ill health and stress reduction when identified in an individual. The Department also has policies to support individuals with alcohol and drug dependencies.

The MOD has particular responsibility for the mental health of members of the armed forces (including reservists on deployment) and specific measures are in place to prevent and treat stress-related disorders among service personnel, as well as civilians deployed in support of operations. These include pre and post-deployment briefings and access to trained mental health staff both during and after deployments.

Service personnel, both regular and reservist, returning from operational deployment are offered a 2–3 day period of 'normalisation' during which they receive a post-deployment briefing pack. This includes two leaflets and a presentation, covering post-traumatic stress reactions and the problems that may be encountered on returning home to families. Returning personnel also receive guidance on whom to consult if they experience post deployment problems, including their commanders, padres, social workers and health care staff.

Out-patient mental health treatment for the armed forces takes place at 13 MOD Departments of community mental health located throughout the UK and three satellite centres in Cyprus, Germany and Gibraltar. In-patient treatment, when required, has been provided by The Priory Group since April 2004.

For civilian staff, medical advice on the specific condition must be a personal responsibility available through the individual's GP and the NHS. The Department provides occupational health (OH) advice and support through its OH advisers, Capita Health Solutions. In addition the Department provides:

Confidential advice from a member of the Occupational Welfare Service

Time off for medical appointments and treatment

Reasonable adjustments to hours of work and the nature of their duties

Gradual rehabilitation including reduced hours and duties

A comprehensive suite of Work/Life policies

Veterans can seek assistance through the Veterans Agency's helpline on 0800 169 2277, and the War Pensioners Welfare Service provides advice and guidance to those veterans who are applying for or who have been awarded a war pension or gratuity. We also paid around £2 million to the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) in the last financial year in order to fund remedial treatment for war pensioners.

Freedom of Information

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to his Department which have been passed to the FOI clearing house for evaluation, broken down by *(a)* subject and *(b)* date of request. [28944]

Mr. Touhig: Information about the handling of Freedom of Information requests is published in "Freedom of Information Statistics on Implementation in Central Government". The most recently published report was 30 September 2005, copies were placed in the Libraries of both Houses. Additional information about the role of the Clearing House can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/guidance/index.htm#2. Departments do not release information about the internal handling of requests, such as details of which requests were referred to the Clearing House for guidance.

Harassment Investigations

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what timetable has been drawn up for each stage of the review of recordkeeping on sexual harassment in the armed forces in order to ensure completion by the end of the year; if he will make a statement when he publishes the Defence Information Notice and policy letter to the armed forces; and if he will place a copy of these documents in the Library; [38596]

(2) what conclusion he has reached on the scope for setting a revised target for the completion of all formal harassment investigations within a period of less than 69 days; on what date he issued a Ministry of Defence policy letter on this issue; and if he will place a copy of the letter in the Library; [38597]

(3) what date he issued a Ministry of Defence policy letter on arrangements for confidential follow-up checks with individuals making complaints of sexual harassment in the armed forces; and if he will place a copy of the letter in the Library. [38683]

Mr. Touhig: The review of record keeping was completed ahead of schedule and a Defence Information Notice (2005DIN02–244: Armed Forces Unit Equality and Diversity Log) was published on 1 December 2005. This document details a tri-service standard for: the recording of incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment; the turnaround time for commanding officers to investigate and consider complaints at unit level (30 days); and arrangements for follow-up checks to be completed four weeks after the conclusion of a complaint. I will place a copy of the Defence Information Notice in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the terms of reference are for the review of formal complaints and other data on sexual harassment in the armed forces; and how many organisations and individuals have been invited to tender for contracts to conduct the review. [38675]

Mr. Touhig: Defence internal audit conducted the review, consequently the work was not tendered. I will place a copy of the terms of reference for the review in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the terms of reference are for the sexual harassment survey of women and men serving in the armed forces; and how many organisations and individuals have been invited to tender for contracts to conduct the survey; [38676]

(2) what the terms of reference are for the focus groups of women and men serving in the armed forces to consider issues relating to sexual harassment; and how many organisations and individuals have been invited to tender for contracts to undertake this work. [38677]

Mr. Touhig: I will place a copy of the terms of reference for the sexual harassment survey and focus groups in the Library of the House. Three organisations were invited to tender for the contract to conduct the survey and focus groups.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the result was of the review of options for increasing awareness of sexual harassment issues conducted by the Armed Forces Diversity and Equality Steering Group; and how many meetings of the steering group have been held since June 2005. [38679]

Mr. Touhig: Options from the review are still under consideration and I will write to my hon. Friend further about this in due course. The Armed Forces Diversity and Equality Steering Group have held two meetings since June 2005.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what timetable has been agreed for *(a)* publication of advertisements for, *(b)* interviewing candidates for and *(c)* appointing an external reviewer to conduct quarterly assessments of the Department's handling of sexual harassment complaints. [38680]

Mr. Touhig: It is intended that an independent reviewer will be appointed to conduct regular non-statutory reviews of the complaints process focusing on the effectiveness, timeliness, and fairness of the system, and providing recommendations for improvements where necessary. A sample of cases will be analysed.

The appointment of the external reviewer is part of a package of improvements to the complaints process, including the introduction of an independent element, linked to the Armed Forces Bill. The timetable for the appointment of the external reviewer will therefore be dictated by the progress of the Bill.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many meetings of principal personnel officers have been held since June 2005; and on how many occasions the officers have discussed the operation of sexual harassment helplines. [38681]

Mr. Touhig: The Principal Personnel Officers have met under the auspices of the Service Personnel Board on three occasions since June 2005. They have not discussed the operation of sexual harassment helplines

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in establishing dedicated investigation teams on sexual harassment in each of the armed services; and how many individuals of each rank comprise these units. [38684]

Mr. Touhig: All three Services have established dedicated Equal Opportunities Investigation Teams that may be tasked with investigating complex and serious complaints of harassment and bullying. The Royal Navy team consists of one Warrant Officer 1st Class, and one Master at Arms. The Army team is commanded by a C2 Grade Military Support Function (MSF) member of the civil service. He is supported by two Warrant Officers and three Senior Non-Commissioned Officers also employed as investigators. The team has two civil service support staff: one EI typist and one E2 Administrative Officer. The Royal Air Force team consists of one Flight Lieutenant, one Warrant Officer, one Sergeant and one Civilian E2 admin support assistant.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqis detained by UK forces have been *(a)* handed over to the custody of (i) Iraqi and (ii) US forces and *(b)* subject to prosecution in the Iraqi courts. [28402]

John Reid: Iraqis detained by the United Kingdom forces are either criminal detainees or security internees. Criminal detainees are transferred as soon as practically possible into Iraqi custody on their detention by UK forces, usually within eight hours. Security internees are detained and then held at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaiba.

Records held in MND(SE) show that 105 security internees have been transferred into the Iraqi criminal justice system since 1 January 2004.

We do not keep figures on the number of criminal detainees placed immediately into Iraqi custody. This is routine business for UK forces and transfers occur very frequently.

Following the end of hostilities in Iraq and the completion of the UK's prisoner release programme, a total of 358 prisoners taken into custody by the UK were transferred to US custody at Camp Bucca. With the opening of the UK's Divisional Temporary Detention Facility in December 2003, they, along with further individuals transferred into US custody in the meantime, were either released, or transferred back to UK custody.

A further 18 security internees have been transferred to US custody at various times. All but four have been released.

Once individuals have been transferred into the Iraqi legal system they become a matter for the Iraqis. We do not hold information on how many are subject to prosecution in the Iraqi courts. I met with the Iraqi Minister of the Interior on 4 December and made clear to him the international community's view that Iraq must have suitable systems of detention, trial and incarceration in line with its international obligations.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 21 November, (PQ 17735/17745) by what means the reports referred to were received; what the original sources of the information were; and what action has been taken as a consequence of these reports. [32255]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer. For reasons of operational security, we do not comment on intelligence matters.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Army has conducted public opinion surveys in Iraq. [32915]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 29 November 2005]:* Yes. Multi-National Division (South-East) used to conduct regular polls, for example the Seven Cities Poll, and the Iraq Opinion Trend Analysis. This latter continued until April 2005, since which time, regular opinion polling has been carried out only nationwide, at Corps level. At present, MND(SE) conducts only ad hoc polling.

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are in place to protect employees of his Department in Iraq. [33692]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom Armed Forces personnel deploying to Iraq receive comprehensive, theatre-specific pre-deployment training, which includes weapons training and force protection skills. In theatre, all personnel are subject to the Reception, Staging and Onward Integration process, which includes further range work, and ground familiarisation. Commanders employ force protection measures as appropriate. These are kept under continual review and adjusted, as necessary, consistent with the assessed threat level in the operating environment.

Ministry of Defence civilian workers who have volunteered for operational duties in Iraq also undertake theatre-specific pre-deployment training, which includes medicals, CBRN training, weapons awareness, battlefield first aid, stress management, and hostage briefing. Military Commanders also ensure that appropriate force protection is provided for them. If Commanders conclude that, in their judgment, civilians are at unacceptable risk, they will remove them to a safer environment as soon as operationally feasible.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what equipment British forces in the Gulf have for dealing with riots in Basra. [37234]

Mr. Ingram: British forces deploy to Iraq with a range of vehicles and specialist equipment with which to deal with a range of potential incidents, including protective suits, shields, riot guns and batons for use in the event of civil unrest. For reasons of operational security, however, we do not comment further on specific equipment capabilities or numbers. Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps and Artillery units and sub-units undertake theatre-specific public order training as part of their operational training package, although the ultimate choice of vehicle or equipment used in any given situation will be dependent on the commander's

assessment of the task in hand and the nature of the current threat. As the Iraqi security forces increasingly assume responsibility for public order, however, British forces are involved far less frequently than before in such operations.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Eastleigh (Chris Huhne) of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1787W, on Iraq, how much was spent in each month; and if he will make a statement. [39192]

John Reid: The costs of operations are calculated on a net additional basis and audited figures are published each year in the Ministry of Defence's annual report and accounts. Expenditure varies depending on troop numbers and activities and cannot therefore sensibly be broken down on a monthly basis. Further to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1787W, I can however offer some further breakdown in the audited costs as follows:

	£ million
2002–03	
Operations in Iraq	629
Expenditure on capital equipment	218
Total	847
2003–04	
Operations in Iraq	1,051
Expenditure on capital equipment	260
Total	1,311
2004–05	
Operations in Iraq	747
Expenditure on capital equipment	163
Total	910
Grand total	3,068

Landing Ships Dock (Auxiliary) Project

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial responsibilities his Department has for design changes to the Landing Ships Dock (Auxiliary) Project. [34029]

Mr. Ingram: As the Design Authority for the Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) programme, Swan Hunter has contractual responsibility to meet the cost of the majority of design changes. However, those changes instigated by the Ministry of Defence are paid for by the Department.

Military Exports/Aid (Maldives)

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the *(a)* number and *(b)* value of UK (i) military exports and (ii) aid to the Maldives in each year since 2000. [38351]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my right hon. Friend to the Government's Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls, which contain information, by destination, on export licensing decisions, and on the value of exports of military equipment from the United Kingdom. The Annual Reports are available from the Library of the House.

As for military aid or assistance, following the Tsunami of 26 December last year, 13 Royal Navy engineers deployed to the Maldives in January to assist the Maldivian National Disaster Management Centre and the State Electricity Company in surveying the national power and distribution systems and help repair generators. Following the subsequent gifting of two ex-MOD landing craft to the Maldivian Government, two Royal Marine instructors deployed to Male to familiarise the Maldivian National Security Services with landing craft operating and servicing. Otherwise, military assistance to the Maldives since 2000 has been limited to a few Maldivian military personnel attending non-combatant UK training courses.

Nuclear Weapons

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the UK nuclear arsenal operates on a hair-trigger alert; and how long the UK would have to decide whether to retaliate in the case of a possible launch of a nuclear attack. [38279]

John Reid: The operational posture of the UK's nuclear forces is set out in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review at paragraphs 66–68. They do not operate on a so-called-'hair-trigger alert', but are normally at several days 'notice to fire'. We do not comment on hypothetical scenarios involving the possible use of nuclear weapons; our course of action in any particular situation would depend on all the relevant circumstances.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his evidence to the Defence Select Committee on 1 November, whether the destructive power of the UK's nuclear force has been reduced in line with the 70 per cent. reduction in fire power referred to. [38058]

John Reid: Yes. I refer my hon. Friend to the Strategic Defence Review, paragraph 64, and the associated chart.

Opportunity Now

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date his Department became a corporate member of Opportunity Now; what he expects to gain from membership; and what procedures have been agreed for the Department to exercise its membership responsibilities. [38670]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence became a corporate member of Opportunity Now on 30 June 2005. Membership of Opportunity Now will enable the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces to benchmark their policies and practices against those of other employers. Since joining Opportunity Now, representatives of the MOD and armed forces have taken part in a number of members' events and activities.

Private Military Companies

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department employs private military companies. [33721]

Mr. Ingram: No.

Protective Armour

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many appliqué protective armour kits are available to protect troop carriers, logistic vehicles and patrol cars in Iraq; [37682]

(2) how many appliqué armour kits for cab floors are available for fitting on logistics vehicles. [38295]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* To date, for operations in Iraq, there are 168 ballistic protection kits, which include ballistic floor covering, available for logistics vehicles. The Warrior armoured personnel carrier has bespoke fitted armour. However, a requirement for 99 sets of additional armoured protection has been met and a further 14 sets are on order. Appliqué protective armour kits are not being provided for the Snatch Land Rovers used for patrol duties as they have integral ballistic protection.

RAF Aircraft

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on aircraft availability across the RAF's fleet. [40508]

Mr. Ingram: Royal Air Force aircraft are available to meet all current operational commitments and training in support of them.

Regimental Headquarters

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many regular regiments of the *(a)* Army Air Corps, *(b)* Royal Engineers, *(c)* Royal Armoured Corps, *(d)* Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and *(e)* Royal Regiment of Artillery are (i) based and (ii) have their headquarters in Scotland. [39808]

Mr. Ingram: None of these regiments is based in or has its headquarters in Scotland.

Senior-level Meetings (Instructions)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what instructions he has issued to senior members of the armed forces on discussions and meetings they may have with hon. and right hon. Members; and whether guidance has been altered in the past two years. [14196]

Mr. Ingram: No such instructions have been issued to senior members of the armed forces. However, central guidance exists for all members of the armed forces on dealing with inquiries from Members of Parliament and on visits by Members of Parliament to Defence establishments.

Service Personnel

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether orders for the necessary equipment have been placed in relation to the forthcoming deployment of United Kingdom personnel into southern Afghanistan; and whether preparations for the deployment are on schedule. [39270]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* I refer the right hon. Member to the written statement I made on 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 41WS.

As I said then, certain necessary preparations for a potential deployment of UK forces to southern Afghanistan, as part of the stage 3 expansion of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), are currently underway.

Once discussions within NATO on the overall stage 3 force structure have been concluded, we will make a statement to the House on the UK contribution and the timetable for deployment.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recommendations were submitted to the Service Personnel Executive Group following completion of the departmental feasibility study on increasing the number of women employed in armed forces' recruitment and initial training of recruits; and on what date these recommendations were discussed by the Group. [38678]

Mr. Touhig: Options from the review are still under consideration and I will write to my hon. Friend further about this in due course.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what timetable has been agreed for each stage of the process agreed for developing a range of options for using trained mediators to assist in the resolution of disputes; and on what date this report will be discussed by the Services Personnel Executive Group. [38685]

Mr. Touhig: A paper identifying options for using trained mediators to assist in the resolution of disputes was circulated to the Service Personnel Executive Group on 16 December 2005 and will be discussed at its meeting on 19 January 2006.

Shropshire Light Infantry

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1498W, on the Shropshire Light Infantry, in what capacity the members of the Shropshire Light Infantry serve. [39589]

Mr. Ingram: The Shropshire Light Infantry are currently serving as an element of the Force Protection Company for Headquarters of Multinational Division (South East) in Iraq. Their duties include the provision of security of the HQ's location by means of static sentries, control of entry and exit points, physical searches and patrols in the vicinity of the base. They are also providing escorts for patrols in the area of responsibility.

Smart Procurement Policy

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the implications for the Smart Procurement Policy of the Prime Minister's recent statement at his monthly press conference that the recent performance of Swan Hunters should not preclude them from bidding for future work from the aircraft carrier programme. [28750]

Mr. Ingram: It remains the Department's policy that our relationship with industry is rooted firmly in project performance. The extent of any particular shipyard's involvement in the future carrier programme will be determined on a value for money decision, in addition to

considering the capability, capacity, and resources of UK industry to meet the full range of planned naval programmes.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced on 14 December, subject to satisfactory contract and demonstration of value for money, the structure of the carriers above the hangar deck, some 40 per cent. of the shipbuild, will be open to competition and will allow an opportunity for the many shipyards and suppliers with the ability to undertake this work to compete and win work.

Taxis

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent by his Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37490]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1541W and 23 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1146W, to the hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Davies). Additionally, the Department does not record in which nation or region of the UK, including London, the expenditure is incurred.

Unexploded Ordnance

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what estimate he has made of the failure rate of each type of unexploded ordnance which remains in British areas of responsibility in Iraq; [31536]

(2) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* quantity and *(b)* types of unexploded ordnance which remain in British areas of responsibility in Iraq; [31535]

(3) what assessment he has made of the impact of unexploded ordnance on civilians in British areas of responsibility in Iraq; and if he will make a statement; [31534]

(4) how much unexploded ordnance has been cleared in British areas of responsibility in Iraq since March 2003, broken down by type. [31533]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 November 2005]:* By far the greatest amount of unexploded ordnance in Iraq are munitions left from the Iran-Iraq war, mines laid by Iraqi forces, stores of ammunition and other ordnance abandoned by Iraqi military and paramilitary forces. There is a far smaller amount of unexploded ordnance employed by coalition forces during the Gulf War and the invasion of Iraq; this includes artillery shells and air-launched munitions, of which some will be cluster bomblets.

We can give no estimate of the failure rate of munitions used by the armed services of other nations and we do not have information on the specific types of unexploded ordnance of UK origin which remain in our area of responsibility. There is no reliable means of assessing the impact of unexploded ordnance on Iraqi civilians in the British area of responsibility since the end of the conflict.

Over 1,500,000 individual items of unexploded ordnance have been cleared in UK areas of responsibility since March 2003. We do not keep a record of the individual types that have been cleared.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Administrative Savings

Mr. Maude: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what administrative savings have been made by her Department in each of the last eight years. [34942]

Bridget Prentice: I refer the right hon. Member to the information published on gross and net controlled administration costs underspends for Whitehall departments which is published in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Papers for the relevant years. These are available in the Library of the House.

Efficiency gains are being made as part of the Spending Review 2004 efficiency programme by the Department as set out in the Efficiency Technical Notes which are available on the Departmental website.

Antisocial Behaviour

Jon Trickett: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in *(a)* Wakefield and *(b)* Pontefract in each month since the penalty was introduced; how many have been breached; and how many breaches resulted in custodial sentences in (i) adult and (ii) juvenile courts. [38136]

Hazel Blears: I have been asked to reply.

Data on antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) are not available below local authority area level. The readily available information is by quarter and is given in the table for Wakefield metropolitan district council area.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction. These data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

Number of antisocial behaviour orders issued, as reported to the Home Office where restrictions are imposed within Wakefield Metropolitan District Council area, by period, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

England and Wales	*Issued*
July to September 2000	—
October to December 2000	—
January to March 2001	—
April to June 2001	—
July to September 2001	—
October to December 2001	—
January to March 2002	—
April to June 2002	—
July to September 2002	—
October to December 2002	—
January to March 2003	—
April to June 2003	—
July to September 2003	—
October to December 2003	3
January to March 2004	4
April to June 2004	4
July to September 2004	9

Number of antisocial behaviour orders issued, as reported to the Home Office where restrictions are imposed within Wakefield Metropolitan District Council area, by period, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

England and Wales	*Issued*
October to December 2004	9
January to March 2005	11
April to June 2005	9
Total	49

[1] Between 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area (pfa). During this period 4 ASBOs were issued, as reported, within West Midlands pfa.

Note:
As from 1 June 2000 data collected centrally by magistrates courts committee (MCC) area by quarter. For the month of June 2000 no (0) ASBOs were reported as being issued.

Channel Islands

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many Acts of Parliament have extended to each of the Channel Islands in the last twenty years. [40506]

Bridget Prentice: The Department for Constitutional Affairs does not keep a record of the UK Acts of Parliament which have been extended to each of the Channel Islands. UK Acts of Parliament do not normally extend to the Channel Islands. If they do, they may do so either by virtue of the Act itself or by Order in Council under an enabling provision contained in the Act. For an Act to extend otherwise than by an Order in Council is now very unusual.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what average time it has taken *(a)* for laws passed in the Channel Islands to be ratified by the Privy Council and *(b)* for the relevant Order in Council to be made over the past five years; and what steps she is taking to reduce this period. [40509]

Bridget Prentice: The Department for Constitutional Affairs does not monitor the time taken to complete each stage of the Channel Islands' legislative process. This Department and the Governments of both Guernsey and Jersey work closely to ensure that each piece of legislation is prioritised as appropriate.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will take steps to make provision for a seat in the United Kingdom Parliament to represent the Channel Islands. [40518]

Bridget Prentice: The Channel Islands are not part of the United Kingdom. Guernsey and Jersey are Crown dependencies with their own legislative assemblies and legislate for themselves on all domestic matters.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the *(a)* legal and *(b)* constitutional position of the Channel Islands in relation to UK law. [40520]

Bridget Prentice: The Channel Islands are not part of the United Kingdom. Each has its own legislative assembly, administrative, fiscal and legal system and its own courts of law. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the ultimate court of appeal.

UK Acts of Parliament do not normally extend to the Channel Islands. If they do, they may do so either by virtue of the Act itself or by Order in Council made under an enabling provision contained in the Act. For an Act to extend otherwise than by an Order in Council is now very unusual.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assistance her Department provides for people from the Channel Islands, who are in the United Kingdom to vote in home elections. [40525]

Bridget Prentice: Guernsey and Jersey are not part of the UK. They are internally self-governing parliamentary democracies and as such make their own arrangements to ensure that those eligible can take part in their domestic elections.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the *(a)* petitions and *(b)* registered complaints from islanders she has received relating to the feudal system on Sark in the last five years. [40507]

Bridget Prentice: I am aware of two petitions to the Privy Council in the last five years which have been about the constitution of Sark. Since the transfer of responsibility for the Crown dependencies from the Home Office in 2001, Ministers and officials at the Department for Constitutional Affairs have received a number of letters about the constitution of Sark. All correspondence and both petitions have been from or on behalf of two residents of Sark.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the constitutional status of Alderney. [40510]

Bridget Prentice: Alderney is an internally self-governing dependency of the Crown. It is part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, but not part of the United Kingdom.

Child Pornography

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer by the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Wythenshawe and Sale, East (Paul Goggins) on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 591W, on child pornography, when she expects to introduce changes to Schedule 3 to the Data Protection Act 1998 to enable payment card companies legitimately to hold and process sensitive data concerning an individual and their convictions, with particular reference to purchasing child pornography on the internet. [38728]

Ms Harman: My department continues to work with colleagues across Government and with the Association for Payment Clearing Services to take forward the amendment of Schedule 3 of the Data Protection. Once this work is complete the amendment will be placed before Parliament when legislative time allows.

Compensation Bill

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when her Department plans to publish its proposals for a possible exemption for trades unions from the claims management proposals contained in the Compensation Bill [Lords]. [38326]

Bridget Prentice: The Compensation Bill will provide the legislative framework to introduce the statutory regulation of claims management activities. The Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, announced at Second Reading of the Compensation Bill (HL) the Government's intention to exempt trade unions and that such an exemption may be subject to conditions, including a requirement to have regard to the code of practice issued by the new regulator. Exemptions will be a matter for secondary legislation and the Government will take account of Peers' and Members' views on appropriate conditions during the passage of the Bill.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether her Department plans to introduce an exemption for trades unions from the claims management proposals in the Compensation Bill [Lords], *(a)* through an amendment to the Bill and *(b)* by secondary legislation; and if she will make a statement. [38327]

Bridget Prentice: We plan to introduce an exemption for trades unions from the claims management proposals in the Compensation Bill, by secondary legislation. Clause 4 of the Compensation Bill (HL) provides an order making power to exempt persons from the requirement to be authorised to carry out claims management services.

Council Tax Valuations

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Valuation Office Agency will have access to the proposed new electoral register database. [39500]

Ms Harman: The Government's current consultation paper on the proposed co-ordinated online record of electors (CORE) seeks views on who should have access to information held by CORE and for what purposes that access should be granted.

Policy will be settled in the light of responses to that consultation. However, the Government's current feeling is that access to data in CORE should match existing regulations governing entitlement to copies of the full version of electoral registers held locally. As an Executive agency of a Government Department, the VOA would accordingly be entitled to access, but only for prescribed purposes.

Data Protection

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance her Department has issued on the publication under the Data Protection Act 1998 by local government officers of private e-mails relating to council business of a sensitive nature between elected councillors and other local government officers. [36720]

Bridget Prentice: The Data Protection Act 1998 covers personal data on living individuals. The Freedom of Information Act 2000, which covers all recorded information, allows individuals to request such information from public authorities covered by the Act subject to a variety of exemptions. The Department for Constitutional Affairs has not issued guidance on the publication of such e-mails under either Act.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* salary bill was and *(b)* administrative costs were for her Department in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London in 2004–05. [35870]

Bridget Prentice: *(a)* The aggregate payroll costs for the Department, which includes costs for Ministers, special advisors and agency staff, in 2004–05 was £339 million.

(b) The total (net) administration costs for the Department in 2004–05 was £925 million.

The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall departments only. The Department does not monitor national, regional or London administration costs separately and it is a matter for the Devolved Administrations how they control their own administration costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by her Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37477]

Ms Harman: My Department holds a number of catering contracts mainly to provide services to jurors, others using the courts and staff. Those contracts also provide for refreshments at official meetings and working lunches. The Department does not hold any separate entertainment contracts.

The total paid to contractors to date for the period January to December 2005 is £1,795,509. Of that total £1,409,176 was to subsidise mainstream catering services and £386,333 was expended on refreshments for officially hosted events, meetings and working lunches. This is broken down by regions in the following table:

£

Region	*Subsidy*	*Official events*	*Total*
North and North Wales	268,471	—	268,471
Midlands and South Wales	199,843	3,274	203,117
London	461,816	378,559	840,375
South East and Western	479,046	4,500	483,546
Total	1,409,176	386,333	1,795,509

The figure for expenditure on official events in the North and North Wales is not recorded separately and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by her Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39084]

Ms Harman: My Department does not hold this information centrally and it is therefore disproportionate cost to extrapolate this information now.

The only body within DCA to use a PR agency in the period requested was the Commission for Judicial Appointments, who have engaged Luther Pendragon since 2002.

In October 2005 HMCS contracted Blue Rubicon to provide communications for their estates strategy.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39085]

Ms Harman: Since its inception in June 2003 my Department, the Department for Constitutional Affairs, has conducted seven media advertising campaigns: a regional poster campaign on buses to promote recruitment to the lay magistracy, radio and press adverts to target court fine defaulters (under the title Operation Payback), press adverts to promote postal voting fraud prevention, and a press, radio and poster campaign to promote recruitment to the lay magistracy.

Figures for our agencies, non-departmental public bodies, and bodies financially sponsored by my Department are not held centrally. To get the information would incur disproportionate cost.

£

Project	*Expenditure on advertising*
2003	
Operation Payback (Phase 1)	230,000
Magistrate recruitment	342,000
2004	
Operation Payback (Phase 2)	292,000
Magistrate recruitment	102,000
2005	
Postal voting	185,270
Magistrate recruitment	741,000
Operation Payback (Phase 3)	263,082

Norman Lamb: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by her Department for use in London headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39148]

Ms Harman: My Department has identified six wide screen televisions that have been purchased for use in London headquarters in the last five years.

The purchases were made as follows:

	Number
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	0
2004–05	6

The cost, all incurred in 2004–05, was £17,500.00.

This answer relates solely to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, HQ Estate and not to Her Majesty's Court Service, related agencies or NDPBs as to gather this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Public Relations

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts awarded by her Department in 2004–05 in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [35951]

Ms Harman: The value (to the nearest £000, excluding VAT) of public opinion research contracts covering the United Kingdom as a whole was £280,000; covering England and Wales £998,000; covering areas of England £40,000; and covering South West England £26,000; no contracts were awarded for public relations.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she will make a statement on the initial activity undertaken by the Department in response to those recommendations in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People where lead responsibility was assigned to all Government departments. [37082]

Ms Harman: This Department has responded positively to the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report; for example, work has commenced on the Disability Equality Scheme, which will be completed by the end of December 2006. There was initial input from disabled members of the judiciary, members of staff and users of the Department's services. There will be further reviews of the Scheme by people with disabilities before the final publication. The document will detail the Department's promotion of disability issues internally, accessibility to buildings, communication, procurement, recruitment, and the support to members of the judiciary with disabilities.

An annual report will be issued, reporting on the progress of the action plans contained within the Scheme.

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) will also report annually to the Prime Minister on cross-government progress in implementing the Strategy Unit report,

"Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People". The first report is due to be published by summer 2006. It will contain an assessment of the initial activity undertaken by the ODI to fulfil its specific responsibilities, which require the active involvement of other Government Departments. It will also include an assessment of the initial activity undertaken by the Department for Constitutional Affairs and other Government Departments to fulfil the responsibilities they have outside of the ODI remit.

Early Retirement

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many of her Department's employees have taken early retirement in each year since 1997. [34040]

Bridget Prentice: The numbers of employees, who have taken early retirement in each year since 1997, are shown in the following table.

	Number of employees
1997	92
1998	94
1999	27
2000	40
2001	27
2002	19
2003	22
2004	28
2005	13
Total	362

The above figures include those who have retired voluntarily with an actuarially reduced pension, those who have retired with benefits under the Civil Service Compensation Scheme and those who have retired on ill-health grounds.

El Hadji Diouf

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress of the investigation into the provision of legal aid for the footballer El Hadji Diouf. [39538]

Bridget Prentice: There is no current investigation, nor is any planned, into the decision to award El Hadji Diouf legal aid. Under the existing arrangements and rules, criminal legal aid representation depends on the applicant satisfying the Interests of Justice test. In the case of El Hadji Diouf, there is no reason to believe that there was any misapplication of this test.

While an applicant for criminal legal aid representation does not currently have to pass a financial eligibility test, the Criminal Defence Service Bill, presently before Parliament, will provide for the re-introduction of means testing for defendants appearing before the criminal courts.

Electoral Administration

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what action her Department is taking to encourage people under the age of 30 years to vote in *(a)* general, *(b)* local and *(c)* European elections. [39462]

Ms Harman: The Department for Constitutional Affairs is, looking at ways to raise awareness of the registration process and encourage people and particularly young people to register to vote. Young people have low levels of electoral registration. We have been making new links with young people's groups to consider how to take this work forward.

The Electoral Administration Bill includes changes to the electoral and voting process to make voting more convenient and more secure.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps her Department proposes to take regarding the failure of *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* Pickfords to provide marked registers; and if she will make a statement. [39579]

Ms Harman: Officials from my department have previously been made aware that the marked registers of a number of constituencies were incomplete. As of 2 November 2005, the missing sections of 42 per cent. of these incomplete marked registers had been located. Pickfords are continuing to carry out searches to locate as many of the remaining missing marked registers as possible.

The Electoral Administration Bill will provide that at future UK Parliamentary elections, the marked registers for England and Wales will be stored locally, and the duty to provide copies will fall to the local electoral registration officer.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* controls and *(b)* restrictions exist to prevent election candidates using freepost mailings for solely commercial purposes. [39580]

Ms Harman: Section 91 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 states that an election candidate's freepost mailing must contain matter relating to the election only. It is illegal to use the freepost mailing system for commercial purposes.

The Royal Mail administer a vetting system to ensure that candidates' freepost literature does not include commercial material.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of the proposal in the Electoral Administration Bill to lower the threshold of votes for retaining deposits on freepost mailings being used for commercial purposes. [39581]

Ms Harman: The proposal in the Electoral Administration Bill to lower the threshold for retention of deposits in parliamentary elections will have no effect on freepost mailings being used for commercial purposes. Section 91 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 states that an election candidate's freepost mailing must contain matter relating to the election only. It is illegal to use the freepost mailing system for commercial purposes. The Royal Mail administer a vetting system to ensure that candidates' freepost literature does not include commercial material.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the provisions available for enabling the severely disabled to vote in general elections; and what changes to current provisions are envisaged. [39595]

Ms Harman: At present, a tactile voting device is available in polling stations for blind and visually impaired voters, and voters with disabilities can vote with the assistance of a companion or the Presiding Officer. Also, electors with disabilities may apply to have a postal or proxy vote if they are unable to access their local polling station.

The Electoral Administration Bill will extend the current provisions for voters with disabilities. It includes a duty on local authorities to undertake a review of polling places at least every four years; and, allows electoral administrators to provide information in other formats, such as Braille or through graphical representation.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she is taking to use *(a)* technology and *(b)* other means to make it easier for the elderly to vote in elections. [40522]

Ms Harman: The Government are committed to increasing everyone's participation in the electoral process and are continuing to look at a number of ways of modernising the electoral process through its Electoral Modernisation programme. This includes the piloting of innovations at local elections and introducing changes to the electoral process through the Electoral Administration Bill, with the aim of making voting straightforward, efficient, secure and readily accessible to all electors, including the elderly.

Electoral Reform

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent representations her Department has received on reform of the first-past-the-post electoral system. [39534]

Ms Harman: Over the three-month period 1 October 2005 to 31 December 2005 the DCA received 16 letters from members of the public and also two parliamentary questions on voting systems reform and review.

Electoral Registration

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent estimate she has made of electoral registration levels among ethnic minorities. [36719]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Commission's 2005 report "Understanding Electoral Registration" contained an analysis of the electoral registers at 1 December 2000. This included the estimate that 17 per cent. of people from minority ethnic groups in England and Wales were not registered to vote in 2000. The equivalent figure for the white population was 6 per cent.

However, these estimates do not explicitly take account of electoral non-eligibility on grounds of nationality. In order to register to vote in the UK, resident adults are required to hold UK, Irish, Commonwealth or EU nationality.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many meetings of the EU Committee on the jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and in matters of paternal responsibility for children of both spouses and on the jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (Brussels I and II) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38808]

Ms Harman: No meetings have taken place during the UK presidency of the Council of the EU on the topics referred to by the hon. Member.

Family Law Act

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when section 42A of the Family Law Act 1996 will come into force; and if she will make a statement. [37762]

Bridget Prentice: The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 makes amendments to Part IV of the Family Law Act 1996, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

It is the biggest overhaul of domestic violence legislation for 30 years and is a crucial part of the Government's wider strategy for preventing domestic violence by protecting and supporting victims, and bringing perpetrators to justice. The new section 42A of the Family Law Act 1996 refers to the breach of non-molestation orders which will become a criminal offence.

Implementation of the Act is commitment 12 of the National Report and Delivery Plan, which was published on the 31 March 2005. The provisions of the Act will be implemented on a rolling basis as and when funding is identified and relevant training completed.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average time taken for contempt proceedings to be dealt with under the Family Law Act 1996 was prior to the amendments of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004. [37763]

Bridget Prentice: This information is not collated centrally. Part of our plans for the implementation of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 is the better collection of statistical information. We are planning to research the impact of breaches and the implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she plans to introduce measures to ensure exchange of information between family and criminal courts for the breach of non-molestation orders under the new provision 42A of the Family Law Act 1996. [37772]

Bridget Prentice: The Family Proceedings (Amendment No 4) Rules 2005 [SI: 2005 No. 1976 (L.18)] which were implemented on 31 October 2005 clarify who and how information in family proceedings may be shared. My Department is also developing a protocol on information sharing for the Integrated Domestic Violence Court Pilot at Croydon.

This is underpinned by the Family-Criminal Interface Steering Committee which my Department established with the support of the Deputy Chief Justice on 9 February 2004.

The Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Solicitor General and the President of the Family Division, has an 'overview' role in co-ordinating all work currently being undertaken in England and Wales to improve the interface between the family and criminal jurisdictions.

Gravesend and Dartford County Courts

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current waiting time is from allocation to hearing for small claims at the Gravesend and Dartford county courts. [39524]

Ms Harman: The current performance data (October 2005) is showing the average waiting time for small claims at Gravesend county court to be five weeks from application to hearing. The performance indicator for cases heard in small claims courts is currently 78 per cent. of cases to be heard within 15 weeks. Gravesend county court is currently operating 100 per cent. effective.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many possession cases were issued at the Gravesend county court between *(a)* 1 October 2004 and 31 March 2005 and *(b)* 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005. [39523]

Ms Harman: Between 1 October 2004 and 31 March 2005, 296 possession claims were issued.

Between 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005, 338 possession claims were issued.

Her Majesty's Courts Service

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made on pay negotiations with former magistrates courts staff transferred to Her Majesty's Courts Service. [39551]

Bridget Prentice: The Department has been engaged in discussions throughout 2005 with the unions representing staff subject to former magistrates courts service (MCS) terms and conditions of service. Formal negotiations began on 5 April 2005 once former MCS staff transferred into DCA.

The Department has made an offer to the unions which officials believe is fair given the current economic circumstances, public sector pay awards generally and what the Department can afford. It is therefore regrettable that PCS and Prospect are taking industrial action. Officials remain prepared to discuss any constructive proposals that the unions wish to put forward to resolve the dispute, recognising the constraints within which the department has to operate.

High Sheriffs

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the name is of each person who has been appointed to a post of high sheriff in each of the last 30 years; and in respect of which area each was appointed. [39288]

Ms Harman: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

House of Lords Reform

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress on reform of the House of Lords. [39466]

Ms Harman: The Government are continuing to seek the co-operation of other parties in setting up a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider and codify the powers of the House of Lords. The Government hope to be able to proceed with the establishment of the Joint Committee as soon as possible.

The Government will also proceed on its other free-standing manifesto commitments on Lords reform—to limit to 60 days the time the House of Lords deal with a Bill, to abolish the remaining hereditary peers and to allow a free vote on the composition of the House of Lords.

Incentive Packages

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the value is of *(a)* pay supplements, *(b)* bonuses and *(c)* other incentive packages that are payable in her Department on the basis of geographic location; how many people are in receipt of each payment; and what the total cost to her Department of each payment was in 2004–05. [35916]

Ms Harman: Details of pay supplements, bonuses and other incentive packages paid to DCA staff broken down by DCA administrative area for the year ending 31 March 2005 follow. The information is not readily available broken down by Government office regions.

The information requested is not readily available for staff previously employed by magistrates courts committees and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Count and value of allowances by DCA region

Allowance description	DCA region							
	London	Midlands	North East	North West	South East	South West	Wales and Cheshire	Grand total
Area Director Responsibility Allowance								
Value (£)	—	20,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	90,000
People	—	2	1	1	1	2	2	9
Extended Working Hours								
Value (£)	—	50,489	—	—	—	—	—	50,489
People	—	62	—	—	—	—	—	62
Job Specific Market Supp.								
Value (£)	381,500	—	—	—	2,000	—	—	383,500
People	100	—	—	—	2	—	—	102
Local Market Supplement								
Value (£)	24,500	1,000	—	—	161,100	—	—	186,600
People	22	1	—	—	174	—	—	197
Local Pay Addition								
Value (£)	1,700	300	—	—	27,300	8,500	—	37,800
People	3	1	—	—	69	17	—	90
Local Pay Addition EO								
Value (£)	600	—	—	—	7,700	1,000	—	9,300
People	3	—	—	—	23	2	—	28
London Pay Addition								
Value (£)	24,797	—	—	—	6,255	—	—	31,052
People	173	—	—	—	37	—	—	210
London Pay Addition EO								
Value (£)	9,270	—	—	—	1,548	—	—	10,818
People	191	—	—	—	16	—	—	207
Accountancy Allowance								
Value (£)	184,300	9,200	—	3,150	—	3,150	6,300	206,100
People	42	3	—	1	—	1	2	49
Auditors' Allowance								
Value (£)	67,000	48,000	15,000	5,000	—	29,000	3,000	167,000
People	15	10	3	1	—	7	1	37
Total value (£)	693,667	128,989	25,000	18,150	213,903	61,650	29,300	1,170,659
Total count of staff in receipt of allowances	549	79	4	3	321	29	5	990

DCA performance and bonus payments 2004–05

Performance bonus payments based on annual appraisal markings

DCA region	Total	Value (£)	Total cost (including employers NIC) (£)
London	802	320,800	350,634
Midlands	208	83,200	90,938
North East	189	75,600	82,631
North West	202	80,800	88,314
South East	260	104,000	113,672
Wales and Cheshire	95	38,000	41,534
South West	145	58,000	63,394
Grand total	1,901	760,400	831,117

Small bonus payments[1] (under £50 to individuals or teams)

	£
Value	244,525
Cost (incl. employers NIC)	267,266

[1] Payments are not recorded by region

Special bonuses

DCA region	Total	Value (£)	Total cost (including employers NIC) (£)
London	973	315,560	344,907
Midlands	148	35,714	39,035
North East	59	10,066	11,002
North West	202	24,516	26,796
South East	212	35,510	38,812
Wales and Cheshire	74	10,215	11,165
South West	76	17,473	19,098
Grand total	1,744	449,054	490,816

Information Commissioner

Ben Chapman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what is the average time taken to process cases at the Information Commissioner's Office; and if she will make a statement. [37724]

Ms Harman: The average time to close a Data Protection case between 1 April and 30 November 2005 was 50 days. The average time to close a Freedom of Information case in the same period was 96 days. The Information Commissioner has analysed his current workload and concluded that the high volume of FOI appeals that he is processing at present are a result of the initial influx of requests that public authorities experienced in the first few months of FOI implementation.

Joint Ministerial Sub-Committees

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Minister of State Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the operation and staffing of the joint ministerial sub-committees between the Scottish Executive and UK departments; [40021]

(2) if she will list the joint ministerial sub-committees between the Scottish Executive and UK Departments; and how many staff are assigned to service each. [40022]

Bridget Prentice: The Memorandum of Understanding and Supplementary Agreements (Cm 5240) allows for the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) to meet in various "functional" formats to discuss specific policy areas. At present, the JMC exists in four such formats: Health, Poverty, Knowledge Economy and Europe. Of these four, the JMC on Europe meets most regularly. As described in the Memorandum of Understanding the Secretariat to these Committees is provided by the UK Cabinet Office and the devolved administrations, although in practice the Secretariat to the JMCs on Health, Poverty and Knowledge Economy is provided by my department. There is no specific group of civil servants assigned to the Secretariat; instead staff from appropriate areas service the Committees as necessary.

Judicial Pension Schemes

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on what date the judicial pension schemes will be deregistered for the purposes of the Finance Act 2004. [40474]

Ms Harman: The Lord Chancellor, as scheme administrator, will notify HM Revenue and Customs that the judicial pension schemes will not become registered schemes for the purposes of the Finance Act, with effect from 6 April 2006, under paragraph 2 of schedule 36 to the Act .

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average pension paid to retired members from the judicial pension schemes is. [40476]

Ms Harman: Figures in the scheme accounts for 2004–05 indicate an average annual pension in payment of about £41,800 for retired scheme members and about £15,500 for surviving dependants.

Magistrates

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions she has had on the implementation of payments for magistrates for their work. [39594]

Ms Harman: None.

Parliamentary Constituencies

Mr. Bone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she expects the new parliamentary constituency boundaries will come into effect. [40548]

Ms Harman: The Boundary Commission for England is required to submit its report by April 2007. Under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, the report will then be brought before Parliament "as soon as may be". If agreed by Parliament, the report's recommendations will come into force at the next General Election.

Rates

Angus Robertson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was paid by her Department in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* London. [36014]

Bridget Prentice: My Department has, in 2004–05, paid rates in:

	£
(a) (i) Nation	
England	5.51[illegible] million
Wales	0
Scotland	0
Northern Ireland	0
(ii) Region of the UK	
North East	16,147.00
North West	3,492.00
South West	8,436.00
All other regions except London	0
(b) London[1]	5.490 million

[1] This answer relates solely to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, HQ Estate and not to Her Majesty's Court Service, related agencies or NDPB's as to gather this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff are employed by her Department in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; and if she will make a statement. [35914]

Ms Harman: The figures requested are published in Civil Service Statistics. They are outlined in Table D which covers staff numbers (FTE basis) in each Department and agency. Civil Service Statistics are available in the Library and at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management of the civil service/statistics/civil service statistics/index.asp

The regional breakdown can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Sub-Committee on Electoral Policy

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the members of the Constitutional Affairs sub-committee on Electoral Policy. [39578]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have been asked to reply.

A full list of all Cabinet committees, including their membership and terms of reference, can be found in the Library. My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, placed an updated list in the Library on Thursday 15 December 2005.

Taxis

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent by her Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37478]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information requested on how much was spent on taxis during the (current) 2005–06 financial year without incurring disproportionate cost.

The Department has published rules for official travel in its staff handbook and all travel complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Goods and Services (Transgender People)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps she is taking to meet the Government's obligations under council directive 2004/113/EC to enact goods and services protection for transgender people by the deadline of 21 December 2007. [37580]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 14 December 2005]:* We are developing proposals to meet our obligations as part of the wider Discrimination Law Review.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Administration Costs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39940]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister carries out no functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In relation to Wales, while the vast majority of functions for which ODPM has responsibility have been devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government since devolution, ODPM does retain some residual functions in relation to Wales, specifically in relation to building regulations and local authority pension arrangements. Since these functions are already exercised in relation to England, the additional costs associated with administering these functions for Wales are minimal and therefore have not been measured. In addition, ODPM acts for the whole of the UK in international forums where it has the lead policy responsibility internationally (e.g. on the EC's environmental impact assessment directive), however, implementation is a matter for the devolved Administrations (where the implementation mechanism is devolved).

Age Discrimination (Housing)

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures the Government are taking to combat age discrimination in relation to housing. [28617]

Yvette Cooper: I understand the hon. Member's question relates to age discrimination in relation to park homes. Many parks do not have age limitations. It is up to individual parks and their residents to decide on what, if any, conditions to attach to residency, subject to any relevant legislation. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have any evidence to suggest that age limitations are causing significant problems for the sector and has no current plans to consider possible measures.

ASBOs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he provides to local authorities on whether they can outsource the delivery of antisocial behaviour order functions to external organisations. [37891]

Hazel Blears: I have been asked to reply.

Provision for contracting out local authority functions relating to antisocial behaviour is contained in section 1F of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by section 128 of The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 but has not yet been implemented. Subsection (9) provides that the Secretary of State may issue guidance on the provisions, to which local authorities and the persons to whom they contract out must have regard.

Officials within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are currently consulting on a proposal to enable local authorities to ask those bodies managing their housing under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985 to also carry out all or some of their functions relating to antisocial behaviour orders.

Buncefield Oil Depot

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Total Oil Depot site at Buncefield, near Hemel Hempstead, is subject to the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997. [39372]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Buncefield Oil Depot site has been subject to the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 since 1 December 1999. The enforcing authority for the regulations at that site is the Health and Safety Executive, who also enforce the fire certificate issued under the Fire Certificates (Special Premises) Regulations 1976.

Christmas Decorations

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance the Government have issued to local authorities on *(a)* celebrating Christmas and *(b)* Christmas lights in relation to (i) highway safety and (ii) diversity. [39480]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued guidance to local authorities on *(a)* celebrating Christmas or *(b)* Christmas lights in relation to (i) highway safety and (ii) diversity.

Guidance on highway safety is not within the remit of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's policy. As local authorities work at the local level and have knowledge of their local populations, they are best placed to decide how to celebrate Christmas and other religious festivals.

Commercial Property

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many voids on commercial property there were in each year since 2000. [40400]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not compile or collate statistics of voids in the commercial property sector.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new commercial leases have been offered on a contracted-out basis since their introduction. [40401]

Yvette Cooper: Landlords and tenants have been able to agree to contract out of security of tenure since 1970. Since 1 June 2004, they have been able to do so without prior court approval, but subject to new safeguards for tenants involving the issue of "health warning" notices.

There are no records of how many new commercial leases have been offered on a contracted-out basis since the new procedures were introduced. We do not expect the new procedures by themselves to change the pattern of contracting out.

The new contracting out procedures were part of a package of reforms to Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 introduced by a Regulatory Reform Order made in 2003. We are currently reviewing the impact of the reforms, with a view to reporting back shortly to the Regulatory Reform Committee.

Council Expenditure

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of spending by *(a)* Kent county council and *(b)* Gravesham borough council will be financed from council tax in (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08. [37523]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not yet available. Authorities will not be setting council taxes for 2006–07 until early in 2006, with council taxes for 2007–08 not set until early 2007.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government plan to cap council tax bills for pensioners; and if he will make a statement. [39487]

Mr. Woolas: The Government have made it clear that they expect to see an average increase in council tax in England of less than 5 per cent. in each of the next two years and are prepared to use their capping powers against excessive increases.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister look forward to receiving the final report of Sir Michael Lyons' independent inquiry into local government funding, in the context of its wider functions and future role before the end of 2006. We will consider how council tax may best be reformed in the light of Sir Michael's recommendations.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1500W, on council tax revaluation, whether the collection of value significant codes and dwelling house codes will continue following the postponement of the council tax revaluation in England. [39641]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 197W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's staff computer manual or guidance document for using the automated valuation model for council tax valuation purposes. [33165]

Mr. Woolas: The guidance contains reference to OASIS and Tenet which are commercial products which may be subject to copyright.

Councillors (Allowances)

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what allowances are paid to councillors by each local authority in England. [40456]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold the information requested.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the United Kingdom, including London. [37467]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, the following table shows how much the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister central spent on catering, hospitality and official entertainment for the period 1 April 2005 to date. These figures do not include any from the Government Offices which perform functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

£

1 April 2005 to date	*Amount spent*
Catering	186,357
Entertainment	129
Hospitality	35,332
Total	221,818

Departmental Projects

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* building and *(b)* refurbishment projects are planned by his Office in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and what the expected costs are of each project. [37389]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has the following building and refurbishment projects being undertaken in 2005–06 and planned for in 2006–07.

£000

	2005–06		*2006–07*	
	Expected building cost	*Expected refurbishment cost*	*Expected building cost*	*Expected refurbishment cost*
Allington Towers—London				
Fit-out costs	—	330	—	—
Eland House—London				
Refurbishment of passenger lifts (DDA requirement)	—	250	—	—
Rebrigading ODPM occupation	—	1,621	—	4,705

£000

	2005–06		2006–07	
	Expected building cost	Expected refurbishment cost	Expected building cost	Expected refurbishment cost
Ashdown House—London				
Refurbishment of passenger lifts (DDA requirement)	—	170	—	—
Burlington House—London				
External repairs to grade2 listed building.	—	2,424	—	714
QEII Conference Centre				
Refurbishment of passenger lift (DDA requirement)	—	—	—	100
Fire Service College—Moreton-in-Marsh				
Refurbishment of student restaurant.	—	216	—	—
Refurbishment of student coffee bar and lounge.	—	—	—	59
Refurbishment of muster bay	—	—	—	107
New Dimension project				
Provision of storage	300	—	—	—

The figures provided, which exclude VAT, are gross expenditure and do not reflect receipts from other building occupants.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has defined refurbishment projects to be upgrading and efficiency projects exceeding £100,000.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Property

Angus Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was paid by his Department in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* London in that year. [35993]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister paid a total of £7,589,600 in rates for its properties in 2004–05. All the properties are in England and the amount of rates paid to each local authority was as follows:

Rates paid to local authorities in 2004–05

Local authority	Amount (£)
City of Westminster	5,839,992
Dacorum borough council	78,660
St Albans City and district council	6,014
High Peak borough council	3,329
Cotswold district council	411,150
East Staffordshire borough council	477,432
Bristol City council	761,633
Trafford Metropolitan borough council	11,390
Total	7,589,600

The amount of rates paid in respect of regions of the UK was as follows:

Rates paid to local authorities in 2004–05

Region	Amount (£)
London	5,839,992
Eastern	84,674
North West	14,719
West Midlands	477,432
South West	1,172,783
Total	7,589,600

Of the total amount of £7,589,600 paid by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to local authorities, £1,614,185 was recovered from other Government occupiers. ODPM also paid £224,565 in respect of rates to other Government Departments whose property they occupied.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government Offices, which carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Secondees

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many secondees there have been to his Office from consultancy firms, including the Big Four accountancy firms, in each of the last three years; and what areas of the Department they have worked in. [37355]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has had one secondee from a consultancy firm in each of the last three years: Details are as follows:

	Number	Area
2003	1	Local Government
2004	1	Local Government
2005	1	Corporate Strategy

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35921]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40293]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) does not collect such data. Staff in ODPM may work at home subject to the agreement of their line manager and the business needs of ODPM. In making such arrangements full account is given to the rights of staff with children under the age of six under the Employment Act 2002 to request a flexible working pattern. ODPM supports such arrangements which assist staff maintain a satisfactory work/life balance, subject to there being a business justification for the arrangement.

Design for Manufacture

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the final sale price of the £60,000 homes being constructed as part of the Design for Manufacture competition. [33495]

Yvette Cooper: The Design for Manufacture competition is being run by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It is anticipated that there will be mixed tenure on each site, with some homes being available for affordable rent, some under shared equity and some for private sale.

The aim of the competition is to demonstrate how to build cost-effectively across a range of housing types without sacrificing quality. The sites are in public sector ownership. This also allows some of the competition homes to become part of our developing low cost home ownership initiatives. We anticipate that the shared equity homes will be made available at a price equivalent to the cost of construction, plus a contribution to the overall development charge for the installation and connection of services and infrastructure. Final details will be known later this year once the homes are built on site and details finalised.

Designated Growth Areas

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1501–02W, on designated growth areas, if he will list the providers of private funding; how much funding has been committed by each; what opportunities for private sector funding were identified by his Department in each of the growth areas; and what his Department's estimate is of the private funding that will be made available within each designated growth area by 2016. [37947]

Yvette Cooper: The answer given on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1501–02W, referred to the opportunities that the designated growth areas will present to private sector investors. This includes investment by the privately owned utility companies in water, waste water and electricity supply infrastructure and investment by housing developers who will be expected to contribute to infrastructure requirements through Section 106 contributions.

A specific example of private sector investment in one particular growth location was also given. In Milton Keynes, delivery partners have focused on identifying, prioritising and sourcing investment for growth related infrastructure—based on their individual circumstances and infrastructure priorities—using a mix of public and private sector funding. The local delivery vehicle has been negotiating a standard charge of over £18,000 per house from private developers in the east and west expansion flanks. This will generate approximately £300 million of funding to complement circa £900 million of funding from public sources in support of infrastructure to facilitate construction of 15,000 houses to 2016. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is encouraging other growth locations to follow similar principles in securing local agreement on priorities and funding their growth location business plans.

There will of course also be direct private sector investment in new opportunities created by the growth strategies. For example in Corby, an important growth location within the Milton Keynes/South Midlands growth area, investment from private sector partners includes: major town centre retail development by Land Securities at Willow Place (Phase 1 of which is worth around £35 million); mixed use town centre and light industrial development by Quadrant Developments at Cockerell Road (which is worth around £35 million) and office, industrial and commercial development by Wilson Bowden at Phoenix Parkway (which is worth around £30 million). This is in addition to the major public sector investment (around £25 million) that has been earmarked for Corby's Parkland Gateway scheme—of which £9 million is Growth Areas Funding.

A full list of *(a)* all of the providers of private funding and the amount of funding committed by each and *(b)* the opportunities for private sector funding in each of the growth areas (covering more than 15 separate locations) is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Domestic Microgeneration Devices

Greg Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the average cost to *(a)* the applicant and *(b)* the planning authority of applying for planning permission to install domestic microgeneration devices. [40259]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not carried out any estimates in this context. As I informed the House on 11 November, we envisage consulting in 2006 on possible amendments to the General Permitted Development Order, including provisions that would make it easier for householders to install microgeneration equipment.

Engagements

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his engagements for *(a)* 13 May 2003 and *(b)* 16 December 2005. [39625]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister had a number of routine departmental meetings in his London office on 13 May 2003. Due to an administrative error, a previous parliamentary response to the hon. Member of 15 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 744W, indicated that he was on a regional visit in Hove on this date. This in fact took place one year earlier, on 13 May 2002.

On 16 December 2005, he was on a regional visit to Portsmouth, Worthing and Brighton.

Fire Service Restructuring

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the level of service people living in North Yorkshire will receive after the restructuring of the Fire Service. [39729]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and rescue authorities are required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to have in place and maintain an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. It is, therefore, for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority to determine appropriate fire cover and the level of service in its area.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects work undertaken to gather information from local fire brigades about essential activities out of scope of the new regional fire control centres will be concluded. [39730]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently reviewing the information supplied by fire and rescue services on out of scope activities and we expect to be able to provide feedback directly to individual fire and rescue services in February 2006.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications for rural areas with a large number of retained firefighters with limited capabilities of *(a)* floods and *(b)* terrorism. [39731]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and rescue authorities are required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to have in place and maintain an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities, including those of floods and terrorism if appropriate. It is, therefore, for each fire and rescue authority to determine appropriate fire cover in its area, be that rural or metropolitan.

The Government place great value on the contribution of firefighters on the retained duty system who provide the backbone of many fire and rescue authorities across the country.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost implications will be of residual control functions out of scope of regional fire control centres. [39812]

Jim Fitzpatrick: We are reviewing information provided by Fire and Rescue Services about the activities which are currently performed by control staff in existing control rooms and which are expected to lie outside the scope of the new control arrangements. Initial analysis confirms our view that there will be considerable savings from making new arrangements for performing these activities. In particular, highly trained, well-paid control room staff will no longer perform routine administrative tasks, such as managing the first aid box or holding the keys for pool cars. This will allow them to focus their efforts on achieving the best possible management of emergency incidents.

Fire Services College

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Fire Services College provides services to brigades in Scotland. [39934]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Yes. The Fire Service College provides a range of training courses for Scottish fire and rescue services. They also have access to the College's library and online information and development resources.

Homebuy Schemes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which public sector body will be providing the funds for the *(a)* Open Market Homebuy, *(b)* Social Homebuy and *(c)* New Build Homebuy scheme. [39489]

Yvette Cooper: Public subsidy for the Open Market and New Build HomeBuy schemes will be provided from 1 April 2006 by the Housing Corporation.

Social HomeBuy, which enables social tenants to buy a share in their rented home, will be funded by housing associations and local authorities. In the housing association sector, the Housing Corporation will provide funding to cover the cost of the discount offered to the tenants to facilitate participation in the scheme.

Funding for the Open Market HomeBuy option will be supplemented by the provision of private finance equity loans following a major agreement with three lenders which was announced on 5 December. This has the potential to enable a further 20,000 households to be helped into home ownership by 2010, bringing the total helped through the HomeBuy schemes to over 100,000.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether private sector workers will be eligible for the *(a)* Open Market Homebuy scheme, *(b)* Social Homebuy scheme, *(c)* New Build Homebuy scheme and *(d)* Key Workers Initiative. [39490]

Yvette Cooper: Private sector workers who are also social tenants, on the housing register, or first time buyers in a priority group recommended by regional housing boards will be eligible for open market homebuy and new build homebuy schemes where they are operating.

Private sector workers who are also social tenants will be eligible for social homebuy where social landlords are operating the scheme.

Private sector workers are not included within the eligible groups for key worker housing as the prime objective is to support improvements in public services. It is the responsibility of the private sector to deal with their own recruitment and retention issues.

Homelessness

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many homeless households in *(a)* Guildford, *(b)* Waverley and *(c)* Surrey were living in (i) temporary accommodation and (ii) sleeping rough in each of the past five years; [39570]

(2) how many beds were available for homeless households in *(a)* Guildford, *(b)* Waverley and *(c)* Surrey in each of the past five years. [39571]

Yvette Cooper: Information about the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation as at 31 March, and the number of persons sleeping rough, in each of the past five years is tabled as follows for Guildford, Waverley and Surrey.

Each local authority in England has a duty to provide accommodation to households who have been accepted as homeless and are owed a main housing duty under homelessness legislation. If the authority cannot provide a settled solution straight away the household will be placed in temporary accommodation. For this reason, authorities will not have a set number of beds for homeless households.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by local authorities under homelessness provisions of Housing Acts, and numbers of persons sleeping rough[2]

	Households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March	*Rough sleepers*
2001		
Guildford	164	1
Waverley	132	0
All LAs in Surrey	1,010	2
2002		
Guildford	181	1
Waverley	[3]—	0
All LAs in Surrey	1,060	2
2003		
Guildford	180	0
Waverley	116	0
All LAs in Surrey	1,020	0
2004		
Guildford	160	0
Waverley	107	0
All LAs in Surrey	930	0
2005		
Guildford	111	0
Waverley	80	0
All LAs in Surrey	1,030	0

[1] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative housing as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

[2] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates.

[3] Denotes data not reported. Figures for Surrey, which include estimates for partial and non-response, have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly) and HSSA returns (annual)

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when he last met representatives of Crisis to discuss homelessness among those people housing authorities are not legally obliged to accept as homeless; [39572]

(2) when the Government last carried out research on the extent of homelessness; [39573]

(3) what plans the Government have to carry out research to establish how many people are living *(a)* in bed and breakfast accommodation, *(b)* in hostels, *(c)* temporarily with families and friends, *(d)* in other temporary accommodation and *(e)* sleeping rough; and if he will make a statement. [39574]

Yvette Cooper: Officials within the ODPM meet regularly with Crisis and I would be happy to meet with them should the situation arise.

In relation to undertaking detailed research on the extent of homelessness, ODPM measures homelessness primarily through local authority statistics on the numbers of households seeking homelessness assistance and through counts and estimates of rough sleeping. These are the most robust and consistent measures of the problem and of changes over time. We are constantly improving them and we conduct other regular surveys to measure other indicators of housing need, such as overcrowding through the annual Survey of English Housing. This data is published and available free of charge from the ODPM website at www.odpm.gov.uk. Link: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1154759.

In addition, the Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local housing authority in England in have in place a strategy for preventing and tackling homelessness among all households at risk of homelessness, including for those to whom they do not owe a statutory duty to house. Every authority published its first strategies in 2003.

The latest National Statistics on statutory homelessness, published on 12 December, showed 100,970 households in some form of temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation as at 30 September 2005. Of this total, 6,290 were in bed and breakfast style units, and 9,870 were in hostels or women's refuges; all the remaining 84,810 households were in some form of self-contained accommodation, the majority of which was leased from the private sector or owned by social landlords.

In addition to the 100,970 households in temporary accommodation on 30 September, there were a further 16,020 households who were "homeless at home", that is awaiting a settled housing solution, having previously been accepted as owed a main homelessness duty but able to remain in their current accommodation for the immediate future.

Latest estimates and street counts, as at June 2005, indicate there were 459 people sleeping rough in England on any single night. This is the lowest recorded level since the count began in 1998.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to tackle hidden homelessness. [39632]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to tackling all forms of homelessness. That is why we introduced legislation in 2002 requiring all housing authorities to have a strategy in place for preventing homelessness and ensuring that accommodation and support are available for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. In support of these strategies we have already invested over £200 million and will invest a further £200 million by 2008.

We are also determined to help others who are facing difficulties in finding a home of their own, for example those staying with family and friends, or living in hostels. To help us achieve this, we are increasing the supply of new social rented homes by 50 per cent. by 2008 and investing £90 million in hostels over three years to 2007–08 to improve the quality and effectiveness of hostels and the services they provide to help people move on to independent living.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what provisions he has made to set up emergency shelters for people sleeping rough in the event of a particularly cold winter. [39796]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities are required to have strategies in place for ensuring that accommodation and support are available for people who become homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has already invested over £200 million to support these prevention strategies and will invest £200 million more by 2008. This funding will also support additional provision for rough sleepers in periods of severe weather.

Whilst welcoming the fact that rough sleeper numbers in England are at an all-time low, we recognise the importance of ensuring that every effort is made to bring rough sleepers off the streets should there be a period of severe weather this winter. To that end, and further to the funding outlined above, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster has written to every local authority to ensure that they have plans in place to deal with anyone on the streets in extreme cold weather, and offer whatever advice and support is necessary to authorities who have not yet got appropriate plans in place.

Richard Burden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how he defines the term temporary accommodation for the purpose of setting targets for local authorities to reduce the number of homeless families in temporary accommodation. [40224]

Yvette Cooper: For the purpose of the 2010 target, "temporary accommodation" means any accommodation secured by an English local housing authority to discharge a power or duty to secure accommodation under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (the "homelessness legislation"). This can be distinguished from the provision of settled accommodation (whether in the social or private rented sectors) that brings a homelessness duty to an end.

House Building

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the additional homes planned to be built in England are expected to be *(a)* council, *(b)* housing association and *(c)* private homes. [37784]

Yvette Cooper: The Government responded to Kate Barker's review of Housing Supply on 5 December, outlining its ambition to increase total (private and social) housing delivery in England over the next decade to 200,000 net additions per year, from current delivery of around 150,000 net additions per year. The Government's aim is to increase home ownership to 75 per cent. and also to increase affordable housing for ownership and rent.

This policy will inform regional and local plans for housing, however the numbers set out in the response represent Government's ambition nationally. Detailed figures at a local level are determined through statutory planning processes.

For 2005–08, the Government is funding 75,000 new social homes of which at least 60,000 are expected to be provided through Registered Social Landlords. The Government have announced that social housing will be a priority in the next spending review and that we will also be piloting new ways for local authorities to support the delivery of more council housing.

Housing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of households accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need *(a)* contained (i) one, (ii) two and (iii) three or more children and *(b)* consisted of an applicant who was 16 or 17 years old in each quarter since 2002; and how many households in temporary accommodation contained (A) dependent children and (B) an expectant mother in (1) London and (2) each London borough in each quarter. [34664]

Yvette Cooper: Information collected about the number of households in temporary accommodation, as arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation, at the end of each quarter identifies those containing dependent children or an expectant mother, but does not distinguish between them.

A table presenting the information as reported by each London borough on the number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, during each quarter since July 2002, and the number of households with dependent children or an expectant mother in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, has been made available in the Library of the House. This distinguishes the number of households accepted each quarter, by the number of dependent children, and those where the applicant was aged 16 or 17, as well as presenting the information as a percentage of the total number of households accepted during each quarter, and the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter.

The total number of households in London accepted as homeless and owed a main homelessness duty, which contained children, or an expectant mother or a 16 to 17-year-old, fell from 5,650 to 4,130 (a 27 per cent. decrease) between the third quarters of 2002 and 2005 respectively.

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 682W, on housing, how many houses

were identified in each local authority as being empty for six months in 2001–02; and in how many of those cases the local authority intervened. [38875]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department has taken to assist low-income rural families to access adequate housing. [38921]

Yvette Cooper: This Government believes everyone should have access to decent housing at a price they can afford, including those in rural communities. To assist those on low incomes and key workers in such communities last year (2004–05) we invested over £200 million in new affordable homes.

On 5 December we published new draft planning policy statement 3: "Housing" (PPS3) for consultation. This exhorts local planning authorities (LPAs) to make sufficient land available for affordable and market housing to sustain rural communities. It encourages LPAs in rural areas to adopt policies that deliver sufficient affordable housing and mixed and sustainable rural communities, for example through setting a lower site-size threshold than the indicative threshold of 15 dwellings. Draft PPS3 enables LPAs to provide for affordable housing of a specific size and type, so that housing provision addresses the identified affordable housing need in particular areas.

We are conscious though that this is only part of the picture. The issues driving affordability in rural areas are complex and include a range of stakeholders outside Government. This is why in the summer we set up the Affordable Rural Housing Commission. We have asked the Commission to consider the evidence and reach consensus on the relevant issues around affordable housing needs in rural areas, in the context of sustainable communities, and to provide recommendations for practical solutions across private, Government, and voluntary sectors, taking account of good practice. The Commission is currently gathering evidence and will report in spring 2006.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* housing, *(b)* regeneration and *(c)* social exclusion scheme funding streams that will be in operation in 2006–07. [33163]

Yvette Cooper: The following list shows funding streams for a wide range of policy objectives across housing regeneration and social exclusion that will be in operation in 2006–07:

Housing

Arms Length Management Organisations

Best Value Intervention in Housing

Disabled Facilities Grants

Homelessness

Housing Action Trusts

Home Buying and Selling

Landlord Licensing and Safety Ratings

Tenants Deposit Scheme

Housing Defects Grants/Loan Charges

Housing Management Grants

Housing Mobility Service

Housing Revenue Account Subsidy

Large Scale Voluntary Transfers—gap funding and repayment of overhanging debt

Leasehold Enfranchisement Advisory Service

Choice-based Letting Schemes

Local Authority Social Housing Grant—Transitional Compensation

Private Housing Renewal

Private Landlords in Low Demand Areas

Programme efficiencies in social housing

Residential Property Tribunal Service

Safer Communities Supported Housing Fund

Single Housing Capital Pot (includes Housing Corporation National Affordable Housing Programme, Local Authority Supported Capital Expenditure for Housing, Private Sector Renewal Grant and Gypsy and Traveller Grant)

Supporting People

The National Approved Letting Scheme

Regeneration

Coalfields funding (Enterprise Fund and Regeneration Trust)

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Design Awards

English Partnerships (including Commission for the New Towns)

European Regional Development Fund

Groundwork and National Urban Forestry Unit

Housing Market Renewal Fund

Interreg (European funding stream)

Lea Valley Regional Park

Liveability Fund

Living Spaces

Mersey Basin

New Deal for Communities

New Ventures Fund

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

Other Growth Areas

Regional Development Agencies (including London Development Agency)

Special Grants Programme

Thames Gateway

Green Flags

Liveability Performance

Academy for Sustainable Communities (formerly Urban Design Skills)

Local Enterprise Growth Initiative

The Government also funds the work of the social exclusion unit. The unit does not administer funding streams directly but does work with Government Departments and other stakeholders to ensure that a wide range of Government funding programmes contribute to the reduction of social exclusion.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also funds research on housing, regeneration and social exclusion.

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on initiatives to improve housing quality for older people with particular reference to affordable *(a)* heating and *(b)* security and safety. [39424]

Yvette Cooper: The Government has set a target to bring all social housing into decent condition and to increase the proportion of private housing in decent condition occupied by vulnerable groups. Under the thermal comfort criterion element of the Decent Home standard, homes should have effective insulation and efficient heating. Older householders are among those who will benefit from these measures.

The Government's Warm Front Scheme in England provides a range of heating and insulation measures to householders and tenants in the private sector, including pensioner households, who are in receipt of certain benefits. Where a new central heating system is installed, customers are provided with guidance on the efficient use of the system. There are similar schemes in place in each of the Devolved Administrations.

In the pre-Budget report, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that an additional £300 million would be made available to tackle fuel poverty across the UK. In England, an additional £250 million will be made available to boost the Warm Front Scheme and extend its ability to provide central heating to pensioner households, and also to provide £300 off the cost of a central heating system for all other pensioners.

With the implementation of Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 in April 2006, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) will replace the fitness standard as the basis for intervention against unacceptable housing conditions and will also become an element of the Decent Home standard. To be decent, a dwelling will need to be free of serious ("category 1") health and safety hazards, including serious hazards from entry by intruders, as assessed under HHSRS. This means that landlords, including local authorities and other social landlords, will need to take reasonable steps to ensure that their properties are secure against unauthorised entry.

Local authorities can offer assistance in the form of grants, loans or advice towards any kind of repair, adaptation or improvement work. The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) helps fund adaptations to enable disabled people to live as comfortably and independently as possible in their homes. 70 per cent. of DFG applications come from older people.

Support and assistance for older people in accessing funding and arranging works can also be obtained from Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), for whom Government provides support through sponsorship of a National Co-ordinating Body—Foundations—and funding from a range of sources including the Supporting People programme.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost of gap funding allocated to large scale voluntary transfers was in each year since 2001. [22411]

Yvette Cooper: £182 million has been allocated for the period 2004–05 to 2007–08. The gap funding scheme did not operate prior to this period. This funding leavers in considerable private finances.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost of administration of the Arm's Length Management Organisation in Islington since it was established. [40353]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No estimate has been made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The funding provided under the ALMO programme is towards the cost of capital works to make homes decent only.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will introduce rules for the conduct of tenants' ballots in housing matters to cover *(a)* starting dates, *(b)* access for opposing campaigners, *(c)* availability of information on addresses and *(d)* adjudication of disputes. [40370]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to introduce such rules. Guidance to local authorities on the conduct of tenants' ballots is in the 'Housing Transfer Manual 2005'. Authorities should also ensure that they follow the 'Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity' (Circulars 20/1988 and 06/2001).

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assumptions are used in estimating building cost inflation when calculating allowances for local authority housing revenue accounts; and how such estimates are calculated. [40849]

Yvette Cooper: Major repairs allowances are increased in line with the GDP deflator, as set out in my response to the hon. Member's question number 40851.

The national total of maintenance allowances is increased each year in line with the policies set in the Spending Review.

The distribution of major repairs and maintenance allowances between authorities makes reference to relative construction costs as measured at county level by the average of the latest four quarters of the BCIS All-in Tender Price Index. The procedure and data are set out in full in the Commentary on the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination 2006–2007.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether building cost inflation is taken into account when calculating local authority major repairs allowances. [40851]

Yvette Cooper: The major repairs allowances for each building archetype are increased each year in line with the forecast GDP deflator measure of inflation provided by HM Treasury at the time of issue of the HRA Subsidy Determination. For 2006–07 this was 2.46 per cent.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list local authorities from which housing revenue account funds were transferred in each of the last three years, broken down by amount. [22254]

Yvette Cooper: A table showing the list of local authorities covered by the housing revenue account subsidy system, together with their subsidy entitlements, both negative and positive, in the years 2003–04 to 2005–06 inclusive has been placed in the Library of the House. The figures are subject to audit.

Transfers from an authority are indicated by negative amounts. Where an authority has been in receipt of subsidy, those amounts are shown as positive amounts to distinguish them from authorities that have closed their housing revenue accounts, which are marked "n/a" in the appropriate years.

In each of the three years, some authorities have contributed to the system, while others have received resources. In none of the years have surpluses met the full cost of deficits. We expect that payments to deficit authorities will continue to exceed resources redistributed from surplus authorities throughout this period. This means that there will be a continuing net subsidy to council housing.

Peter Law: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money has been raised to date from the sale of council houses; and what proportion of the revenue has been reinvested in the repair and upgrading of council housing stock. [35806]

Yvette Cooper: From 1 April 1990 to 31 March 2005 there has been £21.23 billion (current prices net of discounts) raised from sales of local authority dwellings sold for owner occupation. This includes right-to-buy, voluntary sales into owner-occupation and leasehold but excludes receipts from block transfers. Information on use of receipts is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

James Duddridge: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the percentage change in council housing waiting lists *(a)* in Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* for each local authority in England has been since 1997; [33773]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of people who will be on waiting lists for council housing placements in 12 months time; [33775]

(3) how many people are on waiting lists for council housing placements. [33776]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 1 December 2005]:* A table containing the percentage change showing increases and falls in the number of households on housing waiting lists by each district, including Southend-on-Sea, from 1997 to 2005, has been made available in the Library of the House.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not make predictions as to the future status of the housing waiting list. For information on past trends, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 811–12W to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws), in which the annual housing waiting list data for the years 1996 through to 2005 were made available in the Library of the House.

The most recent figure for the number of households on the housing waiting list, as at 1 April 2005, is that there are 1,546,900.

Local authorities in England report the numbers of households on their housing waiting list as at 1 April in their annual Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix returns. Local authorities sometimes maintain a common waiting list with the Housing Association/s in their district. However, information is not held centrally where a Housing Association maintains a separate waiting list to the local authority.

Land Disposal (Hackney)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what applications have been made for disposal of land for less than best consideration by the London borough of Hackney since 2000. [38571]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is tabled as follows:

Less than best price applications by the London borough of Hackney 2000–05

Year/number	*Site*
2000	
1.	2–28 Belfast Road, London N16
2.	Stonebridge Lock, Tottenham Marshes, London E8
3.	Essex Filter Beds, Lea Bridge Road, London E8
4.	Lee Valley Sports Centre, Eastway, Leyton
5.	Shoreditch Town Hall, Annexe and car park, Old Street, EC1
6.	Northgate/Hearn Street, London EC2
2001	
7.	2–10 Hertford Road, Hackney, London N1
8.	Shoreditch Town Hall, Annexe and car park, Old Street, EC1
2002	
9.	Betty Laywood School, Clissold Road, London N16
10.	Park Lodges, Hackney
2003	
11.	9 Amhurst Park, Hackney N16
12.	Land at Church Walk, 4–6 Clissold Road, N16

Local Authority Expenditure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government has made of the gross expenditure of local authorities on *(a)* allowances and *(b)* pensions in 2004–05. [39482]

Mr. Woolas: The estimated gross expenditure of English local authorities on pensions in 2004–05 was £5,815 million.

This figure has been estimated from the 2004–05 Subjective Analysis Return (SAR), part of the Revenue Outturn (RO) suite of forms collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) from local authorities. The SAR is a sample survey and collects information from 121 authorities in England. The data have been grossed up to provide estimates for England as a whole and are presented on a Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) basis.

Expenditure on staff allowances is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost of implementing the single status national pay and conditions agreement for each *(a)* local authority and *(b)* region by 2007. [31553]

Mr. Woolas: No such detailed estimates have been made. The Government are committed to ensuring that local authorities can continue to deliver effective services without imposing excessive increases in council tax. We have established a work programme with the Local Government Association to analyze pay pressures including the Single Status Agreement.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will rank shire counties in England by the *(a)* percentage increase and *(b)* cash increase in formula grant awarded

in the Local Government Finance Settlement for (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08. [38855]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is in the following table.

PQ 2761: Change in formula grant for 2006–07 and 2007–08

Local authority	*Change in 2006–07*				*Net change in 2006–07*			
	Change		*Percentage change*		*Change*		*Percentage change*	
Shire counties	*£ million*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*£ million*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*
Bedfordshire	1.620	29/34	2.7	22/34	1.188	32/34	2.0	30/34
Buckinghamshire	1.671	28/34	3.5	8/34	0.964	34/34	2.0	24/34
Cambridgeshire	1.930	24/34	2.1	30/34	1.959	20/34	2.1	18/34
Cheshire	2.398	22/34	2.8	19/34	1.705	23/34	2.0	27/34
Cornwall	3.516	13/34	3.0	16/34	3.266	10/34	2.8	10/34
Cumbria	3.380	14/34	3.3	13/34	3.060	11/34	3.0	6/34
Derbyshire	4.345	7/34	3.4	10/34	3.728	6/34	3.0	7/34
Devon	2.963	17/34	2.5	24/34	2.583	14/34	2.2	13/34
Dorset	1.806	26/34	6.4	1/34	1.551	28/34	5.5	1/34
Durham	3.517	12/34	2.7	23/34	3.442	8/34	2.6	12/34
East Sussex	1.564	31/34	2.0	34/34	1.608	25/34	2.1	20/34
Essex	5.513	3/34	2.8	20/34	3.966	5/34	2.0	28/34
Gloucestershire	2.685	19/34	3.0	15/34	1.939	21/34	2.2	16/34
Hampshire	4.015	11/34	3.5	9/34	2.361	18/34	2.0	25/34
Hertfordshire	4.015	10/34	2.8	21/34	2.899	12/34	2.0	29/34
Kent	5.491	4/34	2.5	25/34	4.443	3/34	2.0	31/34
Lancashire	6.698	1/34	3.1	14/34	6.047	2/34	2.8	9/34
Leicestershire	2.229	23/34	2.9	17/34	1.557	27/34	2.0	26/34
Lincolnshire	5.196	5/34	3.9	4/34	4.053	4/34	3.0	5/34
Norfolk	6.508	2/34	4.0	3/34	6.169	1/34	3.8	2/34
North Yorkshire	2.707	18/34	3.7	7/34	2.543	15/34	3.5	3/34
Northamptonshire	2.587	20/34	2.1	28/34	2.464	17/34	2.0	32/34
Northumberland	1.768	27/34	2.2	26/34	1.623	24/34	2.0	22/34
Nottinghamshire	4.168	8/34	3.4	11/34	3.346	9/34	2.7	11/34
Oxfordshire	1.885	25/34	2.1	29/34	1.839	22/34	2.1	21/34
Shropshire	1.146	34/34	2.2	27/34	1.114	33/34	2.1	17/34
Somerset	3.104	16/34	3.8	6/34	2.650	13/34	3.2	4/34
Staffordshire	3.280	15/34	2.9	18/34	2.489	16/34	2.2	15/34
Suffolk	4.147	9/34	3.4	12/34	3.592	7/34	2.9	8/34
Surrey	5.022	6/34	5.1	2/34	2.028	19/34	2.1	19/34
Warwickshire	1.528	32/34	2.1	31/34	1.462	29/34	2.0	33/34
West Sussex	1.586	30/34	2.0	33/34	1.573	26/34	2.0	34/34
Wiltshire	1.215	33/34	2.1	32/34	1.294	31/34	2.2	14/34
Worcestershire	2.571	21/34	3.8	5/34	1.367	30/34	2.0	23/34

Local authority	*Change in 2007–08*			
	Change		*Percentage change*	
Shire counties	*£ million*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*
Bedfordshire	1.632	32/34	2.7	32/34
Buckinghamshire	1.319	34/34	2.7	34/34
Cambridgeshire	2.528	22/34	2.7	24/34
Cheshire	2.341	25/34	2.7	26/34
Cornwall	6.068	8/34	5.0	9/34
Cumbria	5.667	10/34	5.4	7/34
Derbyshire	7.567	4/34	5.8	4/34
Devon	4.441	14/34	3.7	13/34
Dorset	2.794	20/34	9.3	1/34
Durham	6.522	5/34	4.9	10/34
East Sussex	2.152	27/34	2.7	28/34
Essex	5.442	11/34	2.7	19/34
Gloucestershire	3.230	19/34	3.5	16/34
Hampshire	3.241	18/34	2.7	22/34
Hertfordshire	3.977	16/34	2.7	20/34
Kent	6.073	7/34	2.7	18/34
Lancashire	10.379	2/34	4.7	12/34
Leicestershire	2.122	28/34	2.7	29/34
Lincolnshire	7.641	3/34	5.5	6/34
Norfolk	11.929	1/34	7.1	2/34
North Yorkshire	4.538	13/34	6.0	3/34
Northamptonshire	3.372	17/34	2.7	21/34
Northumberland	2.454	23/34	3.0	17/34
Nottinghamshire	6.033	9/34	4.7	11/34
Oxfordshire	2.448	24/34	2.7	25/34
Shropshire	1.875	31/34	3.5	15/34
Somerset	4.945	12/34	5.8	5/34
Staffordshire	4.306	15/34	3.7	14/34
Suffolk	6.408	6/34	5.0	8/34
Surrey	2.786	21/34	2.7	23/34
Warwickshire	2.005	29/34	2.7	30/34
West Sussex	2.160	26/34	2.7	27/34
Wiltshire	1.619	33/34	2.7	33/34
Worcestershire	1.877	30/34	2.7	31/34

Note:

Counties have been ranked in decreasing order, i.e. those with the lowest rank are the authorities with the highest increase.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1962W, on local government finance, if he will break down by main budget heading *(a)* the £45 million of costs that will be of potential use in the future and *(b)* the £15 million of costs that cannot be recouped or redeployed. [39552]

Mr. Woolas: The £45 million will be of use in supporting the 1993 valuation lists and also for other

valuation work on domestic property which the VOA undertakes within its statutory remit. This sum includes:

around £30 million for putting the VOA's existing hard copy records on some 22 million domestic properties onto computer and checking they are up-to-date;

around £10 million for the AVM (Automated Valuation Model), which can automatically generate bulk valuations;

around £5 million for designing new systems for enquiries and appeals.

The balance of £15 million relates to such matters as recruitment and training of staff, programme management and work on the design and specification of new systems and work processes.

Peter Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average percentage change was in formula grant for each shire county *(a)* with and *(b)* without responsibility for the fire and rescue service in each of the 10 years to 2007–08. [40268]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows the average percentage increase in formula grant on a like-for-like basis over the period 1997–98 to 2007–08 for shire counties with fire responsibilities in 2006–07 and for shire counties without fire responsibilities in 2006–07. Please note that for the period 1997–98 to 2003–04, the combined shire fire authorities were levying bodies. For this period therefore the formula grant for authorities without fire responsibilities in 2006–07 included an amount for fire.

	Shire counties with fire responsibilities	*Shire counties without fire responsibilities*
1998–99	0.5	1.1
1999–2000	5.0	5.0
2000–01	4.6	4.6
2001–02	4.9	4.6
2002–03	6.4	6.0
2003–04	5.8	5.6
2004–05	6.7	6.4
2005–06	5.9	5.9
2006–07	3.1	2.9
2007–08	4.2	3.7

Peter Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average percentage change was in formula grant for *(a)* each West Midland metropolitan district council and *(b)* the city councils of (i) Birmingham, (ii) Coventry and (iii) Wolverhampton in each of the 10 years to 2007–08. [40269]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows the average percentage increase in formula grant on a like-for-like basis over the period 1997–98 to 2007–08 for all West Midland metropolitan district councils and the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton.

Percentage

	West Midlands district councils	*Birmingham*	*Coventry*	*Wolverhampton*
1998–99	4.1	4.3	4.5	4.8
1999–2000	4.7	3.6	4.6	5.4
2000–01	3.3	3.5	2.9	3.3
2001–02	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.1
2002–03	5.1	5.3	4.4	5.1
2003–04	8.1	8.1	8.4	8.2
2004–05	7.0	7.3	6.6	6.7
2005–06	6.6	6.7	6.3	6.3
2006–07	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.1
2007–08	4.2	4.7	3.8	2.7

Peter Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account he took of the annual percentage change in the Retail Price Index over the 10 years to 2007–08 when setting formula grant levels. [40270]

Mr. Woolas: In 1998–99, Central Support Protection Grant was introduced for the first time. This grant protected authorities from cash decreases in their formula grant for the first time. In 2001–02, Floor Damping was introduced for authorities with education and social service responsibility. The following year, i.e. 2002–03, this was introduced for all authorities.

Under the floor damping regime, the floor is self-financing within each of the authority groups covered by the scheme. This means that it is not possible to set the floor above the level of the average grant increase for that group on a like-for-like basis. When setting the level of the floor Ministers take into account a number of factors including the level of inflation expected for the period covered by the grant, the average grant increase for the group, and the scaling factor imposed on authorities above the floor. The measure of inflation used in deciding at what level the floor should be set is the GDP deflator, as this measure is forecast by Treasury, and hence is available for the period covered by the grant.

Planning Controls

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the guidance given in his Office's Planning Policy Statement 7 on development ancillary to the enjoyment of a domestic dwelling, with particular reference to development in the setting of a listed building where development might have been permitted under the Town and Country Planning Act Permitted Development Order, save for the listed status of the building. [40550]

Yvette Cooper: The Government's planning policy in Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7), 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas', is that all new building development in the open countryside should be strictly controlled. The Government have not carried out an assessment of the impact of this policy on any specific types of development.

Development proposals that require planning permission are matters for the local planning authority in the first instance. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with relevant policies in an adopted development plan for the area, subject to other material considerations.

Population Growth

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the policy implications for his Department of the growth in population in Aylesbury Vale. [39671]

Yvette Cooper: Aylesbury Vale forms a part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area, one of the four growth areas established by the Communities Plan. The Growth Areas are an important component of the Government's policies for tackling housing shortages associated with household formation and population growth and complement the initiatives to be undertaken as part of the Government's December 2005 response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply.

The Government's funding allocations to local government for 2006–07 and 2007–08 are currently being consulted upon by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Whereas previous settlements have used the latest available mid-year population estimates as the basis of funding calculations, as from 2006–07 the level of funding will be based on forward-looking population projections. The population projections are prepared by the Office for National Statistics using a trend-based methodology which projects forward the population (using 2003 mid-year population estimates as the starting point) into the future. The new approach should be more favourable to areas experiencing population growth such as the Growth Areas.

More generally, in its response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply, the Government announced that as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review it would undertake a cross-cutting review to:

"determine the social, transport and environmental infrastructure implications of housing growth in different spatial forms and locations;

establish a framework for sustainable and cost-effective patterns of growth, including by examining the use of targeted investment through the Community Infrastructure Fund and Growth Areas funding to support the fastest-growing areas; and

ensure that Departmental resources across Government are targeted appropriately for providing the national, regional and local infrastructure necessary to support future housing and population growth."

The cross-cutting review will inform the spending decisions of ODPM and other Departments for 2008–09 and beyond.

Regional Fire Control Centres

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1965W, on regional fire control centres, what estimate *(a)* the Government and *(b)* the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority has made of the cost of the new London control centre; and whether it will be funded from the Greater London Authority precept on council tax. [39481]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Work on a replacement regional fire control centre for London is at a very early stage and no detailed assessment of costs has been made. It is expected that any new centre would be funded in a similar way to the eight regional control centres that are being procured for the regions outside London. For those centres the capital construction costs are being met by the developers and ongoing lease and associated accommodation costs will be met by Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Regional Spatial Strategies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the regional spatial strategies will be finalised for each region. [39483]

Yvette Cooper: The provisional timetable for publication of the final regional spatial strategy for each region is as follows.

Region	
North East	Early 2007
East of England	Spring 2007
North West	October 2007
Yorkshire and Humberside	Autumn 2007
South East	End 2007/Early 2008
South West	End 2007/Early 2008
East Midlands	Early 2008
West Midlands partial review part 1	End 2007/ Early 2008
West Midlands partial review part 2	End 20087 Early 2009

Revenue Support Grant

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual per capita allocation of revenue support grant was in *(a)* Bury metropolitan council and *(b)* other local authorities in the same family group in each of the last eight years; what the annual percentage increase was; and what the average per capita allocation was for all (i) metropolitan districts and (ii) English local authorities in each year. [40601]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows formula grant per head for Bury metropolitan council, all metropolitan districts, and all English local authorities for 1998–99 to 2005–06. Formula grant comprises revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and principal formula police grant.

It should be noted that Bury metropolitan council and the other metropolitan districts only provide some services within their area, both police and fire services are provided by other authorities. The 'all English local authorities' column covers both the services provided by Bury plus police and fire services.

Formula grant per head

£ per head

	Bury	*All metropolitan districts*	*All English local authorities*
1998–99	537.918	667.653	721.889
1999–2000	563.630	705.724	752.996
2000–01	586.541	731.117	778.194
2001–02	600.930	751.824	804.465
2002–03	621.218	759.790	806.510
2003–04	707.464	862.610	892.485
2004–05	755.452	905.388	930.640
2005–06	798.322	959.301	983.154

In their response to consultation on the local government settlement, Bury compared themselves with other authorities classed as CIPFA nearest neighbours.

The CIPFA nearest neighbour toolkit would give different comparators depending on what indicators were selected. It is therefore not possible to supply revenue support grant per head for a 'family' group.

The following table shows the percentage increase in formula grant per head year-on-year on a like-for-like basis for Bury metropolitan council, all metropolitan districts, and all English local authorities for 1998–99 to 2005–06.

Please note that the figures provided in the first table can not be compared directly as there have been a number of changes in the funding and functions covered by formula grant over this period.

Year-on-year increase in formula grant per head

Percentage

	Bury	*All metropolitan districts*	*All English local authorities*
1998–99	4.4	3.3	1.4
1999–2000	4.8	5.7	4.3
2000–01	4.1	3.6	3.3
2001–02	3.0	3.6	3.8
2002–03	4.3	4.8	4.5
2003–04	9.5	10.4	7.7
2004–05	7.1	5.1	4.7
2005–06	4.7	5.2	4.9

Please note that all of these figures are based on the respective year's settlement. In some years these figures have subsequently been subject to an Amending Report.

School Funding

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment the Government have made of the impact on *(a)* council tax and *(b)* local government finance gearing, of changes to the funding of schools. [39491]

Mr. Woolas: The introduction of dedicated schools grant will have no effect overall on council tax or gearing. Any effect on formula grant distribution to individual authorities will be limited by floors damping.

Student Accommodation

Grant Shapps: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate the number of students living in private rented accommodation in 2005–06 as defined by the form returned by local authorities on 21 October 2005. [39606]

Yvette Cooper: The information is not available from the form mentioned.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's *(a)* document dwelling house coding-an illustrated guide and *(b)* standard letters V07746, V07747 and V07748. [30834]

Mr. Woolas: The standard letters can de accessed online via the Valuation Office Agency's website, www.voa.gov.uk

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* dwelling house codes and *(b)* value significant codes in use by the Valuation Office Agency for council tax valuation purposes. [30836]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 26 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 477W. The instructions and advice documents, placed in the Library of the House, following this answer, list the dwelling house codes and value significant codes used by the Valuation Office Agency.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Valuation Office Agency *(a)* has, *(b)* does and *(c)* will make use of (i) aerial and (ii) satellite photography for the purposes of (A) business rates and (B) council tax valuations. [39485]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has no contractual arrangements to use aerial or satellite photography for valuation purposes. Any decision to enter into contractual arrangements for the use of aerial photographs in the future would only be taken if this represented a sensible and cost-effective way of confirming property characteristics and the photographs were already in the public domain.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's Council Tax Charter. [39486]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency's Council Tax Charter can be accessed on-line via the Valuation Office Agency's website, www.voa.gov.uk.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1523W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the Agency's *(a)* value significant codes and *(b)* dwelling house codes include indicators for (i) patios, (ii) greenhouses and (iii) scenic codes; [39640]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1944W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what the names are of the *(a)* 17 dwelling house codes and *(b)* value significant codes. [40024]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 26 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 477W. The instructions and advice documents, placed in the Library of the House, following this answer, is the dwelling house codes and value significant codes used by the Valuation Office Agency.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1944W, on the Valuation Office Agency, when electronic value significant codes were introduced. [40023]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1994W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1972W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the agency has published guidance for its staff on race relations legislation. [40025]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency's Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan can be accessed on-line via the Valuation Office Agency's website, www.voa.gov.uk.

Widescreen Televisions

Norman Lamb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39142]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has only purchased one widescreen television for use in its HQ buildings in the last five years. This is installed in the reception area in Eland House and displays a 24 hour news channel with subtitles. This was purchased as part of a refurbishment programme in 2003-04 and the cost of the equipment could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Batteries

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received regarding European Union directives on batteries; and if he will make a statement. [39723]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have received representations from a wide range of stakeholders, including battery and appliance manufacturers, local authorities, consumer groups, trade associations and environmental groups, both as part of the Department's 2004 public consultation on the European Commission proposal for a Directive on Batteries and Accumulators, and subsequently, as negotiations on the Directive have proceeded.

The European Parliament completed its Second Reading of the proposed Directive on 13 December, and the measure is expected to move to the conciliation process during the first half of 2006.

Burma

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of exports from the UK to Burma was in each year since 1997 for which records are available. [39760]

Ian Pearson: According to figures published by HM Revenue and Customs, the UK's exports of goods to Burma were as follows:

UK exports of goods to Burma 1997–2004

£ million

	Current prices
1997	15.4
1998	12.6
1999	7.4
2000	8.6
2001	9.5
2002	7.3
2003	5.0
2004	2.2

Source:
HM Revenue and Customs, Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS A)

Carbon Emissions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which unit in his Department is responsible for reducing carbon emissions. [39904]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry has a joint public sector agreement target with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for Transport, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent. from 1990 levels by 2008–2012 in line with our Kyoto commitment and to move towards a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2010.

The Energy Strategy Unit within DTI is responsible for co-ordinating DTI's interest in climate change in consultation with other parts of the Department. DTI's interests primarily relate to the policies and measures designed to reduce emissions from the energy supply and business sectors while maintaining the competitiveness of UK industry and taking account of other energy policy objectives. This includes the DTI's responsibility for renewable energy and lower carbon technologies.

Christmas Lights

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate his Department has made of the change in energy consumption in the UK over the Christmas period as a result of the electricity requirements of Christmas lights in each of the last three years. [39436]

Malcolm Wicks: National Grid have estimated that peak electricity demand increases by about 200–300 MW as a result of Christmas lights. Assuming a demand of 250 MW and that lights are operational for 12 hours a day for a period of 25 days, this equates to 75GWh, or 0.02 per cent. of total annual UK electricity consumption.

Citygate Public Affairs Ltd

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings the Department has held with Citygate Public Affairs Ltd. since July. [36751]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not maintain a central list of such contacts. Ministers and civil servants, including special advisers meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such contacts are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the ministerial code, civil service code, code of conduct for special advisers and guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what controls are placed on minerals imported from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to verify their source and method of extraction; and if he will make a statement. [39926]

Ian Pearson: The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a signatory of the Kimberley Process under the terms of which exports of rough diamonds must be accompanied by a government issued certificate stating that they have not been sold to fund armed conflict.

Departmental Assets

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by his Department. [27388]

Alan Johnson: The Department of Trade and Industry has the following most valuable assets under headings *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable recorded on their fixed asset register as at 31 March 2005.

£

Assets	*Value*
(a) Moveable assets	
Furniture fixtures and fittings	
Pool—purchases 2002–03	3,390,872.04
Pool—purchases 2003–04	2,259,345.24
Pool—purchases 2001–02	1,387,884.41
Pool—purchases 2004–05	352,077.04
Abbey Orchard Street	267,900.00
Plant and Machinery	
Variable speed drives	147,028.62
Lift safety equipment	116,000.00
IT Equipment	
Telecommunications cabling	63,726.65
Realtis telecommunications equipment	53,910.99
Plant and Machinery—air conditioning	36,288.77
(b) Immovable assets	
Building—National Physics Laboratory, Teddington	94,081,689.48
Land—National Physics Laboratory, Teddington	7,112,228.31
Building—Cobalt 60 Building, Teddington	4,449,633.24
Building—National Weights and Measure Laboratory, Teddington	4,004,669.91
Building—Chadwick Building, Teddington	3,705,654.56
Building—Bushy House, Teddington	1,737,974.39
Land—National Weights and Measure Laboratory, Teddington	1,334,889.97
Building—The Core Store building, Edinburgh	1,330,000.00
Building—Thompson Building, Teddington	1,209,253.27
Building—Advance Pressure Vessel, Teddington	259,753.88
Land—British Maritime Technology, Teddington	104,697.25
Building—British Maritime Technology, Teddington	94,227.53

Departmental Branded Materials

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the suppliers of branded *(a)* LP bags, *(b)* plastic carrier bags and *(c)* pens used by his Department in each year since 1997. [38262]

Alan Johnson: A response cannot be provided to this question as the Department's records do not capture this level of detail. Finding this information would exceed the disproportionate cost threshold.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* salary bill was and *(b)* administrative costs were for his Department in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London in 2004–05. [35876]

Alan Johnson: The Department's total paybill for 2004–05 was as follows, from the Department's Resource Accounts for 2004–05.

	£000
Wages and salaries	246,848
Social security costs	22,115
Other pension Costs	34,876
Sub total	303,839
Less: Recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(1,600)
Total net costs	302,239

An analysis of these costs by national and regional spend is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1661W, on departmental expenditure, if he will estimate the cost of branded *(a)* LP bags, *(b)* plastic carrier bags and *(c)* pens in each year since 1997. [38263]

Alan Johnson: A response cannot be provided to this question as the Department's records do not capture this level of detail. Finding this information would exceed the disproportionate cost threshold.

Departmental Property

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was paid by his Department in 2004–05 in rent for properties in *(a)* total, *(b)* each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(c)* London. [35959]

Alan Johnson: In 2004–05 my Department paid £29.6 million rent ex VAT for properties on its HQ estate. This comprised £28.296 million (London), £0.155 million (Yorkshire and Humberside) and £0.061 million (North East) in England and £1.094 million in Scotland.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was paid by his Department in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* London. [35994]

Alan Johnson: The Department paid £9.708 million in rates for buildings on its HQ estate in 2004–05. In England this comprised £9.318 million (Westminster), £0.078 million (Wandsworth) and £0.139 million (Lambeth) in London, £0.060 million (Sheffield) in Yorkshire and Humberside and £0.019 million (Stockton) in North East region. In Scotland this comprised £0.055 million (Edinburgh) and £0.245 million (Aberdeen).

Departmental Salaries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the 10 highest-paid employees in his Department; what the *(a)* job title and *(b)* salary including bonuses is of each; and whether the individual concerned is (i) a civil servant and (ii) a contractor in each case. [27572]

Alan Johnson: Details of the highest paid employees in DTI are as follows:

Position	*Pay Band*	*Bonus*
(a) Permanent Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry (b) Chief Scientific Adviser to HM Government and Head of the Office of Science and Technology	Within the permanent secretary pay range of £130,350 to £264,250	(a) Potential to earn a bonus of up to £16,000 in the 2005 pay round depending on performance (b) Potential to earn a bonus of up to 20 per cent. per annum depending on performance.
Director General, Business Group Director General, Energy Director General, Special Projects The Solicitor and Director General, Legal Group	Within the senior civil service pay band 3 range of £93,139 to £198,197	Potential to earn bonuses of up to £8,000 in the 2005 pay round depending on performance
Chief Economic Advisor and Director General, Economics Chief Executive, Small Business Service Director, Information and Workplace Services Director General of Research Councils Director General, Innovation Group	Fixed term appointments—salaries within the senior civil service pay band 3 range of £93,139 to £198,197 or the senior civil service pay band 2 range of £75,606 to £159,659	Potential to earn bonuses of up to 15 or 20 per cent. per annum depending on performance

The DTI uses contractors from time to time but they are not members of the staff of the Department.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many of his Department's employees have taken early retirement in each year since 1997. [34039]

Alan Johnson: The number of employees who have taken early retirement in each year since 1997 are shown in the following table.

	Number of employees
1997	54
1998	26
1999	25
2000	27
2001	22
2002	30
2003	24
2004	140

The above figures include those who have retired voluntarily with an actuarially reduced pension, those who have retired with benefits under the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (CSCS) and those who have retired on ill-health grounds. Most of the departures in 2004 were as a result of a flexible early retirement scheme under the CSCS.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff are employed by his Department in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; and if he will make a statement. [35923]

Alan Johnson: The figures requested are published in Civil Service Statistics. Table D of these statistics covers permanent staff numbers (FTE basis) in each Department and agency. Civil Service Statistics are available in the Libraries of the House and at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

Data on staffing levels in the civil service are now collected quarterly from Departments and agencies via a quarterly ONS survey, as part of the remit to measure the size of the public sector as a whole. Details of the new methodology can be found on the ONS website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/nojournal/PSE_final.pdf

Civil service staffing trends by Department are published by the Cabinet Office on a quarterly basis via its statistics website. http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/index.asp

The most recent figures, as at 30 June 2005, were published on 6 October 2005.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which he has responsibility in 2004–05 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London. [35964]

Alan Johnson: Total Executive NDPB staff numbers as at 31 March 2005, for which my Department is responsible, are recorded in Public Bodies 2005, a copy of which is in the Libraries of the House and which is available online at: http://www/civilservice.gov.uk/the_thefuture_of_the_civil_service/agencies_and_public_bodies/publications/pdf/public_bodies/publicbodies2005.pdf.

However, the NDPB data do not detail the regional breakdowns. This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The agency chief executives will individually send to the hon. Member details relating to their own organisations.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 9 January 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 6 December 2005, regarding how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which he has responsibility in 2004–5 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London.

Patent Office staffing figures as at 1 March 2005 were:

	Number
Total	1,023
Each nation	
England	[1]19
Wales	1,004
Scotland	0
Northern Ireland	0
Each region	0
In London	19

[1] London

Letter from Martin Wyn Griffith, dated 9 January 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 6 December 2005, regarding how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which he has responsibility in 2004–5 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London.

Small Business Service staffing figures as at 31 March 2005 were:

	Number
Total	355
Each nation	
England	355
Wales	0
Scotland	0
Northern Ireland	0
Each region	
NE	5
NW	9
YH	118
EM	7
WM	5
E	4
SE	5
SW	5
In London	197

On 31 March we closed our regional teams and passed responsibility for those activities to the regional development agencies. We retain headquarters offices in Yorkshire and London.

Letter from Jeff Llewellyn, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which he has responsibility in 2004–05 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London.

The National Weights and Measures Laboratory had 47.3 fte staff at 31st March 2005. All were employed at Teddington, Middlesex.

Letter from Clare Clancy, dated 9 January 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The number of staff employed in our offices in 2004/5 as a total, and individually is as follows:

	Total employees (including part-time)	*Full-time equivalent posts*
Cardiff, Wales	1,244	1,127
Edinburgh, Scotland	38	36
London, England	9	9
Total	1,291	1,172

Letter from Graham Horne, dated 9 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2318/2005) asking how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodes and agencies in 2004–05 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London.

As at 31 March 2005 a total of 1,806 staff were employed by The Insolvency Service.

By nation of the UK these staff were distributed as follows:

	Number
Wales	48
Scotland	33
England	1,725

The split for Insolvency Service Regions is shown below. These are not the same as government regions but are based on county court jurisdictions.

	Number
North East	179
North West	208
Midlands	403
South West	169
South East	166
Anglia	158
Croydon/Watford	81
London	409

Departmental Tendering Policy

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his policy is on including *(a)* ethical and *(b)* environmental factors in tenders for services. [33341]

Alan Johnson: Guidance on the inclusion of environmental issues in procurement is contained in the Department's Procurement Manual. We also follow OGC guidance on Fair and Ethical Trading.

All new contracts for services to support the DTI operational estate include appropriate clauses covering ethical and environmental clauses as part of the DTI's ISO 14001 certification. Such requirements are routinely included as part of any tender evaluation proposals. Firms tendering for such services are also referred to the Framework for Sustainable Development in Government (SDIG) website and must explain as part of their tender submission how they meet SDIG requirements.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what financial support has been made available through the Export Credits Guarantee Department for *(a)* fossil fuel power plants, *(b)* nuclear plants, *(c)* renewable energy generation schemes and *(d)* carbon capture and storage sequestration technology schemes in each year since 1997. [38852]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The following table details the financial support made available by the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) for power plants in the fossil fuel, nuclear, renewable energy and carbon capture and sequestration technology sectors, since 1997:

ECGD has provided no financial support for power plants in these sectors since 2002.

£ million

Fuel type /Market	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*Total*
Fossil						
Abu Dhabi	—	8	—	—	—	8
Anguilla	—	1	—	—	—	1
Bangladesh	—	—	—	7	—	7
Brazil	—	16	—	—	—	16
China	32	291	1	—	—	323
Cyprus	—	5	—	—	—	5
Dominican Republic	—	—	—	23	—	23
Egypt	—	—	6	—	—	6
Hong Kong	73	—	—	1	—	74
India	—	20	89	48	—	157
Indonesia	39	—	—	—	—	39
Israel	—	—	—	—	11	11
Malaysia	—	—	770	—	—	770
Mexico	—	—	3	77	—	80
Oman	—	—	10	25	—	35
Philippines	—	—	72	—	—	72
Saint Kitts and Nevis	—	8	—	—	—	8
Taiwan	—	—	128	18	—	146
Turkey	—	22	—	34	—	56
Vietnam	—	—	24	—	—	24
Zimbabwe	9	—	—	—	—	9
Nuclear						
China	—	58	—	—	—	58
Renewable						
Thailand	6	—	—	—	—	6
Carbon Capture and storage sequestration Technology	—	—	—	—	—	0
Total	159	428	1,103	233	11	1,933

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the location of the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights will be. [38814]

Meg Munn: A decision has been taken to locate main sites of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights in Manchester and London with the majority of staff in Manchester and a significant presence in London. There will also be offices in Glasgow and Cardiff. We want the Commission to be a powerful and authoritative champion of equality and human rights across Great Britain.

This decision followed a comprehensive independent study to assess a number of options. An equality impact assessment and a race equality impact assessment were also carried out on the location options identified in the study. Further work will now be undertaken to determine the operational functions to be located at the sites.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the multinannual Community action plan on promoting the safe use of the internet, *(b)* Standing Committee for the harmonisation of national legislation relating to recreational craft and *(c)* Standing Committee for the approximation of the laws of member states relating to lifts have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39000]

Alun Michael: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Committee for the implementation of the multi-annual Community action plan on promoting the safe use of the internet did not meet during the UK presidency.

(b) It is my understanding that the hon. Member is referring to the Standing Committee set up under Article 6 of Directive 94/25/EC (as amended) on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of member states relating to recreational craft. The Standing Committee met in Brussels on 20 December 2005. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission and two officials from the Department of Trade and Industry represented the United Kingdom. No provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments, as this is not a devolved issue.

(c) The mandate of the lifts Standing Committee is contained in Article 6.3 of the Lifts Directive 95/16/EC. The committee did not meet during the UK presidency.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on general authorisations and individual licences in the field of telecommunications services, *(b)* EC-India RTD Cooperation Steering Committee and *(c)* Coordinating Committee on Fusion Energy EC-USA have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39006]

Ian Pearson: None of the aforementioned committees met during the UK presidency of the EU.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings of the *(a)* Textile Committee (conventional regime), *(b)* Advisory Committee on medical devices and *(c)* Advisory Committee for the transparency of measures governing the pricing of medicinal products for human use have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39040]

Ian Pearson: The information requested is as follows:

(a) This committee is not known by the name given. This committee is known as the Textiles Management Committee and met four times during the UK presidency. This is a Commission-chaired committee and an official from the Department of Trade and Industry represented the UK. No provisions were made for representations from devolved governments.

(b) and *(c)* are a matter for the Department for Health.

EU Trade

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken in its capacity as holder of the EU presidency to negotiate EU trade policy at the World Trade Organisation. [35605]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the statement to the House made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 20 December 2005.

Heating Sources

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assess the merits of using heat generated from the hot road sub-surface of new roads to provide heating in houses and commercial and industrial buildings. [35840]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Highways Agency commenced a two-year trial in September 2005 to investigate the feasibility of using the solar energy absorbed by a road surface both as a renewable energy source to heat buildings nearby and as an alternative winter maintenance option to using salt for de-icing.

Export Licences

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* open individual export licences were issued and *(b)* open individual export licences issued with a validity period of (i) two years, (ii) three years, (iii) five years and (iv) more than five years by the Government was in the periods (A) January to March 2004, (B) April to June 2004, (C) June to September 2004, (D) October to December 2004, (E) January to March 2005, (F) April to June 2005 and (G) July to September 2005. [38948]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

OIELs issued for the period 1 January 2004 to 30 September 2005

Number

Period	*Total number of OIELs issued*	*1 year*	*2 years*	*3 years*	*4 years*	*5 years*	*More than 5 years*
2004							
January to March	109	0	77	30	0	2	0
April to June	126	0	95	29	0	2	0
June to September	140	0	97	41	0	1	0
October to December	143	3	84	16	0	40	0
2005							
January to March	109	3	33	6	1	66	0
April to June	146	5	36	5	0	99	1
July to September	126	1	26	6	0	93	0

Fair Trade

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government proposes to take at the World Trade Organisation talks in Hong Kong to ensure a fair deal for the world's poorest farmers; and if he will make a statement. [35436]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the statement to the House made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 20 December 2005.

Fuel Poverty

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the level of fuel poverty in *(a)* Aylesbury Vale and *(b)* England and Wales. [39677]

Malcolm Wicks: The most recent data on the level of fuel poverty in England corresponds to 2003 and was published in July 2005 in the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy Third Annual Progress Report. This data, sourced from the English House Condition Survey, showed that the number of fuel poor households in England in 2003 was around 1.2 million.

The most recent data on the level of fuel poverty in Wales corresponds to 2004. This data, which has recently become available from the Living in Wales Survey, showed that the number of fuel poor households in Wales in 2004 was around 130,000 households.

As fuel poverty is a devolved issue, figures have been collected on a country-by-country basis, with varying definitions and time frames covered.

We are unable to provide a breakdown of the number of households in fuel poverty by individual towns, however detailed regional data is available from the 2003 English House Condition Survey as follows:

Number

Government office region	*Households in fuel poverty*
North East	95,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	180,000
North West	178,000
East Midlands	112,000
West Midlands	146,000
South West	139,000
Eastern	115,000
South East	149,000
London	108,000

Gas

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the recent reduction in gas production from mixed oil and gas fields. [39444]

Malcolm Wicks: Production of "associated gas" from the mixed oil and gas fields located principally in the northern and central North Sea has varied over time for a number of reasons. The rate of production is affected by contractual nominations, by planned and unplanned maintenance, by the effect of investment in new production or injection wells or well workovers in existing fields, by the effect of past production reducing reservoir pressure in existing fields and by the effect of new fields coming into production. Total associated gas production from the UK continental shelf peaked in 2002 and has since declined. Production from new fields coming on-stream has not matched the decline in production from existing fields, though there have been significant changes from month to month. Production in August 2005 was particularly low, with reduced deliveries at all four of the main coastal landing terminals (CATS, FLAGS, SAGE and SEAL), but by October production was back close to the level of a year earlier.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what incentives there are for oil and gas producers to maintain gas production from mixed fields. [39445]

Malcolm Wicks: Producers of oil and gas have commercial incentives to produce gas, whether that is "dry gas" from the gas fields found principally in the southern basin of the north sea and in the Irish sea or "associated gas" from the mixed oil and gas fields located principally in the northern and central north sea. The rate of production can be affected by contractual nominations, by planned and unplanned maintenance and by the effect of investment in new production, in injection wells or in well workovers.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to compensate industrial users of natural gas in the event of a need to reduce offtake during high demand periods in the winter. [40409]

Malcolm Wicks: Where the industrial customer has an interruptible contract (either for their gas transportation and/or shipping/supplies) they are compensated for potentially being interrupted a number of days a year by paying a lower bill. Some customers may decide to reduce their gas demand to enable their shippers to sell the gas they would otherwise have consumed back to the market. This is known as demand side response. It is for the customer and the shipper to strike a contract in a way that ensures the appropriate transfer of money from the shipper to the customer. However, where a customer has opted not to buy gas, because they assess it is commercially unviable to do so in respect of their particular industrial process, there is no provision for direct compensation for that reduction in gas usage.

Other than for commercial reasons as described above, interruption of gas supplies to industrial consumers is only otherwise undertaken by the relevant network operators as part of a gas emergency, as a safety measure in order to protect the general public. In this situation there are no provisions for compensation.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to enable UK industrial users of gas to source supplies directly from Europe. [38880]

Malcolm Wicks: UK industrial users are of course free to contract with gas shippers to source supplies directly from Europe within the physical constraints of current gas import infrastructure. I recently met

capacity holders at the Isle of Grain LNG terminal and on the interconnector to ensure that this capacity is well utilised.

Flows of gas through the Interconnector have not been close to its expanded capacity. We are asking the European Commission to establish why there has not been more gas available to import through the Interconnector, given the large price differential. In addition, we continue to pressure the European Commission. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry have written to the Commission about this, and I used our UK Presidency to push this in the Energy Council. Ofgem also sent a delegation to Madrid earlier this month to investigate Spanish provisions for the importation of LNG.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to ensure that the liquid natural gas import facility at the Isle of Grain is fully used. [39230]

Malcolm Wicks: Both of the companies that own rights to the import capacity at the Isle of Grain LNG facility have reassured me that they have booked cargoes that will fill, or nearly fill, all the available slots throughout the winter. They are working on filling the remaining slots. Ofgem is taking forward work to make sure the "Use It Or Lose It" regime at the facility is working effectively, so that any slots not used by the primary capacity holders will be made available to others who might use it. National Grid's website shows that gas has been flowing from the Isle of Grain facility onto the gas networks at or close to capacity over most of the past two weeks.

Jubilee Sailing Trust

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received about the financial position of the Jubilee Sailing Trust. [40385]

Alun Michael: I am not aware of any representations about the financial position of the Jubilee Sailing Trust. The company of that name filed its accounts to 31 March 2005 on 12 December 2005. These are available for public inspection. The Jubilee Sailing Trust is also a registered charity so information about it may be available from the Charities Commission.

Miners' Compensation Claims

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to solicitors acting on behalf of the Department for advising on mineworkers' compensation claims in each year since 1998. [39331]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has paid solicitors the following sums for advice relating to mineworkers' compensation schemes:

	Amount paid (£ million)
2002	3.9
2003	6.6
2004	6.6
2005	4.8

Note:
Figures before 2002 are not readily available.

Non-Fossil Fuel and Renewables Obligations

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what sums of money have been transferred in the last 12 months by Ofgem to the Consolidated Fund from the non-fossil fuel obligation fund in respect of section 7 of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003; what the date was of each transfer; who made the decision to make each transfer; on what date; what legal advice was taken by the Government before transferring the money to ascertain that this transfer was legal; and if he will place a copy of the legal advice received in the Library. [38570]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* Ofgem have not transferred any money in the last 12 months to the Consolidated Fund, from the non-fossil fuel obligation fund, in respect of Section 7 of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003. However, Ofgem transferred £60 million to the Consolidated Fund, from the non-fossil fuel obligation fund, in respect of Section 7 of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003 on 14 July 2004.

The power and the legal basis to transfer £60 million to the Consolidated Fund, from the non-fossil fuel obligation fund, are set out in Section 7 of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003. A copy of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003 is available from the Libraries of the House.

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been transferred from the surplus funds of the *(a)* Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation and *(b)* Renewables Obligation to the Consolidated Fund since 1997; what estimate he has made of transfers in each case over the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [39463]

Malcolm Wicks: The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) is responsible for the administration of funds for the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) and the Renewables Obligation (RO). However, we understand that since 2 May 1997 Ofgem have made two payments from the surplus revenue arising from the NFFO, to the Consolidated fund, totalling £210 million. £60 million of which was used for the support of renewable energy projects. The RO does not have surplus revenue, as the money is recycled to electricity suppliers on presentation of Renewable Obligation Certificates.

Any additional payments from the NFFO, to the Consolidated Fund, over the next 3 years will depend on the surplus revenue collected by the Non Fossil Fuel Purchasing Agency.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment he has made of the impact of nuclear power on climate change. [40545]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has made no recent assessment of the impact that nuclear power would have on climate change.

The 2003 Energy White Paper published the results of extensive modelling of the costs of different options for reducing carbon dioxide emissions over the period to 2050. The analysis is available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/phase2.pdf

In November 2005 my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced that there would be a review of energy policy which would report in summer 2006. This will involve further analysis of the costs of different options for meeting the Government's long-term targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Pay Gap

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women; and what the pay gap was in 1975. [39186]

Meg Munn: The median full-time gender pay gap has reduced from 14.5 per cent. in 2004 to 13.0 per cent. in 2005.

The full-time pay gap in 1975 was 30 per cent. using the mean[1] (as no figures are available using the median). This compares with the mean full-time gender pay gap of 17.0 per cent. in 2005[2].

Although progress has been made, there still remains a gap between men and women's pay and the Women and Work Commission was set up specifically to look at this issue. I look forward to their final report early in the new year, and to taking action on their findings and recommendations to reduce the gender pay gap further.

[1] Based on the New Earnings Survey
[2] Based on the Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings

Power Stations

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on integrated gasification combined cycle power stations. [34798]

Malcolm Wicks: Decisions as to the choice of technology for new electricity generating capacity are for private sector investors.

Public Appointments

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 who have since been appointed to public bodies by his Department, broken down by party; and who was responsible for making each appointment. [36689]

Alan Johnson: Information about the political activity of appointees is recorded and publicised in accordance with the independent Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. This shows that no former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 have since been appointed to public bodies sponsored by the Department.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress his Department has made towards fulfilment of each aspect of Public Service Agreement Target 4 in the last six months; whether his Department is on track to meet each aspect of the target; and if he will make a statement. [31577]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 24 November 2005]:* The UK remains on course to achieve its Kyoto target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent. below base year levels by 2008–12. Latest provisional estimates show that UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2004 are estimated to have fallen to about 12.6 per cent. below 1990 levels.

In order to meet the very challenging domestic goal of a 20 per cent. reduction in CO_2 emissions by 2010 it is recognised that more needs to be done, as existing policies in the current climate change programme will not on their own achieve the target reduction. Current analysis shows that carbon dioxide emissions increased by around 1.5 per cent. between 2003 and 2004, mainly due to estimated increases in industrial and transport sector emissions. The current review of the Climate Change Programme gives the opportunity to examine a wide range of policies that we might put in place for the future, to put us back on track towards the 2010, and our longer-term carbon dioxide goal. Key contributions to the revised programme will be initial plans for Phase 2 of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS); the results of the Energy Efficiency Innovation Review; and the recently announced Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation. Responsibility for the delivery of this goal is held jointly with the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs, and Department for Transport.

Overall position on energy supplies was covered in the first Annual Report to Parliament (Section 172 Security of Supply report was published July 2005). This covers in detail the short and medium term outlook for the UK supply-demand balance, drawing on National Grid's preliminary outlook for this winter published by OFGEM. The Government's market-based approach has delivered benefits over a number of years in terms of low prices and reliable supplies. However, this winter the gas market is likely to be tighter than in recent winters. Under normal weather conditions there are sufficient gas supplies and electricity to meet demand. If the forthcoming winter is much colder than average there will be a need for a response from the demand side of the gas market. DTI and Ofgem have been working with major users to try to encourage this response if necessary. National Grid have made it clear in their winter outlook statement that there will be no problem for domestic gas customers, small businesses and organisations, no matter how severe the winter, barring freak technical disruptions. Looking to the medium term the Government and OFGEM continually monitor developments in the gas and electricity market through the Joint Energy Security of Supply Group (JESS).

The latest independent report published in November 2005, based on provisional data for 2004 and using established benchmarking methodology, indicates that the UK continues to exhibit the most competitive

electricity and gas markets within the EU and G7. This has been due to early liberalisation of gas and electricity markets in the UK. However, the dynamic effect of the liberalisation programme across continental Europe may change that position in the future.

Progress against the Government's fuel poverty targets is published in an annual report (the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 3rd Annual Progress report, published July 2005). The number of households in fuel poverty in the UK as a whole has fallen by around 4.5 million since 1996, to a level of around 2 million in 2003. However between 2003 and 2006 the number of households in fuel poverty will have increased as a result of higher prices. This will make reaching the 2010 fuel poverty target more challenging. Departments are working with suppliers and voluntary organisations to look at ways that vulnerable consumers can best take advantage of the current assistance available. The Fuel Poverty Advisory Group in England published its third annual report this year, highlighting the need for consideration to be given to the resources needed to tackle fuel poverty, and the importance of all Government Departments continuing to work together on the issue. DTI and the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs share wording on this goal within their respective PSA targets.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the feasibility of consolidating the data from different Departments on different time scales which are needed to assess 2004 PSA Target 9. [30060]

Alan Johnson: When this PSA target was set, details of the various sub-targets that underpin it were brought together in the Technical Note for this target. This is available on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/pdfs/psa_9.pdf.

Progress against all the sub-targets will be reported in the Department's twice yearly public reports on PSA delivery. The next of these reports—and the first assessment of progress towards the PSA targets set out in the 2004 Spending Review—will be in the forthcoming autumn performance report 2005, which will be laid before Parliament in mid-December.

As data from different Departments is produced to different timescales, assessments of progress are made on the basis of latest available data. A final assessment will be made when final data are available for all sub-targets.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what time scales his Department has set for achieving 2004 Public Service Agreement Target *(a)* 4 and *(b)* 6. [30061]

Alan Johnson: The information is as follows.

(a) PSA 4 Energy

The Energy White Paper published in 2003 set out a long-term framework for policy development with four key objectives; to put ourselves on the path to cutting UK carbon dioxide emissions, to maintain the reliability of security of supplies, to promote competitive energy markets in the UK and beyond and to ensure every home is adequately and affordably heated. These form the basis of the 2004 PSA Target 4.

The first goal within the PSA target is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels, and move towards a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels, by 2010. These are initial stages towards meeting our goal to put the UK on a path to cut carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. by about 2050. Responsibility for the delivery of this goal is held jointly with the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs, and Department for Transport.

The goal for energy reliability, within the PSA target, is that the market provides sufficient capacity to meet maximum gas and electricity demand in each year to 2008.

The goal for competitive energy markets, within the context of the PSA target, is that UK energy markets remain in the top three of the EU and G7 countries. This is measured annually by independent assessment, using indicators of competitiveness peer reviewed by energy market experts.

The final goal of the PSA target is to eliminate fuel poverty in vulnerable households, as far as reasonably practicable in England by 2010 in line with the Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy objective.

(b) PSA 6 Enterprise

This PSA has three sub-targets (i) an increase in the number of people considering going into business, (ii) an improvement in the overall productivity of small firms and (iii) more enterprise in disadvantaged communities. These targets are to be achieved by 2008.

Details of how these targets are measured are set out in the Technical Note for this target. This is available on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/pdfs/psa_6.pdf.

Renewable Energy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent in each year since 1980 on the research and development of *(a)* tidal power, *(b)* wind power, *(c)* geothermal power, *(d)* hydro power, *(e)* solar power and *(f)* nuclear fusion; and what further sums are planned to be spent. [36596]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 12 December 2005]:* It has not been possible to collate all public expenditure and other Government support since 1980 for energy technologies in the time available at proportionate cost. However, it is possible to detail the DTI and Research Council expenditure on new, renewable, and nuclear research and development. These are set out in the following tables.

Further spend on all of these technologies will be in line with the Government's objectives.

DTI New and Renewable Energy Programme—External spend for each technology area by financial year from 1990–91

Rounded to nearest thousand

Programme area	*1990–91*	*1991–92*	*1992–93*	*1993–94*	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*
Geothermal-Aquifers	-8,000	55,000	130,000	143,000	0	0	0	0
Geothermal-Hot Dry Rocks	2,579,000	1567,000	1,088,000	989,000	245,000	0	0	0
Hydro	33,000	122,000	70,000	167,000	148,000	79,000	142,000	57,000
Solar	2,124,000	2,354,000	2,302,000	2,378,000	2,067,000	1,878,000	1,874,000	1,660,000
Tidal	1,860,000	1,932,000	1,726,000	582,000	220,000	165,000	0	0
Wave	388,000	467,000	325,000	196,000	106,000	42,000	50,000	0
Wind	4,530,000	6,674,000	8,694,000	7,310,000	2,729,000	3,370,000	2,365,000	1,240,000
Nuclear	—	73,500,000	69,200,000	60,900,000	12,500,000	6,000,000	9,300,000	1,000,000

Programme area	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Geothermal-Aquifers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Geothermal-Hot Dry Rocks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hydro	80,000	138,000	60,000	130,000	200,000	85,000	0
Solar	983,000	1,278,000	1,264,000	1,522,000	4,485,000	3,131,000	1,970,340
Tidal	0	0	27,000	305,000	1,996,000	2,914,000	1,268,530
Wave	91,000	11,000	331,000	662,000	748,000	2,104,000	0
Wind	950,000	801,000	913,000	1,248,000	1,428,000	1,395,000	1,459,600
Nuclear	1,600,000	2,500,000	0	2,000,000	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,200,000

Notes

1. From 2000–01, figures do not include spend on contracts placed direct by DTI.
2. For 2004–05, highlighted cells show a combined spend for the two areas

Research council spend

Research area	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–4*	*2004–5*
Wind	178,000	261,000	330,000	490,000	482,000	256,000
Wave and tidal	175,000	301,000	606,000	617,000	830,000	1,050,000
Biomass	736,000	601,000	701,000	783,000	1,043,000	1,186,000
Biofuel	0	22,000	52,000	144,000	135,000	92,000
Photovoltaic	2,760,000	2,992,000	3,536,000	2,770,000	2,381,000	2,762,000
Solar	1,076,000	1,134,000	1,130,000	1,157,000	1,453,000	1,753,000

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what comparative analysis has been undertaken on *(a)* the impact on carbon footprints and *(b)* the cost effectiveness of (i) new renewable energy schemes and (ii) carbon sequestation technology. [38897]

Malcolm Wicks: The 2003 Energy White Paper published the results of extensive modelling of the costs of different options for reducing carbon dioxide emissions over the period to 2050. The analysis is available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/phase2.pdf.

In November 2005 my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced that there would be a review of energy policy which would report in summer 2006. This will involve further analysis of the costs of different options for meeting the Government's long-term targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research has been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated by his Department into the long-term impact of burying sequestered carbon. [38898]

Malcolm Wicks: We published two reports on Carbon Sequestration and the results of these can be found in "The Review of Carbon Capture and Storage in the UK" and "The Carbon Abatement Technology (CAT) Strategy for Fossil Fuel Use", both of which can be found in the Libraries of the House. Both reports can also be found on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/coal/cfft/co2capture/review.pdf, and http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/coal/cfft/cct/pub/catreportlinked.pdf.

The supporting analysis underpinning the Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy which can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/coal/cfft/cct/pub/pdfs/r301.pdf provides the work to date on predicting the impact of deploying this technology. Further work on this area is planned as part of the CAT Strategy.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department has spent in direct subsidies to *(a)* renewable energy generation and *(b)* nuclear energy generation for each year since 1990. [38974]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Leominister (Bill Wiggin) on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2262W.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether a detailed feasibility study has been carried out to establish whether the recommendation in his Department's Buildings Renewable Strategy report to install renewable energy technologies in each of the

Department's buildings is achievable; and whether the other recommendations in the report have been implemented. [39228]

Alan Johnson: Work to investigate the feasibility of the renewable energy technology and low carbon options suggested within the Carbon Trust report is now in hand.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether a budget has been set for the applications of renewable and low carbon technologies for his Department's buildings. [39229]

Alan Johnson: Any costs involved in such work are an integral part of the capital works programme on the DTI HQ estate and therefore no separate budgetary allowance has been made.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's targets are for increased use of renewable fuels for energy generation; and if he will make a statement. [35377]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have a target that 10 per cent. of the UK's electricity supply should come from Renewable Obligation (RO) eligible source of renewable energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double that by 2020.

In 2004, 3.1 per cent. of the UK's electricity supply came from RO eligible sources of renewable energy.

Rhyl Flats Wind Farm

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the proposed Rhyl Flats wind farm is to be located on the Constable Bank. [39960]

Malcolm Wicks: The position of the wind farm could be described as being on the north eastern edge of Constable Bank but it is difficult to define the boundaries of this or any other sea bed feature precisely as they change with time. It is, therefore, best to define the location of the wind farm by fixed co-ordinates rather than its position relative to, what could be, mobile sea bed features.

The impact of the Rhyl Flats project in relation to the Constable Bank and other marine features was fully considered by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) and others in agreeing that the various consents for the project should be granted.

Small Business Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to enable the regional development agencies to take over the responsibilities of the Small Business Service. [36708]

Alun Michael: The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) took over local and regional management of Business Link from the Small Business Service on 1 April 2005. The Small Business Service has a much wider role of promoting enterprise and small business development, including working across government to ensure that the UK is the best place in the world to start and grow a business. It is also responsible for promoting social enterprise.

Student Finance

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reasons it was decided to exclude the financial information regarding student loans from data sharing arrangements between financial institutions. [34120]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 2 December 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

No action has been taken to exclude data sharing between financial institutions themselves about student loans.

We do not currently plan to take forward proposals to share data with credit reference agencies but as with all policy issues we will keep this issue under review.

Taxis

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent by his Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the United Kingdom, including London. [37466]

Alan Johnson: The Department of Trade and Industry has recorded expenditure of £146,677.82 on taxi travel to date this financial year.

Information on the national and regional distribution of this expenditure is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Trade-related Aspects of the Intellectual Property Rights Council

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on access to medicines through the Trade-Related Aspects of the Intellectual Property Rights Council. [37501]

Alan Johnson: An important success has been achieved by WTO Members resulting in a permanent WTO agreement on access to medicines, which was reached on 6 December 2005. The agreed amendment to the WTO Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) Agreement enables developing countries to import generic copies of patented medicines when they are unable to manufacture the medicines themselves. This timely agreement demonstrates the willingness of WTO Members to ensure that the TRIPs Agreement is supportive of public health needs in the developed world.

In addition, during the UK presidency of the EU, we have recently agreed an EU regulation which enables European generic manufacturers to export under this agreement.

Uranium

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Government have recently sought advice regarding the long-term availability of high grade uranium ore; and if he will make a statement. [40260]

Malcolm Wicks: This is an important issue that will be considered as part of the Energy Review's analysis of how different technologies could help us meet our Energy White Paper goals.

The Department has not recently sought advice on the long-term availability of high-grade uranium ore.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to implement the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [39182]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department announced on 15 December 2005 that it would be reviewing progress on the implementation of the EU directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment and undertaking a public consultation on its proposals for this during the spring of 2006 before transposing the main provisions of the directive into UK law.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the status is of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the EU; and when the legislation is due to come into effect. [38177]

Malcolm Wicks: The EU Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment was adopted by the European Council and Parliament on 13 February 2003. The Government announced on 15 December 2005 that it would be reviewing progress towards the UK implementation of this Directive and undertaking a public consultation on its proposals for this during the Spring of 2006 before transposing the main provisions of the Directive into UK law.

Wind Farms

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the potential impact on the North Wales tourist industry of the proposal for the development of the Gwynt y Mor wind farm. [36973]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government made clear in their Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development that they are committed to promoting a strong, stable and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all. This includes recognition of the economic benefits of tourism.

The Government will also consult statutory advisors such as the Countryside Council for Wales when assessing the proposal for the development of the Gwynt y Mor wind farm.

Wood Panel Industry

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research he has commissioned into the effect of the recent increases in wholesale gas prices on the wood panel industry; and if he will meet representatives of the industry to discuss the matter. [37934]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has commissioned research to update work on the demand side in the gas market, carried out earlier this year and published on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/index.shtml.

I, as well as DTI and Ofgem officials, have met numerous industry representatives on several occasions to discuss the impact of gas prices and ways of mitigating this. I have also exchanged correspondence with Mr. Alastair Kerr of the Wood Panel Industries Federation on the subject. I would be happy to meet him and/or his colleagues for further discussion if a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

World Trade Organisation

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of *(a)* the outcome of the World Trade Organisation summit in Hong Kong and *(b)* the impact it will have on developing countries. [39720]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State's statement to Parliament on 20 December.

There was progress on a number of issues at Hong Kong, which have the potential to benefit developing countries: an end date of 2013 was agreed for export subsidies; other nations signing up to the principle of duty-free quota free access for least developed countries; a commitment to end cotton export subsidies by 2006; new commitments on aid for trade and solid progress on trade facilitation. There is also a road map for concluding the round and delivering a fairer, freer trading environment.

TREASURY

Administrative Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total administration costs for his core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39845]

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last 12 months. [39817]

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39941]

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40009]

John Healey: The net total administration costs for the core Treasury in 2004–05 were £81.4 million, and are regarded as non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. All the functions of the core Treasury are carried out in London.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which

figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39857]

John Healey: The information requested is available in the relevant departmental Reports and Accounts, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Civil Service Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35927]

John Healey: The Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the real growth rate in UK departmental expenditure has been over the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [40029]

John Healey: Total departmental expenditure limits in real terms are provided in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005 (Cm 6521), Table 1.12.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05; [40080]

(2) what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case; [40081]

(3) what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40082]

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what has been the annual expenditure on vehicles for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06; [39985]

(2) what has been the annual expenditure on training and development for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06; [39986]

(3) if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* returned to the Consolidated Fund. [40141]

John Healey: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40323]

John Healey: Since July 2002 meeting refreshments for the Treasury have been supplied by the PFI contractor, Exchequer Partnerships. Meeting refreshments include teas and coffees, mineral water and biscuits, and it is not possible to identify separately the costs of bottled water.

Total costs for meeting refreshments in 2004–05 were £200,344.

Departmental Research

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [32989]

John Healey: The information requested is not held centrally in the Treasury and could be assembled only at disproportionate cost.

EU Budget

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will itemise the reductions of the UK rebate from the EU which will occur in each of the years of the new financial perspective 2007 to 2013; and if he will make a statement. [40257]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to Annex 2 of the proposal from the UK Presidency on the Financial Perspective 2007–13 agreed at the European Council on 17 December 2005.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Code Committee—customs warehouses and free zones, *(b)* Customs Code Committee—customs procedures with economic impact, *(c)* Customs Code Committee—counterfeit and pirated goods and *(d)* Customs Code committee—single administrative document have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided

over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved government; and if he will make a statement. [39029]

John Healey: There have been two meetings of the Customs Code Committee—customs warehouses and free zones during the UK presidency. The Commission chairs these meetings. The UK was represented by an official from HM Revenue and Customs.

There have been two meetings of the Customs Code Committee—customs procedures with economic impact during the UK presidency. The Commission chairs these meetings. HMRC represented the UK.

There has been one meeting of the Customs Code Committee—counterfeit and pirated goods during the UK presidency, on 11 July 2005. John Pulford from TAXUD chaired this meeting. HMRC represented the UK.

There have been four meetings of the Customs Code committee—single administrative document during the UK presidency:

23 September

28 September

25 October

19–20 December

All attendees were from HMRC. The Commission chaired all of these meeting.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved governments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Code Committee—duty-free arrangements, *(b)* Customs Code Committee—tariff and statistical nomenclature, *(c)* Customs Code Committee—tariff quotas and *(d)* Committee on recovery of claims have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39031]

John Healey: There have been no meetings of the Duty Free Arrangements Committee during the UK presidency.

There have been 10 meetings of the Customs Code Committee—tariff and statistical nomenclature division during the UK presidency. A member of the European Commission chaired each meeting and on each occasion the only UK representatives were from HM Revenue and Customs. Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

There has been one meeting of the Customs Code Committee—tariff quotas during the UK presidency, HMRC quota experts attended. It was presided over by Patric Wallez of TAXUD Directorate B.

There has been two meetings of the Committee on recovery of claims during the UK presidency on 13 July and 21 December. The UK was represented by an official from HM Revenue and Customs (HMCE). TAXUD chaired the meeting.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Code Committee—movement of air or sea passengers' baggage (technical problems), *(b)* Customs Code Committee—transit, *(c)* Customs Code Committee—favourable tariff treatment (nature of end-use of goods and *(d)* Customs Code Committee—origin have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39032]

John Healey: There has been no meetings of the Customs Code Committee—movement of air or sea passengers' baggage (technical problems) during the UK presidency.

There have been two meetings of the Customs Code Committee—transit during the UK presidency on 27–28 September and 8–9 November. The UK was represented by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Manuela Cabral chaired the meetings.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Code Committee—favourable tariff treatment (nature of end-use of goods) during the UK's presidency.

There have been four meetings of the Customs Code Committee: Origin meetings during the UK presidency. The meetings were presided over by the Head of the Rules of Origin Unit in Directorate C of the European Commission's Directorate General on Taxation and Customs Union. An official from the Europe and World Trade Directorate of the Department of Trade and Industry was present at the first meeting in July The meetings are attended by the UK's Customs and DTI Origin experts who are at present located in offices in London and Southend.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on mutual assistance in customs and agricultural matters, including operation of the CIS, *(b)* Customs Code Committee-general customs rules, *(c)* Customs Code Committee-recovery of claims and *(d)* Customs Code Committee-customs valuation have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39033]

John Healey: The has been one meeting of the Committee on mutual assistance in customs and agricultural matters, including operation of the C.S.

during the UK presidency on the 22 November 2005, attended by officials from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). OLAF chaired the meeting.

There were four meetings of the Customs Code Committee-general customs rules during the UK presidency:

13 July 2005

29–30 September 2005

26–27 October 2005

28–29 November 2005

The UK was represented by HM Revenue and Customs (HKRC) and the Commission chaired all of the meetings.

There has been two meetings of the Customs Code Committee-recovery of claims during the presidency on 13 July 2005 and 21 December 2005, the UK was represented by HMRC at both meetings and the meetings are chaired by TAXUD.

There was one meeting of the Customs Code Committee-customs valuation during the UK presidency on the 10 October 2005. The UK representative at this meeting was Ian Cremer and colleague. The meeting was chaired by TAXUD.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on the movement of air or sea passengers' baggages (principles), *(b)* Advisory Committee on value-added tax, *(c)* Committee on mutual assistance for the recovery of claims and *(d)* Committee on administrative cooperation in the field of indirect taxation, including Fiscalis programme have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39034]

John Healey: There has been no meetings of the Customs Code Committee-movement of air or sea passengers' baggage (technical problems)-during the UK presidency.

During the period of the UK's presidency the Advisory Committee on Value Added Tax met once on 18 November 2005. A European Commission DG TAXUD official chaired the meeting and UK representation was provided by HMRC.

The have been no meetings of the Committee on mutual assistance for the recovery of claims during the UK's presidency.

During the period of the UK's presidency the Standing Committee on Administrative Co-operation (SCAC) met on 12 July 2005 and 9 December 2005, its IT sub-Committee (SCIT) met on 20 July 2005 and 25 November 2005, and the Excise Committee on 25 November 2005. There were no meetings of the Fiscalis Committee. The Commission chaired these meetings.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on economic outward-processing arrangements for textiles, *(b)* Committee on the export of cultural goods, *(c)* Customs 2002 Committee and *(d)* Committee for the application of the rules on the manufacture and placing on the market of certain substances used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representative were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39035]

John Healey: There have been no meetings of the Committee on economic outward-processing arrangements for textiles during the UK presidency.

There have been no meetings of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Goods (ACCG) during the UK presidency.

Customs 2002 Committee no longer meets this has been overtaken by Customs 2007.

One meeting of the European Commission Drug Precursors Advisory Committee took place during the United Kingdom's presidency of the EU. An official from the Home Office led the United Kingdom representation, officials accompanied him from HM Revenue and Customs and the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved Governments.

Financial Inclusion Fund

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to receive state aids clearance from the European Commission to enable the establishment of a growth fund for third sector lenders from within the financial inclusion fund. [34957]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

Payments from the Growth Fund will provide a Service of General Economic Interest to people in areas of high financial exclusion. The fund will be paid in accordance with the appropriate rules for operation of a Block Exemption on prior notification to the EU Commission. Procurement arrangements for delivery of the service through third sector financial institutions are in hand. Delivery of the affordable loans service that the fund is to provide will commence during the first half of 2006.

Labour Force/Unemployment Rates

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* labour force and *(b)* unemployment rate is in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales, (iii) each of the English

regions and (iv) Northern Ireland, broken down by (A) agriculture, (B) fishing, (C) forestry, (D) fish processing, (E) manufacturing, (F) construction, (G) other industry, (H) commerce, (I) Government and public service employees, (J) transport, (K) communications, (L) utilities, (M) tourism, (N) finance and insurance, (O) business, (P) other services and (Q) other types of labour force. [39118]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 22 December 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the labour force by country and industry. (39118)

The attached table provides information showing the number of economically active people by industry, for those unemployed their previous industry has used, covering regions and countries of the UK. The table covers the three months period ending in August 2005.

These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to a margin of uncertainty.

People economically active[1] and unemployment rates[2] by industry division, 3 months ending August 2005— United Kingdom

	Total	North East	North West	Merseyside	Yorkshire and Humberside	East Midlands	West Midlands
Economically active (thousand)							
Total[3]	29,848	1,178	2,668	628	2,455	2,165	2,595
of which:							
in employment	28,397	1,096	2,545	593	2,339	2,063	2,472
unemployed	1,451	81	124	34	116	102	124
A. Agriculture hunting and forestry	391	9	18	2	32	39	28
B. Fishing	12	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
C. Mining quarrying	109	4	2	[5]	5	9	3
D. Manufacturing	3,913	153	392	80	392	379	464
E. Electricity, gas and water supply	14	14	2	14	14	18	14
F. Construction	2,334	103	206	44	216	163	201
G. Wholesale retail and motor trade	4,534	189	446	89	375	372	397
H. Hotels and restaurants	1,294	43	124	24	102	86	96
I. Transport storage and communication	2,028	78	191	38	160	162	186
J. Financial intermediation	1,248	27	83	25	96	44	90
K. Real estate renting and business activ.	3,326	106	269	63	214	210	246
L. Public administration and defence	2,023	105	171	54	148	110	147
M. educ	2,578	93	240	60	224	182	231
N. Health and social work	3,588	162	321	99	306	244	315
O. Other community social and personal	1,616	60	135	30	119	108	117
P. Private households with employed person	131	2	9	1	10	9	5
Q. Extra-territorial organisations bodies	12	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Unemployment rate (per cent.)							
Total[4]	4.9	6.9	4.6	5.5	4.7	4.7	4.8
A. Agriculture hunting and forestry	3.2	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	6.2
B. Fishing	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
C. Mining quarrying	1.7	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
D. Manufacturing	4.6	7.0	4.0	3.9	4.8	5.1	4.9
E. Electricity gas and water supply	2.7	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
F. Construction	3.1	3.0	2.9	[5]	2.9	2.3	1.7
G. Wholesale retail and motor trade	4.1	6.0	3.2	5.8	4.5	4.1	3.7
H. Hotels and restaurants	7.3	12.5	7.2	13.4	5.8	9.3	5.0
I. Transport storage and communication	3.2	5.5	4.0	5.5	4.6	3.2	4.2
J. Financial intermediation	2.5	7.9	[5]	[5]	4.1	5.0	3.0
K. Real estate renting and business activ.	3.0	6.4	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.6	4.0
L. Public administration	1.7	3.2	1.8	[5]	1.4	2.3	2.5
M. educ.	2.1	2.7	1.6	[5]	2.3	1.1	1.2
N. Health and social work	2.0	2.5	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.2
O. Other community social and personal	3.3	3.4	3.0	[5]	2.1	3.6	1.9
P. Private households with employed person	2.6	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Q. Extra-territorial organisations bodies	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]

	Eastern	London	South-east	South-west	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Economically active (thousand)							
Total[3]	2,837	3,725	4,297	2,553	1,375	2,578	795
of which:							
in employment	2,722	3,473	4,133	2,456	1,311	2,438	757
unemployed	115	252	163	96	65	140	38
A. Agriculture hunting and forestry	41	11	66	44	29	39	34
B. Fishing	[5]	[5]	1	2	[5]	6	1
C. Mining quarrying	6	2	8	11	5	51	3
D. Manufacturing	352	265	515	332	199	285	105
E. Electricity, gas and water supply	14	9	22	17	9	20	2
F. Construction	237	240	322	205	103	214	81
G. Wholesale retail and motor trade	445	475	650	404	202	375	115
H. Hotels and restaurants	111	178	168	124	78	129	31
I. Transport storage and communication	209	274	303	138	78	170	41

	Eastern	London	South-east	South-west	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
J. Financial intermediation	140	263	201	94	40	127	19
K. Real estate renting and business activ.	347	662	599	248	105	205	54
L. Public administration and defence	177	265	265	199	102	187	93
M. educ	251	299	374	216	129	223	57
N. Healthand social work	311	382	465	326	199	347	110
O. Other community social and personal	134	264	256	142	73	146	33
P. Private household with employed person	17	19	28	18	6	7	[5]
Q. Extra-territorial organisations bodies	3	4	[5]	2	[5]	2	[5]
Unemployment rate (per cent.)							
Total[4]	4.1	6.8	3.8	3.8	4.7	5.4	4.8
A. Agriculture hunting and forestry	6.3	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	5.9	3.4
B. Fishing	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
C. Mining quarrying	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
D. Manufacturing	3.0	5.8	3.4	3.7	5.2	6.4	5.6
E. Electricity gas and water supply	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
F. Construction	3.7	5.0	2.8	3.5	2.5	3.6	4.7
G. Wholesale retail and motor trade	2.4	6.5	3.5	2.8	3.7	6.0	3.5
H. Hotels and restaurants	8.8	9.1	7.2	4.9	7.0	6.2	3.2
I. Transport storage and communication	1.6	4.3	2.9	5.1	3.8	3.1	6.6
J. Financial intermediation	1.3	2.6	2.8	[5]	3.4	1.8	[5]
K. Real estate renting and business activ.	2.8	3.7	2.3	2.6	2.7	3.4	3.5
L. Public administration	0.8	1.8	1.4	1.0	2.1	2.0	1.3
M. educ.	2.3	3.7	1.5	2.2	3.5	1.2	1.9
N. Health and social work	2.4	2.3	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.6	1.1
O. Other community social and personal	3.2	4.3	2.7	3.0	3.9	4.6	[5]
P. Private households with employed person	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Q. Extra-territorial organisations bodies	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]

[1] Economically active is the sum of people in employment by their current industry and those unemployed by their previous industry
[2] Unemployment rate is the number of unemployed people by their previous industry as a percentage of those economically active.
[3] Includes those who did not state their industry.
[4] Includes those who did not state their previous industry.
[5] Figures not shown as it is based on small sample size, and subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Source :
ONS Labour Force Survey

Private Finance Initiative Projects

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list private finance initiative projects signed since 1 January, broken down by Department; who the commissioning body is in each case; and what the *(a)* location, *(b)* capital value and *(c)* date of the financial close is in each case. [40382]

John Healey: A list of signed PFI projects is published on the HM Treasury website (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_private_partnerships/ppp_pfi_stats.cfm). The list is updated annually, and the next update is scheduled to take place during January 2006.

The PFI project list can be disaggregated according to Department, and it also sets out the procuring authority, location, capital value and date of financial close for each signed PFI project. The updated PFI project list will include all PFI projects that had reached financial close by September 2005—the date of the last HM Treasury PFI data collection.

Public Works Loan Board

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money is on loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), broken down by country or region of the United Kingdom; and how much money is available for lending from the PWLB. [39624]

John Healey: The 130th Annual Report of the Public Works Loan Board, laid before Parliament on 20 July 2005, notes that at 31 March 2005 the following principal was outstanding:

Country	£ million
England	32,222.9
Scotland	6,750.4
Wales	3,096.6
Total	42,069.9

The Public Works Loan Board does not lend to Northern Ireland authorities.

The maximum amount of outstanding loans, at any one time, from the Public Works Loan Board should not currently exceed £55,000 million.

Research and Development Tax Credits

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many companies have been convicted of research and development tax credit fraud in each year for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [38347]

John Healey: Since the introduction of the research and development tax credit in April 2000, no companies have been convicted of research and development tax credit fraud.

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Scotland have successfully applied for the research and development tax credit in each year since it was introduced. [39120]

John Healey: The information requested for Scotland is not available.

Information on the total number of companies that have claimed research and development tax credit data under the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

scheme is published on the HM Revenue and Customs website at www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/corporate_tax/randdtcmenu.

Voter Registration

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the population of 18 to 24 year-olds are registered to vote broken down by constituency. [39160]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 22 December 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 who are registered to vote. (39160)

Only very limited age information is collected on electoral returns. Information is collected and collated on the number of attainers, i.e. those aged 16 and 17 who will be entitled to vote when they reach 18. Information is also collected on the elderly (because of exemption from jury duty), though these data are not collated centrally.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the population is registered to vote in each ward in the Tees Valley, broken down by constituency. [39171]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 22 December 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question concerning what percentage of the population is registered to vote in each Ward in Tees Valley. (39171)

I am placing a table giving the requested information in the House of Commons Library.

The estimated percentages vary considerable between wards. They are calculated by taking ward electorate counts for December 2002 parliamentary electors as a percentage of population estimates for Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards. There are a number of limitations with the data that means that some care should be taken with interpretation of the results. See also the footnotes.

The CAS wards are the closest available geography to electoral wards, for which population estimates are available. They were created for outputs from the 2001 Census and are based mainly on 2003 electoral wards. It is necessary to convert electorate counts to the CAS ward geography and therefore the electorate counts in the table are not necessarily consistent with data published elsewhere. The latest available population data available at ward level is for mid-2002, published in April 2005. The ward electorate counts are for December 2002 parliamentary electors, including attainers. No adjustment has been made to reflect the difference between these two timepoints.

There are a number of wards that are split by parliamentary constituency i.e. they fall within two or more parliamentary constituencies. These are shown by an asterisk * alongside their ward name, and appear under both constituencies (except where the split is not in Tees Valley). Electorate and population figures for the whole ward are shown. Some wards will therefore be double counted. It is not possible to split the data for these wards.

There is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. In addition, people can register in more than one place.

There are a relatively small number of wards (2) where the electorate counts are more than 10 per cent. greater than the population estimate.

The majority of such cases are likely to be attributable to a limitation in the methodology used to convert electorate counts to a CAS ward geography, though the other limitations set out will also have an affect.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Administration Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39823]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office Core Department has only one location in England that carries out functions for the Department. This is in London.

The functions and administrative costs for 2004–05 for functions carried out in London were as follows:

Function	*Total administrative cost 2004–05 (£)*
Private Offices (London)	
Total	626,893
Secretary of State, Minister of State and Support Staff (London)	626,893
Political Directorate (London Offices)	
Total	539,009
Political Director, Associate Political Director and Support Staff	539,009
Rights and International Relations Division (RIR)	
Total	1,156,583
Head of Division and Support Staff (RIR)	124,533
Elections Unit	223,934
Human Rights and Equality	327,485
Political Planning	128,587
International Relations	299,602
Security and Extradition	52,442
Devolution and Legislation Division (DLD)	
Total	808,491
Head of Division and Support Staff (DLD)	211,701
Political Development	202,418
Legislation	264,176
NI Administration (Relations with Devolved NI Government)	100,821
DLD Support	29,375
Office Services Division (London)	
Total	1,830,441

Ambulance Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to move the non-emergency Northern Ireland Ambulance Service control centre at Altnagelvin hospital to another site. [39268]

Mr. Woodward: There are no plans to move the non-emergency Northern Ireland Ambulance Service control centre at Altnagelvin hospital to another site.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2091W, on bovine tuberculosis, what role culling of badgers has played in the control strategy; and how many badgers have been despatched in each year for which figures are available. [39669]

Angela E. Smith: The existing control programme in Northern Ireland in relation to bovine tuberculosis is based on measures to limit cattle-to-cattle transmission of the disease. The culling of badgers does not play a role in the existing control programme and no badgers have been despatched.

Bullying

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent on anti-bullying initiatives in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary and grammar schools in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; and what assessment he has made of their effectiveness. [39646]

Angela E. Smith: Anti-bullying became a separate area of work for the Department of Education in 2000–01 with the commissioning of the research into the scale and nature of bullying in schools. The following table details specific expenditure by the Department of Education for the last five years and planned expenditure in 2005–06. The heading 'All schools/ pupils' covers expenditure which cannot be ascribed to a particular sector.

£

	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*	*All schools/ pupils*	*Total*
2000–01	15,000	15,000	60,000	90,000
2001–02	17,500	30,000	3,000	50,500
2002–03	18,000	23,000	1,000	42,000
2003–04	10,000	10,000	5,000	25,000
2004–05	—	—	8,000	8,000
2005–06[1]	—	—	80,000	80,000

[1] Planned

Expenditure covered research, the production of materials for schools, an information leaflet for parents and a pilot programme of peer mediation in 10 schools. All of this work was pursued in partnership with the education and library boards and voluntary sector organisations with a keen interest in tackling bullying. Feedback on the materials has been positive. The peer mediation pilot was evaluated by ETI and while found to be beneficial could not be sustained by schools without sustained external support.

The Department does not have information about the resources which schools devote to anti-bullying initiatives from their own budgets. Across the education and library boards at least £200,000 per annum is allocated to specific anti-bullying activity.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils in Northern Ireland have been absent from school through sickness as a result of bullying in each of the last 10 years. [39648]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education does not collect the requested information from schools. Basic statistical information about attendance is collected and from this the Department can determine levels of overall absence. Following recommendations contained in a Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) report, 'Improving Pupil Attendance at School' published in November 2004, the Department is currently in the process of putting in place arrangements for gathering more detailed statistical information on pupil absences from 2006–07 school year. While information about the type of absence will be collected, including illness, it will not provide details on the type or reason for illness.

Child Protection

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much of the Northern Ireland draft budget will be allocated to child protection services in 2006–08; and what his funding priorities are in this area. [25303]

Mr. Woodward: Children and families remain a priority for Government. The budget for Health and Personal Social Services includes an additional £2 million in 2006–07 and 2007–08 set aside to support statutory requirements in respect of child protection. This money will be made available subject to agreement between the boards and the Department on the purposes for which it will be used and the specific outcomes to be achieved.

DHSSPS is committed to improving core children's services and this was reflected in the Budget 2006–08 settlement. As a result of the Budget we are able to invest:

an additional £2 million from 2006–07 in children's residential Care, opening new facilities and improving existing facilities,

an additional £4 million/£2 million in foster care;

an additional £0.5 million/£0.5 million for children leaving care.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been allocated for child protection arrangements in the Province over the next three years. [38616]

Mr. Woodward: Children and families remain a priority for Government. The budget for Health and Personal Social Services includes an additional £2 million in 2006–07 and 2007–08 set aside to support statutory requirements in respect of child protection. This money will be made available subject to agreement between the boards and the Department on the purposes for which it will be used and the specific outcomes to be achieved.

Expenditure planning figures for 2008–09 will be arrived at as a result of the national 2007 spending review.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time staff are employed by the Child Support Agency in Northern Ireland. [38956]

Mr. Hanson: As at 20 December 2005 there are 1,578 full-time staff employed by the Child Support Agency in Northern Ireland.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1247–48W, on the Child Support Agency, what the problems are with the new system; what steps have been taken to solve them; and how effective these measures have been. [39273]

Mr. Hanson: The agency recognises that there are ongoing problems with the service it delivers to its customers via the new Child Support computer system. I am, however, continuing to work closely with our colleagues in Great Britain and the system provider, EDS, to resolve the remaining functionality defects with the new system. In addition to the functionality problems there were issues with technical stability, which have now been addressed.

A forward programme of enhancements has been agreed with the system provider. This will resolve all current defects and provide the specification that will enable the conversion of old scheme cases onto the new scheme. The terms of the recent commercial settlement with EDS means that the enhancements will be completed without further cost. A proportion of payments due to the provider are however being retained, conditional upon timely completion of the programme of work to the required standards.

Governance arrangements are also in place to assess the performance of EDS against acceptance criteria and ensure the satisfactory delivery of all system improvements.

Monitoring has identified that recent technical enhancements to the system have improved performance against agreed service standards. Monitoring will continue as the programme is implemented. When Ministers are satisfied that the new system and arrangements are working well, a decision to convert all old scheme cases to the new system will be taken.

Churches/Orange Halls (Attacks)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many places of worship have come under attack in each of the last 10 years, broken down by denomination. [18240]

Mr. Woodward: The following table from PSNI records details the number of attacks on church property over the last 10 years correct to 30 June 2005.

	Number of attacks on church property
1995	52
1996	52
1997	41
1998	42
1999	15
2000	31
2001	30
2002	35
2003	59
2004	32
2005[1]	36

[1] To 30 June

Notes:
1. 2005 statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.
2. Includes incidents such as stones thrown, petrol bombs thrown, shots fired, malicious fires, etc.
3. PSNI does not record the denomination of the place of worship.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Orange Halls have come under attack in each of the last 10 years. [18241]

Mr. Woodward: The following table from PSNI records details the number of attacks on Orange Halls / Apprentice Boys Halls over the last 10 years correct to 30 June 2005.

	Number of attacks on Orange Halls / Apprentice Boys Halls
1995	42
1996	38
1997	41
1998	29
1999	26
2000	26
2001	16
2002	4
2003	19
2004	6
2005[1]	8

[1] To 30 June.

Note:
1. 2005 statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.
2. Includes incidents such as stones thrown, petrol bombs thrown, shots fired, malicious fires, etc.

Classroom Assistants

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many classroom assistants in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in Northern Ireland are (i) male and (ii) female; [39121]

(2) how many classroom assistants in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in Northern Ireland are employed on (i) permanent contracts and (ii) temporary contracts. [39122]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not readily available in my Department. Classroom Assistants working in the controlled and in the maintained sectors are employed by the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and those working in the Voluntary Grammar School (VGS) and in the Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) sectors are employed by the individual school Board of Governors. My Department has written to the respective employers seeking the information required and will write to the hon. Gentleman when the information is available.

Colin Worton

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent representations he has received regarding the case of Colin Worton; what representations he has received on extending the right to compensation for wrongful imprisonment to include people held on remand; and if he will make a statement. [37714]

Mr. Hanson: I have received a number of representations about compensation arrangements and about the case of Colin Worton, including a recent letter from the hon. Gentleman. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has recently written to Mr. Worton, and to those who have made representations on his behalf, advising him of the decision in his case. Those who have spent time on remand in custody as a result of a wrongful charge or conviction may be entitled to compensation under section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 or under existing ex-gratia arrangements.

Common Fisheries Policy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what penalties were imposed on fishermen from Northern Ireland for infringement of the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004; what infringements were involved according to the codes used by the European Commission; how many cases were discovered, broken down by type of infringement; what the average fine was, broken down by type of infringement; how many seizures there were, broken down by type of infringement and how much was paid by the fishery industry in Northern Ireland as a consequence of serious infringements. [39610]

Angela E. Smith: Infringements by the Northern Ireland fishing fleet within British Fishery Limits of the Irish Sea are detected by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, The Scottish Fishery Protection Agency, and the Royal Navy operating under contract to the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

Penalties are not administered by Departments, but are imposed by court after conviction. A number of cases from the period are unresolved at this stage; infringements by Northern Ireland vessels which have been prosecuted and have had penalties imposed are included below:

	2002	*2003*	*2004*
Number of penalties	7	nil	nil
Type of penalty	Court fines	—	—
Infringement codes	D1, E1, F1	—	—
How many by type	2 x D1, 1 x E1, 1 x F1	—	—
Average fine by type	D1 £1,500	—	—
	E1 £5,000	—	—
	F1 £1,000	—	—
Number of seizures	nil	—	—
Cost of infringements	£9,000	—	—

Commonwealth Games

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support and preparation is being offered by the Government to athletes from Northern Ireland for the Commonwealth games. [38953]

Mr. Hanson: The Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland including the distribution of public funding to individual sports. SCNI is presently operating a Lottery-based Athlete Support Programme, through which it has already made available a total of £477,580 to assist athletes wishing to participate in the next Commonwealth games.

Community Restorative Justice (Sex Abuse)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many allegations of sex abuse were received by the police from community restorative justice (CRJ) organisations in 2000; and how many involved members of CRJ organisations. [38977]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Constable has advised me that the PSNI does not keep specific records on the category of person reporting a crime.

To obtain the information requested would require a manual trawl of all police records and could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many allegations of sex abuse were passed by community restorative justice (CRJ) organisations to social services in 2000; how many involved members of CRJ organisations; and how many in each case were referred to the police. [38978]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested. Recordable data on abuse cases identifies individuals making allegations to social services, but not necessarily any organisation with which they may be associated.

Coolkeeragh Power Station

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* total running hours against anticipated hours and *(b)* earnings in system value arrangements were over the last six months for Coolkeeragh power station. [36544]

Angela E. Smith: Coolkeeragh power station ran for approximately 3,900 hours against an anticipated 4,200 hours over the six month period June to November 2005.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is precluded, by virtue of Article 63(1) of the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (No. 419, N.I. 6), from disclosing information in relation to the system value agreement between Coolkeeragh ESB Ltd. (the owner of Coolkeeragh power station) and SONI Ltd. (the transmission system operator in Northern Ireland) without the consent of both parties. It has not been possible to secure this.

Craigavon Area Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information is collected on the *(a)* number of patients waiting and *(b)* duration of waiting times in the Accident and Emergency Department at Craigavon Area Hospital. [38608]

Mr. Woodward: Information is collected locally by Craigavon Area Hospital on patients who present at the Accident and Emergency Department, using the Northern Ireland Regional Accident and Emergency System. The table given shows the total number of patients who were waiting in the Accident and

Emergency Department of Craigavon Area Hospital during the month of November 2005 by waiting time band (time waiting from arrival at A and E to departure).

Patients waiting in Craigavon area hospital Accident and Emergency Department by waiting time band—November 2005

Time waiting from arrival in A and E to departure	Number of patients in A and E waiting
Less than 1 hour	1,701
1 hour to less than 2 hours	2,061
2 hours to less than 3 hours	1,320
3 hours to less than 4 hours	745
4 hours to less than 5 hours	386
5 hours to less than 6 hours	153
6 hours or more	192
November 2005 total	6,558

Source:
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust

Denis Donaldson

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what relationship there was between Denis Donaldson and *(a)* the Security and Intelligence Services in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the RUC/Police Service Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [39598]

Mr. Woodward: It is longstanding Government policy not to comment on intelligence matters.

Dentistry

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to tackle dental decay in children in Northern Ireland. [38747]

Mr. Woodward: The Oral Health Strategy published by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in September 2004 sets out a range of targets and recommendations for improving the levels of dental decay experienced by our child population. The strategy aims to:

improve the oral health of the Northern Ireland population;

reduce the inequalities in oral health in our society.

Within this strategy it is emphasised that much of the dental disease burden is related to lifestyle and socio-economic factors and shares common risk factors with other diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

More specifically, in the past year all community trusts have introduced an evidence-based caries reduction programme in pre-school children. This has been complemented by additional funding of £100,000 per year for evidence-based caries reduction programmes for under 6-year-old children in the 20 per cent. most deprived wards in Northern Ireland. In addition, a targeted preventive fissure sealant scheme was introduced into the General Dental Services in April 2005.

More generally, all boards and trusts have in place a range of healthy eating schemes which aim to reduce the amount of sugary foods and drinks consumed by children. Many of these schemes involve intersectoral working with the education sector with school-based diet programmes such as "Fresh Fruit in Schools", "Safe Snack Award" and "Boost Better Breaks".

Departmental Staff

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff in his Department were *(a)* civil servants, *(b)* contractors and *(c)* other staff in each year since 1997. [27448]

Mr. Woodward: *(a)* The following figures exclude secondments, career breaks, temporary staff and Electoral Office staff.

	Northern Ireland civil service	Home civil service	Northern Ireland prison service	Total
2005	1,340	170	410	1,920
2004	1,250	180	410	1,840
2003	1,140	190	420	1,750
2002	1,100	180	440	1,720
2001	1,070	190	430	1,690
2000	1,010	200	410	1,620
1999	1,000	230	400	1,630
1998	1,010	200	400	1,610
1997	990	200	390	1,580

(b) It is not possible to identify the number of contractors/consultants. This could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

(c) The information is as follows.

	Northern Ireland civil service (agency/temp staff)	Home civil service (agency/ temp staff)	Northern Ireland prison service (agency/temp staff)	Total
2005	60	0	10	70
2004	40	0	20	60
2003	60	0	20	80
2002	40	0	10	50
2001	20	0	10	30
2000	20	0	20	40
1999	30	0	20	50
1998	40	0	10	50
1997	30	0	10	40

Domestic Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment the Government have made of the average Effective Tax Rate to be charged on each property under the new discrete capital values system of domestic rates. [39499]

Angela E. Smith: It is not possible to determine the average Effective Tax Rate (ETR) for each domestic property at this stage until the outcome of the revaluation process, currently being carried out by the Valuation and Lands Agency, is complete. This is due to be finalised sometime in spring 2006. The Department, however, has carried out some analysis based on preliminary data which suggests a rate substantially lower than the 0.79 per cent. indicated by the University of Ulster study over two years ago, which was based on 1999 capital value estimates. The preliminary estimates are insufficiently reliable at this point in time given the current unavailability of valuation data but the Government does intend to provide an estimate of the ETR to coincide with the publication of the new values in 2006 to allow individual ratepayers to gauge their 2007–08 liability following the revaluation.

Drinking By-laws

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions the Police Service of Northern Ireland has brought cases regarding the breach of drinking by-laws to Castlereagh borough council in each year since November 2001. [37591]

Mr. Woodward: Records held by Castlereagh District Command Unit indicate the following:

	Number of referrals to Castlereagh borough council
2001	2
2002	3
2003	3
2004	3
2005	12

Drugs Seizures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many drug seizures have been made in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; and what their total estimated worth was. [36567]

Mr. Woodward: Data relating to the number of drug seizures by police together with the street value of drugs seized are only available from 1998–99 and are contained in table 1 as follows.

Similarly I am unable to supply data on the number and value of drug seizures that have been made by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, prior to 1999 as to do so would require a substantial manual exercise and would incur a disproportionate cost.

Data for the number of drug finds in prison establishments prior to January 2003 were not collated centrally and are not available. The value of drugs seized within Northern Ireland Prison establishments is not calculated.

Table 1: Number of seizures of class A, B and C drugs by Police Service of Northern Ireland—1998–99 to 2004–05 and value of drugs seized

	Number of drug seizures	*Total estimated street value (£)*
1998–99	1,588	7,043,168
1999–2000	2,058	11,425,982
2000–01	1,750	9,994,769
2001–02	1,533	6,559,700
2002–03	1,781	11,082,910
2003–04	2,347	15,108,410
2004–05	2,402	9,507,689
1 April-30 November 2005	1,803	5,835,120

Table 2: Number of seizures of class A, B and C drugs by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs—1999–2000 to 2004–05 and value of drugs seized

	Number of drug seizures	*Total estimated street value (£)*
1999–2000	1	n/a
2000–01	2	744
2001–02	8	13,137
2002–03	13	343,254
2003–04	15	76,046
2004–05	13	57,440

n/a = not available

Table 3: Number of seizures of class A, B and C drugs by Northern Ireland Prison Service 2003–05

	Number of drug seizures
2003	371
2004	355
1 January-31 October 2005	317

Education (Rural Areas)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to improve early years education and after-school activities in rural areas. [38615]

Angela E. Smith: Regarding early years education, in the current school year there are approximately 21,000 funded pre-school places, which provide for 93 per cent. of all children in their final pre-school year. It remains the Government's priority to provide age appropriate and high quality provision for all children in Northern Ireland including those in rural areas whose parents wish them to avail of a free pre-school education place.

The Children and Young People's funding package announced on 14 December 2005 includes an element for after-school activities. Final details have yet to be worked through but will take account of the needs of rural areas.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated to ensuring those in rural areas can access *(a)* early years provision and *(b)* after-school activities in each of the next three months. [38619]

Angela E. Smith: A profile of funding for each of the next three months is not available in the format requested. Funding of £23,243,426 was allocated in respect of the 2005–06 financial year for statutory nursery schools funded under the common funding formula, and for funded places in the voluntary sector and these take account of the needs of those in rural areas.

DE does not fund after-school activities direct though some schools are providing activities beyond the school day and meeting the costs from within their delegated budget, from charges to pupils or parents, or through funding received from grant making organisations.

The Children's and Young People's Funding package, which was announced on 25 October 2005, includes an element for the promotion of extended schools, including after school activities and I would expect that rural areas will qualify for a proportion of the funds available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to improve after-school activities for schoolchildren in Dungannon and South Tyrone. [38620]

Angela E. Smith: There are currently no plans specific to Dungannon and South Tyrone. However, the Children and Young People's Funding Package which I announced on 14 December includes an element for the promotion of extended schools, including after school activities. Final details will be announced in the new year and will take account of the needs of rural areas

Electoral Fraud

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many successful prosecutions were made against those involved in electoral fraud in Northern Ireland in each of the past 10 years. [21619]

Mr. Hanson: There have been no successful prosecutions with regard to electoral fraud in Northern Ireland since September 2000. The Electoral Office for Northern Ireland holds no record of any prosecutions in the period 1995–2000.

Equality Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Equality Commission in connection with the composition of the Commission's work force as contained in the Monitoring Report No. 15: A profile of the Northern Ireland work force. [37808]

Angela E. Smith: Ministers have had a number of discussions with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland about a range of issues, including the composition of its work force and have noted that the Commission has an affirmative action programme in place to address existing imbalances.

External Consultants

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33222]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is as follows.

Project	*(£)*
Design and production of new logos	
2000–01	
Total expenditure: 2001–01	—
2001–02	
Design of causeway logo	1,135.00
Total expenditure: 2001–02	1,135.00
2002–03	
Design of causeway logo	2,871.00
Establishment of public prosecution service (PPS) corporate identity logo	2,861.12
Infolog—community safety publications	258.50
'Community Safety Matters' magazine	50,759.37
Community safety improvement and development agency	80.00
'Two Tens' communication	20.00
Form design	724.00
Total expenditure: 2002–03	57,573.99
2003–04	
Establishment of PPS corporate identity/logo	2,079.76
Community safety promotions	572.59
'Stay Safe Stay Secure' campaign	677.04
'Domestic Violence' campaign	1,527.51
Community safety challenge competition	1,014.31
Total expenditure: 2003–04	5,871.21
2004–05	
Form design	4,244.00
Total expenditure: 2004–05	4,244.00
Employing external public relations	
2000–01	
Six steps to beat burglar campaign	3,991.87
Total expenditure: 2000–01	3,991.87
2001–02	
Small business security grants scheme	13,014.46
'Going on Holiday' campaign	7,918.17
Six steps to beat burglar campaign	1,951.28
Total expenditure: 2001–02	22,883.91
2002–03	
Small business security grants scheme	821.33
'Be Safe Be Secure' campaign	4,055.86
Crime reduction public information campaign	816.19
Establishment and operation of the youth justice agency	7,126.13
Total expenditure: 2002–03	12,819.51
2003–04	
CCTV challenge competition	9,760.00
Small business security grants scheme	22,858.00
South Belfast burglary survey	7,000.00
Crime reduction public information campaign feasibility study	17,085.00
'Stay Safe Stay Secure' campaign	43,774.85
Lock out crime pilot scheme	3,567.13
Establishment and operation of the youth justice agency	54,346.83
Total expenditure: 2003–04	158,391.81
2004–05	
Youth justice agency (YJA)—launch of Antrim project, Omagh project, youth conference service project in Strabane. Invites to those invited to attend. Retainer fee for production of annual report, business plan and policies and consultancy work. Letterheads/ compliment slips used on a daily basis.	16,991.39
Handy van scheme feasibility study	4,340.00
Lock out crime pilot scheme	11,004.00
'Stay Safe Stay Secure' campaign	1,168.20
Unknown caller leaflet	1,451.75
Drug related harm conference handbook	138.50
Theft form vehicles campaign	41,344.34
Total expenditure: 2004–05	76,438.18
Employing external graphic design agencies	
2000–01	
Design and artwork for information services	514.65
Development of forensic science website	3,340.00
Design and production of forensic contamination packs	930.07
Design and production of covers for forensic science NI service level agreements, corporate plan and business plans	3,675.57
Roscor plaque	146.00
'Are you a victim' leaflet	2,425.00
Code of practice for victims of crime	1,128.13
Car checklist	6,768.00
Total expenditure: 2000–01	18,927.42
2001–02	
Code of practice for victims of crime	2,364.00
Victims information leaflet	317.25
Creeper burglar leaflets	4,174.05
Small business security grants scheme	1,932.63
Total expenditure: 2001–02	8,787.93
2002–03	
Information services—graphic design and design and artwork	4,756.41
Code of practice for victims of crime	7,760.00
Victims leaflet	2,660.00

Project	£
Criminal justice service NI (CJSNI) website	13,160.00
Public information and education strategy	924.00
State pathologist's department consultation document 'The Way Forward'	774.34
Total expenditure: 2002–03	30,034.75
2003–04	
Launch of YJA, production of annual report, business plan and policies	21,841.67
Information services design and artwork	6,480.34
Signage for new public prosecution service HQ building	74.03
Building for future information briefing for PPS	9,215.49
Official opening of new PPS HQ	2,990.38
Schools poster competition	750.00
Community safety strategy document	23,106.38
'Community Safety Matters'	28,367.54
CJSNI conference	33,400.52
Criminal justice booklets	2,291.25
Analysis of—'The Way Forward' consultation document	475.87
Post mortem leaflet	861.28
Total expenditure:2003–04	129,854.75
2004–05	
YJA—launch of Antrim project, Omagh project, launch of youth conference service in Strabane. Invitations to those invited to attend launches. Letterheads/ compliment slips for use on a daily basis. Production of annual report, business plan and policies that agency produces.	67,687.06
Graphic design and NIO corporate house style	43,180.78
Information services graphic design and artwork	17,434.85
Building for the future—the PPS's Fermanagh and Tyrone pilot	6,541.28
CCTV expression of interest form	267.00
Schools poster competition	285.00
Community safety week	2,537,166.95
CJSNI website	8,000.00
Public information and education strategy	2,677.00
CJSNI annual report	11,267.00
Committal consultation paper	3,061.00
Criminal justice management framework	1,372.41
Total expenditure: 2004–05	2,698,940.33

It is not possible for the NI prison service to separate these costs and to do so would incur disproportionate costs. They have been able to provide the accumulative totals as follows.

Northern Ireland prison service

Period	Total spend on design and production of new logos	Total spend on employing external public relations	£ Total spend on employing external graphic design agencies
2000–01	—	—	34,937.21
2001–02	—	—	3,420.00
2002–03	—	—	2,142.53
2003–04	—	—	180,225.93
2004–05	—	—	153,220.33

Fertility Treatments

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what arrangements are in place in Northern Ireland for national health service inter-uterine insemination treatment; what funding has been allocated for such treatment in the 2005–06 financial year; and what recent changes there have been in the availability of such treatment. [39576]

Mr. Woodward: Inter-uterine insemination is an assisted reproduction treatment that does not require to be licensed by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). Health and Social Services Boards have, therefore, greater choice in commissioning this treatment. At present the eastern and northern boards commission treatment for their patients from the Regional Fertility Centre (RFC) in Belfast while patients from the southern board area are treated at Craigavon Area Hospital. The western board commissions a limited number of treatments from the RFC while the remainder are provided at Altnagelvin Area Hospital.

The Department currently allocates annual funding of £1.4 million to the Regional Fertility Centre for the provision of fertility services across the four board areas, including the provision of inter-uterine insemination treatments provided by the RFC.

The Department is not aware of any recent changes regarding the availability of this treatment.

GP Funding

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated over the next three years to *(a)* develop general practitioners with specialist interests and *(b)* provide for the accreditation of such doctors. [38609]

Mr. Woodward: No formal extra central funding has been allocated over the next three years to develop general practitioners with specialist interests but Health and Social Services Boards do fund a small number of general practitioners for providing certain specialised services although the overall amount is not readily available. Accreditation of GPs carrying out this specialist work would be the responsibility of the individual Board.

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients within each health trust area in the Province have *(a)* received, *(b)* accepted and *(c)* declined second offers for treatment. [38610]

Mr. Woodward: In July I announced a major programme of reform to address Northern Ireland's unacceptable waiting times. By March 2006, I would expect no-one to be waiting more than 12 months for in-patient or day case treatment with shorter waiting times for cardiac surgery (six months), cataracts (six months), and major joint replacement (nine months). An alternative offer scheme has been set up to guarantee patients an offer of treatment within these time scales and I have established the Northern Ireland Patient Offer Centre to facilitate this scheme.

The number of patients who have been offered transfers under the auspices of the Northern Ireland Patient Offer Centre are set out in the following table.

Trust	Offers received	Offers accepted	Offers declined
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	24	23	1
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	43	30	13
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	32	21	11
Total	99	74	25

Source:
Northern Ireland Patient Offer Centre

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many trolley waits were recorded at Altnagelvin hospital in each week in each of the last three years. [38611]

Mr. Woodward: Over the period for which information was requested, the number of hospital trolley waits was reported to the Department by Trusts on a quarterly basis.

Hospital trolley waits recorded in each quarter at Altnagelvin group HSS trust during the last three years

Quarter	*Total number of trolley waits*
30 June 2002	1,375
30 September 2002	1,450
31 December 2002	1,509
31 March 2003	1,575
Year 2002–03	5,909
30 June 2003	1,652
30 September 2003	1,759
31 December 2003	1,996
31 March 2004	2,106
Year 2003–04	7,513
30 June 2004	1,941
30 September 2004	2,008
31 December 2004	1,993
31 March 2005	2,230
Year 2004–05	8,172

Source:
Departmental Information Return CH10.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which female gonadotropin products are used by the Regional Fertility Clinic in Belfast; how much they cost; and by what process the decision is taken to use them. [38612]

Mr. Woodward: The Regional Fertility Centre has advised that they currently use several gonadotropin products. These include Puregon, Gonal F and Menogon injections. Puregon is prescribed as the product of choice for Assisted Conception but is also used for other procedures. Gonal F and Menogon are prescribed for procedures such as ovulation induction.

These drugs are prescribed for patients where clinical decision dictates this choice.

The total cost for these drugs during the period April to September 2005 was approximately £233,000.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many trolley waits were recorded at Craigavon Area in each week of the last three years. [38621]

Mr. Woodward: Over the period for which information was requested, the number of hospital trolley waits was reported to the Department by Trusts on a quarterly basis.

Hospital trolley waits recorded in each quarter at Craigavon area hospitals group HSS trust during the last three years

Quarter	*Total number of trolley waits*
30 June 2002	3,152
30 September 2002	3,360
31 December 2002	4,009
31 March 2003	4,240
Year 2002–03	14,761
30 June 2003	4,419
30 September 2003	4,277
31 December 2003	4,639

Hospital trolley waits recorded in each quarter at Craigavon area hospitals group HSS trust during the last three years

Quarter	*Total number of trolley waits*
31 March 2004	4,421
Year 2003–04	17,756
30 June 2004	4,356
30 September 2004	4,240
31 December 2004	4,201
31 March 2005	4,434
Year 2004–05	17,231

Source:
Departmental Information Return CH10.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps have been taken to provide *(a)* investment and *(b)* infrastructure aimed at sustaining key services at the Tyrone County and Erne Hospitals since 30th June 2004. [38623]

Mr. Woodward: Substantial investment has been made in maintaining services at Tyrone County and the Erne hospitals. The Department has provided Sperrin Lakeland Trust with additional capital funding of £1.9 million in 2004–05 and approximately £3.5 million in 2005–06, specifically targeted on sustaining key services in the Erne and Tyrone County hospitals. This additional funding has supported, among other things, the provision of a CT scanner and ultrasound and mammography accommodation at TCH and the refurbishment of A&E and paediatric facilities at the Erne.

In addition, the Trust has advised that they have recruited a total of 15 doctors as staff grade anaesthetists, staff grade surgeons, radiologists and A&E doctors, and that of the 51 nurses recruited over the past two years from outside the UK, 32 remain in post.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time was at Accident and Emergency in the Causeway hospital during *(a)* November 2004 and *(b)* November 2005. [38749]

Mr. Woodward: *(a)* The Clinical Information System which records waiting times at the Accident and Emergency Department in Causeway hospital did not 'go live' until mid November 2004. Therefore information on average waiting times during November 2004 is not available.

(b) For November 2005, the average waiting time from patient arrival in the Accident and Emergency department in Causeway hospital to be being seen by a Clinician was 1 hour 1 minute.

HMP Magilligan

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed at HMP Magilligan on a *(a)* full and *(b)* part-time basis; and how much was earned in total by these personnel in the 2004–05 financial year. [37803]

Mr. Woodward: There were 438 full-time staff employed at Magilligan and 1 part-time member of staff as at 30 November 2005. Payments for basic salary, overtime and allowances for these staff in 2004–05 amounted to £13.3 million.

Inward Investment

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 632W, on inward investment, what assessment he has made of what steps should be taken to increase the level of foreign direct investment into Northern Ireland. [39645]

Angela E. Smith: Invest NI constantly assesses what steps should be taken to increase the level of foreign direct investment into Northern Ireland. In doing so Invest NI continually evaluates the sectoral focus of its marketing activities and location of overseas offices.

One example of this is the development of a Northern Ireland proposition offering a business solution for companies in the financial services sector. This led to the establishment of a Citigroup project in Northern Ireland and Invest NI's decision to open an office in New York in June 2005.

In period 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2005 Invest NI secured a total of 106 projects with investment in excess of £525 million, and these projects promoted 6,653 new jobs.

IRA Decommissioning

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the difference was in the original and final estimates for the size of the IRA arsenal in relation to *(a)* handguns, *(b)* rifles, *(c)* heavy machine guns, *(d)* ammunition, *(e)* missiles systems, *(f)* semtex, *(g)* explosives, *(h)* timing devices and *(i)* detonator switches. [20746]

Mr. Woodward: On 26 September 2005 the IICD "determined that the IRA had met its commitment to put all its arms beyond use in a manner called for by the legislation". The IMC report published on 19 October 2005 said that the initial signs are encouraging.

The Government expect a full report on armaments to be published when the IICD have fully concluded their work.

IT Projects

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many IT projects have been developed for his Department since 2001; and whether he has agreed to make public Gateway reviews for these projects *(a)* in full and *(b)* in part. [23521]

Mr. Woodward: The following table refers to the Northern Ireland Office. It does not include figures for the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration.

	Number
Projects developed since 2001	2
OGC Gateway Reviews made public	0
FOI requests for full or partial disclosure of Gateway Reviews	0

Jonesborough Market

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total financial cost was of the police swoop on Jonesborough market in South Armagh on Sunday 4 December. [38580]

Mr. Woodward: The police operation on 4 December in Jonesborough involved officers from Organised Crime Branch, Newry and Mourne District Command and the Operational Unit as well as representatives from the film industry anti piracy body, Federation Against Copyright Theft. The total financial cost of the operation is not available.

The operation was concentrated on the surrounding area of Jonesborough not on the market itself and a substantial quantity of counterfeit goods were seized.

Ministerial Car Fleet

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which agency or Department provided drivers for ministerial vehicles in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [39651]

Mr. Hain: While in Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Office Ministers are driven and escorted by police officers.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many overnight stays he has made in Northern Ireland in each month since taking up office. [37587]

Mr. Hain: The number of days I have spent in Northern Ireland between taking up office and 31 December 2005 is as follows:

Month	*Overnights*	*Days*
May	3	6
June	6	10
July	9	14
August	0	1
September	5	10
October	7	10
November	5	11
December	13	18

In addition to the time spent in Northern Ireland, I undertake NIO business in Parliament and in the Northern Ireland Office at 11 Millbank, as a member of the Cabinet I have additional duties including attending Cabinet meetings on Thursday mornings.

Non-jury Trials

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to review the necessity for non-jury trials in respect of scheduled offences in Northern Ireland. [39153]

Mr. Woodward: The Government are currently considering what arrangements may need to be put in place to ensure the continuing effectiveness of the criminal justice system when Part VII of the Terrorism Act 2000 ceases to have effect. During the Report stage in the House of Commons of the Terrorism (Northern

Ireland) Bill 1 indicated that we should have detailed proposals worked up next summer and that these will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny.

Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of people who will be affected by the terms of the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill; and how many he expects to be *(a)* republicans, *(b)* loyalists, *(c)* police personnel, *(d)* army personnel and *(e)* other security service personnel. [30309]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for East Londonderry (Mr. Campbell) on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1644W.

Nurses

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nursing vacancies there are in Northern Ireland. [39649]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of nursing vacancies is only held for posts within the NI HPSS. This information is provided in the table as follows.

Number of current and long-term qualified and unqualified nursing staff vacancies in the NI HPSS as at 31 March 2005

	Current vacancies		*Long-term vacancies*	
	Headcount	*WTE*	*Headcount*	*WTE*
Qualified nursing staff	642	593.86	283	274.56
Unqualified nursing staff	124	102.26	25	22.60
Total	766	696.12	308	297.16

Notes:

1. WTE = whole-time equivalent.
2. Qualified nursing staff include health visitors, district nurses and midwives.
3. Current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31 March 2005 was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
4. A long-term vacancy is an unoccupied post which at 31 March 2005 had been vacant for three months or more (was vacant prior to 31 December 2004) and which the organisation was actively trying to fill. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.

Source:

NI Health Trusts and Organisations

Obesity

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland aged *(a)* under 20, *(b)* 20 to 30, *(c)* 30 to 40, *(d)* 40 to 50 and *(e)* over 50 are estimated to be clinically obese. [39653]

Mr. Woodward: Figures for the percentage of people who are clinically obese in Northern Ireland for the requested age groups are as follows:

Age group	*Percentage of population who are obese*
16–19	9
20–29	12
30–39	14
40–49	22
50+	25
Total	19

Source:

1997 Health and well-being survey

The information requested is not available for persons under 16.

Parades

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many participants in parades have been prosecuted for not completing form 11/1 in the last five years. [3829]

Mr. Woodward: I understand the high level of public interest in this issue at present. Acquiring the information from records held in 29 District Command Units within the set timeframe will take some time. I am, however, willing to write to the Chief Constable, PSNI, requesting this information and to ensure that a copy of the reply is forwarded to you once the research has been completed.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many parades proceeded *(a)* with and *(b)* without completion of form 11/1 in each of the last five years. [3830]

Mr. Woodward: The Parades Commission Secretariat has collated the information for part *(a)* of your request and I reproduce this in the following table:

	Notified parades
April 2000 to March 2001	3,440
April 2001 to March 2002	3,301
April 2002 to March 2003	3,280
April 2003 to March 2004	3,125
April 2004 to March 2005	3,470
March 2005 to end 2005	3,123
Total parades notified in the last five years	19,739

The Parades Commission do not have records on parades that proceeded without notification. To accurately answer part *(b)* of your question will require manually accessing the information from records held in 29 PSNI District Command Units and will not be possible within the set timeframe. However, as with your previous question, I am willing to write to the Chief Constable requesting this information and to ensure that a copy of the reply is forwarded to you once the research has been completed.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list each parade in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005 to date by its named organisation. [14498]

Mr. Woodward: This information is already in the public domain and is available in the Parades Commission's reports which are laid annually before Parliament, or via the Parades Commission's website—http://www.paradescommission.org/.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many parades took place in each of the last 12 months in Northern Ireland. [14499]

Mr. Woodward: This information is already in the public domain and is available in the Parades Commission's reports which are laid before Parliament annually or via the Parades Commission's website—http: //www.paradescommission.org/.

Police Service

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police officers in Northern Ireland were offered early retirement packages on health grounds in 2004. [37804]

Mr. Woodward: There were a total of 147 ill health retirements during the financial year 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005.

Figures for police officers retirements on the grounds of ill health include both serving, and ex-serving officers who have applied retrospectively and are not held separately.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of service was of officers with the rank of police inspector and above in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005. [36608]

Mr. Woodward: The average length of service for officers of the rank of Inspector and above in December 1995 is 27.94 years and in December 2005 is 24.11 years. A breakdown of individual ranks is as follows:

Rank	*Average service (years)*	
	December 1995	*December 2005*
ACPO	33.30	25.48
Chief Superintendent	32.30	26.28
Superintendent	28.19	24.44
Chief Inspector	24.50	23.24
Inspector	21.40	21.09

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the strength is of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [40036]

Mr. Woodward: The total strength of the Police Service of Northern Ireland as of 20 December 2005 is 9,413. This figure can be broken down as follows:

Service	*Number*
Regular	[1]7,507
Full-Time Reserve	1,062
Part-Time Reserve	844

[1] Including those working part-time hours

Pre-school Education

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on pre-school provision in Dungannon and South Tyrone; and what plans there are to change such provision. [38613]

Angela E. Smith: Part of the Dungannon district council area falls within the Fermanagh and South Tyrone parliamentary constituency. Looking at the two areas separately will count some pre-school provision twice.

The overall level of funded pre-school provision in the Dungannon district council area is 95 per cent. and the Fermanagh and South Tyrone parliamentary constituency is 99 per cent., which would indicate there is sufficient provision to meet the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme's aim of providing a year of good quality pre-school education for every child whose parents wish it. Research has shown that approximately 10 per cent. of parents do not wish their children to attend pre-school education.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to increase Sure Start provision in Dungannon and South Tyrone. [38614]

Mr. Woodward: Investment in the Sure Start project currently operating in Dungannon stands at £300,000 for 2005–06 and means that around 700 children under the age of 4 and their families have access to the range of services offered by the project. At this stage, no decisions have been taken on any possible expansion of Sure Start across Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding is being allocated to improving pre-school provision in each of the next three years. [38617]

Angela E. Smith: On 14 December 2005 the Secretary of State confirmed an allocation in the next two years of £28 million and £33 million to the new priority funding package for children and young people originally announced in October.

Departments have been working to draw up detailed plans, and related funding, to meet the objectives of the package, which includes an element of pre-school provision.

Professional Disqualifications

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many doctors in Northern Ireland were disqualified in each of the last 10 years. [38585]

Mr. Woodward: It is only the General Medical Council (GMC), through the Fitness to Practice panels, who may erase a doctor from the medical register within the UK. They have identified three such cases occurring in Northern Ireland during the 10 year period, one in each of 2002, 2004, and 2005. However, the registered address that doctors must maintain with the GMC is not necessarily their place of practice so, although it is unlikely that there have been other cases, the possibility exists.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many company directors in Northern Ireland have been disqualified in each of the last 10 years. [38586]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the number of directors disqualified in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 financial years.

Number

Year ending 31 March	*Directors disqualified*
1996	24
1997	25
1998	32

Number

Year ending 31 March	*Directors disqualified*
1999	21
2000	26
2001	16
2002	20
2003	[1]17
2004	[1]10
2005	[1]26
Total	217

[1] Includes undertakings not to act as a director given under Article 4 of the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.

Prosecutions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in how many cases of *(a)* indecent behaviour, *(b)* rape and *(c)* sexual assault files were sent to the Northern Ireland Public Prosecution Service and were subsequently returned recommending no prosecution in each of the last 10 years. [36256]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

In respect of *(a)* indecent behaviour and *(c)* sexual assault, the information requested is not available. Until the commencement of the PPS in June of this year, virtually all minor offences, which would include the majority of cases of indecent behaviour and some forms of sexual assault, were dealt with in the magistrates court and were prosecuted by the police. That continues to be the case in those areas of Northern Ireland which are not yet covered by the new service. The PPS does not record offences under the general heading of "sexual assault"—a category which could include a number of different offences some of which would have been prosecuted by the police.

In respect of *(b)* rape, over the five year period 2001 to 2005 (to 16 December), of the 133 persons charged by police with an offence of rape, 68 (51 per cent.) were directed for prosecution for rape and 21 (16 per cent.) for lesser offences (eg indecent assault. No prosecution was directed for the remaining 44 suspects. This can be broken down by year as follows:

	Prosecution direction for offence of rape		*Prosecution direction for lesser offence*		*No prosecution directed*		*Total*
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*
2001	12	50	4	17	8	33	24
2002	11	41	3	11	13	48	27
2003	16	50	6	19	10	31	32
2004	15	68	3	14	4	18	22
2005	14	50	5	18	9	32	28

The figures for 2005 are provisional.

It should be noted that the above figures apply only to charge cases (that is, cases commenced by police by way of charge). No reliable information is available in relation to cases where police did not charge a suspect but reported the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Data cannot be provided prior to 2001.

Runaway Children

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many runaway children were reported in each police district command unit in Northern Ireland in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement. [38111]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold a central record which would identify runaway children. To obtain this information would involve a manual trawl of records at disproportionate cost.

Public Officials (Security Threat)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether public officials have had to move house in Northern Ireland due to the danger of becoming victims of terrorism, since the police raid on Sinn Fein offices in Stormont in 2002; and if he will make a statement. [39602]

Mr. Woodward: As a result of the paramilitary intelligence gathering which police acted to prevent, hundreds of stolen documents were recovered. More than a thousand people had to be warned about their safety—some of whom moved house—and approximately £35 million was spent on protective measures.

Spy Ring (Stormont)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was to the Police Service of Northern Ireland of the investigation into those charged with running a spy ring at Stormont in 2002. [38707]

Mr. Woodward: To obtain an accurate breakdown of what has been a complex, multi-faceted and lengthy investigation would require careful and involved analysis by the PSNI. Such an answer could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Temporary Mobile Classrooms

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many temporary mobile classrooms are in use in *(a)* controlled schools and *(b)* maintained schools in Northern Ireland. [39647]

Angela E. Smith: At 31 March 2005 there were 1,126 temporary classrooms in controlled schools and 1,220 maintained schools in Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein Offices (Stormont)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who authorised the police raid in 2002 on Sinn Fein offices in Stormont. [39603]

Mr. Woodward: The fact in this case is that a paramilitary organisation, namely the Provisional IRA, was actively involved in the systematic gathering of information and targeting of individuals.

Police investigated that activity and a police operation led to the recovery of thousands of sensitive documents that had been removed from government offices.

As part of the investigation, the Police Service of Northern Ireland required to search a number of offices at Stormont. These searches were conducted under the authority of a Schedule 5 Search Warrant that had been sought by a police officer and authorised by the relevant judicial authority.

Punishment Beatings

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many persons were the subject of paramilitary-style punishment attacks in each year of the current troubles; how many persons have been convicted in respect of such attacks; how many of those attacks remain unsolved; and how many of those attacks involved *(a)* firearms, *(b)* bladed instruments, *(c)* other weapons and *(d)* assault without weapons. [29547]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have advised that the only statistics held in relation to this matter can be found at the PSNI website, www.psni.police.uk and are set out as follows. You should note that statistics only date back to 1973 and that data are not held for convictions or weapons used. All statistics are provisional at this stage and may be subject to minor amendment.

Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks 1973 to 2005 (updated on 14 December 2005)

	Shootings			*Assaults*[1]			
	Total	*By Loyalist groups*[2]	*By Republican groups*[2]	*Total*	*By Loyalist groups*[2]	*By Republican groups*[2]	*Total casualties (shootings and assaults)*
1973	74	21	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1974	127	43	84	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1975	189	50	139	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1976	98	36	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1977	126	28	98	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1978	67	17	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1979	76	25	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1980	77	26	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1981	80	14	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1982	81	22	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1983	31	9	22	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1984	26	6	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1985	32	11	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1986	41	24	17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1987	124	67	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988	66	34	32	56	21	35	122
1989	161	65	96	51	23	28	212
1990	106	60	46	68	21	47	174
1991	76	40	36	62	22	40	138
1992	133	72	61	74	36	38	207
1993	85	60	25	41	35	6	126
1994	122	68	54	70	38	32	192
1995	3	3	0	217	76	141	220
1996	24	21	3	302	130	172	326
1997	72	46	26	156	78	78	228
1998	72	34	38	144	89	55	216
1999	73	47	26	134	90	44	207
2000	136	86	50	132	78	54	268
2001	186	121	65	146	93	53	332
2002	173	117	56	139	89	50	312
2003	156	101	55	149	103	46	305
2004	112	89	23	115	74	41	227
2004[3]	109	87	22	109	72	37	218
2005[4]	78	69	9	83	57	26	161

[1] Beatings
[2] Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available and does not necessarily indicate the involvement of a paramilitary organisation.
[3] To 30 November 2004
[4] To 30 November 2005
Note:
2005 statistics are provisional at this stage and may be subject to minor amendment in the future.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the locations of each fatal road traffic collision in East Belfast District Command Unit from 2000 to 2004. [37590]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Fatal road traffic collisions in East Belfast DCU from 2000-04

Town	*Road name*
Belfast	Airport Road West, 160 metres north of Tennant's Road
Belfast	Upper Newtownards Road, 100 metres east of Prince of Wales Avenue
Belfast	Parkway, 200 metres south of Belmont Road
Belfast	Sydenham By Pass, 600 metres south of Tillysburn Interchange
Belfast	Old Holywood Road, at the junction with Finchley Park
Belfast	Upper Newtownards Road, at the junction with Finvoy Street

Fatal road traffic collisions in East Belfast DCU from 2000-04

Town	*Road name*
Belfast	Ballymiscaw Road, at the junction with Moss Road
Belfast	Ravenhill Road, 40 metres south of Ravenhill Avenue
Belfast	Newtownards Road, at the junction with East Bread Street
Belfast	Holywood Road, 15 metres east of Park Avenue
Belfast	Belmont Road, 30 metres west of Ranfurly Drive

Sports Council

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the response of 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 750W, on the Sports Council, if he will break down by sport the funding distributed by the Sports Council in each of the last five years. [36356]

Mr. Hanson: The Sports Council for Northern Ireland has allocated lottery and exchequer funding to individual sports in Northern Ireland for the amounts shown in the following tables in the last five years. This includes funding for bodies with a province wide remit, for example governing bodies of sport:

Lottery monies allocated by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland

Sport	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	£ *2004-05*
Angling	19,700	10,429	0	0	0
Archery	0	0	0	0	10,917
Association Football	1,217,900	442,908	696,561	328,153	765,048
Athletics	170,739	197,414	452,908	46,480	174,293
Badminton	57,124	7,350	0	0	106,755
Basketball	6,200	0	100,000	0	14,000
Billiards and Snooker	15,442	0	0	4,800	22,700
Bowling	154,409	8,075	47,176	98,300	39,460
Boxing	147,000	57,823	1,918	249,515	164,109
Camogie	2,200	0	70,000	110,000	0
Canoeing	0	0	0	0	13,200
Cricket	285,500	59,202	16,000	157,420	6,900
Cycling	66,785	82,823	68,340	35,880	207,680
Disabled Sport	0	16,442	99,300	95,110	11,248
Equestrianism	2,500	59,910	55,400	18,760	15,530
Fencing	67,320	10,020	8,080	14,240	40,400
Gaelic Sports	1,668,382	611,024	530,462	1,071,11	635,699
General	0	750,704	0	0	500,000
Gliding	0	0	0	6,720	0
Golf	67,008	69,750	24,945	101,225	29,680
Gymnastics	39,217	6,535	3,720	0	479,097
Handball	0	46,845	0	0	5,200
Hang Para Gliding	5,750	0	0	0	0
Hockey	19,625	22,850	68,800	0	82,530
Hurling	0	0	0	0	0
Ice Skating	12,780	29,000	21,240	16,400	0
Judo	0	67,285	39,444	3,320	8,000
Karate	8,877	0	0	0	1,400
Karting	0	0	12,440	0	0
Motorcycling	50,786	47,600	55,940	12,960	131,000
Motor Sports	46,930	7,250	0	0	127,650
Mountaineering	0	6,040	0	0	0
Multi Sports	859,910	1,162,713	730,956	134,665	0
Orienteering	16,307	0	0	0	0
Netball	0	38,044	5,000	0	9,050
Rowing	95,933	5,450	0	0	77,424
Rugby Union	218,946	144,000	76,860	244,163	0
Sailing/Yachting	52,756	32,900	12,000	15,160	14,500
Shooting	235,733	53,384	39,680	0	187,490
Skiing	0	20,988	0	0	0
Squash	44,722	39,845	8,000	0	48,820
Sub Aqua	9,000	0	15,000	12,593	0
Surfing	0	0	0	0	11,750
Swimming	96,861	149,523	42,008	25,112	78,367
Table Tennis	57,650	4,560	0	38,442	50,630
Tennis	0	112,200	111,700	63,958	0
Trampolining	13,000	0	0	0	0
Triathlon	19,480	32,800	41,720	0	44,229
Tug of War	0	0	0	0	18,000
Volleyball	0	0	0	0	25,533
Water-skiing	7,432	5,960	4,440	18,200	21,500
Weightlifting	0	3,700	0	0	9,400
Yoga	3,170	0	0	0	0
Total	5,863,074	4,623,346	3,460,038	2,922,688	4,189,189

Exchequer monies allocated by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland

Sport	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
					£
Aikido	—	—	574	—	—
Archery	—	—	2,300	4,000	—
Athletics	—	—	50,500	67,606	75,972
Badminton	—	—	27,000	59,217	53,014
Basketball	—	—	25,210	37,600	35,395
Bowling	—	—	17,560	36,000	16,071
Boxing	—	—	25,761	9,250	6,237
Camogie	—	—	15,389	40,990	29,905
Canoeing	—	—	6,160	39,461	39,208
Cricket	—	—	26,330	61,814	65,246
Cycling	—	—	19,800	34,300	36,592
Fencing	—	—	7,525	14,300	24,025
Fishing	—	—	3,232	—	—
Gaelic	—	—	543,075	154,550	121,169
Glyding	—	—	950	—	—
Golf	—	—	13,438	—	—
Gymnastics	—	—	20,578	33,986	44,554
Hockey	—	—	55,333	112,193	120,605
Horse Riding	—	—	2,874	37,337	48,297
Ice Hockey	—	—	1,150	—	—
Ice Skating	—	—	2,800	—	—
Ju Jitsu	—	—	2,450	5,000	7,710
Judo	—	—	20,011	43,199	20,576
Karate	—	—	1,445	7,000	2,350
Karting	—	—	5,300	10,925	19,826
Motor Sport	—	—	108,072	231,725	230,228
Multi Sport	—	—	1,537,809	2,046,568	1,612,313
Netball	—	—	29,008	58,595	53,265
Rowing	—	—	8,300	6,670	13,988
Rugby	—	—	25,100	105,528	99,933
Shooting	—	—	11,850	33,233	10,535
Skiing	—	—	3,150	3,500	9,461
Snooker	—	—	3,000	7,742	7,295
Soccer	—	—	601,668	134,929	1,039,002
Squash	—	—	23,642	41,687	38,299
Surfing	—	—	—	—	5,121
Swimming	—	—	29,967	58,948	52,042
Table Tennis	—	—	20,712	50,789	54,622
Taekwondo	—	—	2,350	5,000	13,811
Tennis	—	—	11,320	44,304	55,300
Triathlon	—	—	2,300	8,515	6,708
Volleyball	—	—	10,686	24,579	31,096
Water Polo	—	—	—	7,842	9,500
Weightlifting	—	—	632	3,605	3,750
Yachting	—	—	21,385	60,110	60,358
Yoga	—	—	1,750	—	—
Total	—	—	3,349,445	3,742,597	4,173,379

A breakdown of exchequer funding allocated by sport is not available for the period 2000–01 to 2001–02.

Expenditure planning figures for 2008–09 will be arrived at as a result of the national 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

Sure Start

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding is being allocated to Sure Start in the Province in each of the next three years. [38618]

Mr. Woodward: The budget for Health and Personal Social Services includes £9.335million in 2006–07 for Sure Start rising to £9.615 million in 2007–08.

Sure Start is one of the possible recipients of additional funding from the Children and Young People's Package. A final decision on the allocation of this funding, which amounts to £28 million in 2006–07 and £33 million in 2007–08, has yet to be reached.

Water Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Water Service staff there were on 1 January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2005, broken down by (i) grade and (ii) location; and how many are planned for 2007 in each case. [38484]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Katharine Bryan, dated 21 December 2005:

Your recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about the number of Water Service staff there were on 1 January 2001 and 2005, broken down by grade and

location, and how many are planned for 2007 in each case (38484). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

The staff-in-post figures for 2001 and 2005 by grade and location are set out in the tables below. The figures show an overall reduction of 181 staff (8%). The reduction is relative of the impact of the Water Reform process which requires Water Service to produce overall efficiencies in running costs.

Grade	*January 2001*	*January 2005*
Grade 3	1	1
Grade 5	6	6
Grade 6	10	9
Grade 7	39	40
Deputy Principal and Analagous	108	126
Staff Officer and Analagous	177	167
Executive Officer I and Analagous	368	332
Executive Officer II and Analagous	73	67
Administrative Officer	223	241
Administrative Assistant	93	65
Industrial	1,067	930
Total	2,165	1,984

Location	*January 2001*	*January 2005*
Altnahinch	1	3
Antrim	65	44
Armagh	39	43
Ballycastle	12	9
Ballynahinch	0	3
Ballinrees	1	4
Ballykeel	6	73
Ballymena	182	87
Ballymoney	13	8
Ballinacor	1	1
Banbridge	26	35
Bangor	1	0
Greater Belfast	758	710
Bullays Hill	1	5
Carrickfergus	15	1
Castor Bay	0	2
Carron Hill	1	0
Castlederg	1	0
Clogher	0	2
Coleraine	49	42
Conlig	71	61
Cookstown	18	12
Craigavon	219	151
Downpatrick	53	50
Dungannon	8	27
Dungiven	1	0
Dungonnell	1	4
Dunmurry	14	13
Enniskillen	72	72
Fofanny	1	0
Gelvin Grange	0	4
Holywood	4	0
Killylane	1	3
Londonderry	208	194
Larne	20	11
Limavady	1	3
Lisburn	64	58
Lough Fea	1	5
Loughgall	0	1
Lurgan	1	1
Magherafelt	26	36
Moyola	0	4
Newtownards	1	0
Newcastle	4	1
Newmills	8	8
Newry	52	70
Oaklands	0	1
Omagh	85	73
Portadown	40	1
Rathlin	0	2
Seagoe	9	40
Strabane	9	6
Whiteabbey	1	0
Total	2,165	1,984

Detailed planning for the achievement of efficiencies in 2007 is proceeding. It is not possible, at this stage, to give definitive numbers, grades or locations but a further reduction in numbers is planned.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Air Weapons

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will arrange a general amnesty on all air weapons on a particular day when they could be handed in at police stations. [19734]

Hazel Blears: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 28 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 532W.

Possession of an air weapon is not an offence and so a general amnesty as such would not be appropriate. Individual police forces can, and do, encourage people to hand in unwanted air weapons, particularly when there is a problem of misuse in their force area. We are planning a knives amnesty in the new year and will consider whether it can be extended to cover the hand-in of other weapons including possibly airguns.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many injuries were caused by air weapons in Hartlepool in the last year for which data is available. [38380]

Hazel Blears: Data collected centrally for recorded crime involving firearms in England and Wales is only available at police force level. Information for Hartlepool is therefore included in data for Cleveland police and is given in the table.

Injuries incurred during offences involving air weapons[1] recorded by Cleveland police, 2003–04

Type of injury	*Number of injuries*
Fatal	0
Serious[2]	4
Slight	38

[1] By the weapon being fired, used as a blunt instrument or in a threat.

[2] A serious injury is one which necessitated detention in hospital or involved fractures, concussion, severe or general shock, penetration by a bullet or multiple shot wounds.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes involving the use of air weapons took place in Hartlepool in the last year for which information is available. [38381]

Hazel Blears: Data collected centrally for recorded crime involving firearms in England and Wales is only available at police force level. Information for Hartlepool is included in data from Cleveland police, who recorded 361 offences involving the use of air weapons in 2003–04.

Aircraft Arrests

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether UK police have authority to arrest individuals suspected of criminal

offences who are on board aircraft which transit through UK *(a)* civilian airports and *(b)* military airfields. [33939]

Hazel Blears: In England and Wales, a constable may arrest a person without a warrant under section 24 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. Section 17 provides a constable with the power to enter and search any premises for the purpose of arresting a person for an arrestable offence. An aircraft falls within the definition of premises.

Similar provisions exist in Northern Ireland under Article 26 and Article 18 of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

In Scotland, a constable may detain a person without a warrant under section 14 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 where he has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a person has committed or is committing an offence punishable by imprisonment. Section 14 does not contain any power to enter and search premises prior to detention without a warrant. If the police are satisfied that there is evidence that a person or persons have committed a crime, they can arrest them without warrant at common law where that is necessary in the interests of justice.

UK police do not have the authority to arrest if the aircraft in question is a military aircraft as this has special status in international law even when it is on the ground. The aircraft and anything inside remains the sovereign territory of the foreign military. This is a recognised principle of international law based on the doctrine of state immunity, where a state enjoys immunity in respect of itself and its property, from the jurisdiction of the courts of another state.

Airport Policing

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) which airports are designated for police purposes; what the costs charged to the airport operators for policing were in each case in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [20379]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost of policing in each of the five largest airports which are not designated for police purposes in each of the past five years; [20380]

(3) if he will review the status of major airports which are not designated for police purposes; and if he will make a statement. [20381]

Hazel Blears: Details of the policing costs at individual airports, whether designated or not, are not held centrally. There are nine airports that are currently designated under the Aviation Security Act 1982. These are Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Prestwick and Aberdeen.

The Department for Transport is leading a review of the designation process, but work on this has been suspended pending the outcome of a request for determination by the Secretary of State under the terms of the above Act. The review will resume once a determination has been made in this case.

Animals (Scientific Procedures)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the nature and purpose was of the 47 procedures performed on endangered wild birds in 2004 under the Animals (Scientific procedures) Act 1986. [38844]

Andy Burnham: All 47 procedures reported in the Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals 2004 (Cm 6713) as having been performed on wild birds were for research for conservation purposes into techniques to reduce the mortality of threatened species due to infectious diseases. The procedures involved vaccination and taking of small blood samples. No special techniques were used and no anaesthesia was necessary.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to tackle (i) antisocial behaviour and (ii) antisocial behaviour outside night clubs and public houses in Southend-on Sea; and if he will make a statement. [37536]

Hazel Blears: Southend on Sea is an Antisocial Behaviour Unit Action area.

The Home Office have allocated Southend on Sea £50,000 in 2005–06 to tackle anti social behaviour. £25,000 of this has been allocated to tackle the most antisocial families in the town. The remaining £25,000 is being used to fund a number of initiatives including:

extension of the Mediation Service across the borough;

witness support;

covert CCTV deployment;

ASB Initiatives Fund to enable small initiatives to be carried out throughout the Borough;

roadrunner scheme—a course aimed at good driving behaviour for 16 and 17-year-olds.

Southend on Sea are undertaking a number initiatives to combat alcohol related disorder outside pubs and clubs, on the sea front and in the town centre. These focus both on prevention and enforcement and include the following:

S.O.S Bus;

The Street Pastors;

No alcohol zones. Three designated areas in Southend where no alcohol can be consumed on the street;

Club Watch—a meeting of the licensee's and police;

Door staff vetting/training;

Drug safes supplied to nightclubs in relation to substances or other articles seized. These can only be opened by police.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued to citizens living in Southend-on Sea in each month since their introduction. [37537]

Hazel Blears: The readily available information is by quarter and is given in the following table.

Number of antisocial behaviour orders issued, as reported to the Home Office where restrictions are imposed within Southend-on-Sea local government area, by period, 1 June 2000[1] to 31 March 2005 (latest available)

England and Wales	*Issued*
July to September 2000	—
October to December 2000	—
January to March 2001	—
April to June 2001	—
July to September 2001	—
October to December 2001	—
January to March 2002	—
April to June 2002	1
July to September 2002	—
October to December 2002	—
January to March 2003	—
April to June 2003	—
July to September 2003	—
October to December 2003	8
January to March 2004	4
April to June 2004	—
July to September 2004	—
October to December 2004	1
January to March 2005	4
Total	18

[1] Between 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area (pfa). During this period no ASBOs were issued, as reported, within Essex pfa.

Note:

As from 1 June 2000 data collected centrally by magistrates courts committee (MCC) area by quarter. For the month of June 2000 no (0) asbos were reported as being issued.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to tackle (i) anti-social behaviour and (ii) antisocial behaviour outside nightclubs and public houses in Tamworth; and if he will make a statement. [37833]

Hazel Blears: The Tamworth Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) has adopted an incremental approach to tackling antisocial behaviour which involves letters, visits, acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs) and ultimately legal enforcement through antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) or injunctions. Serious cases of antisocial behaviour are monitored by a multi agency action group which sits under the Community Safety Partnership.

Since April 2004 to March 2005 the Community Safety Partnership has issued:

350 first stage letter warnings to young people

seven multi agency visits to parents of juveniles causing antisocial behaviour

22 ABCs

Between April 1999 and June 2005 four ASBOs have been issued in Tamworth. Trent Basic Command Unit (BCD) has received an extra £10,000 Home Office funding as part of the third national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign. This campaign has been running since 15 November 2005 and enables the BCU to provide extra high visibility patrols aimed at deterring alcohol-related crime and disorder, including antisocial behaviour taking place in the vicinity of nightclubs and public houses.

On the 15 December 2005, the Tamworth CDRP, in conjunction with a multi agency partnership will launch their antisocial behaviour campaign with a specific focus on drink related violence.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what Government funding schemes are available for organisations which tackle antisocial behaviour and youth development; and how much money was available to each scheme in the last 12 months. [36591]

Hazel Blears: Tackling antisocial behaviour is a cross-Departmental issue and many Government Departments contribute to this agenda. A wide range of funding streams across Government have a positive impact on tackling antisocial behaviour. For example Neighbourhood Renewal programmes which focus on the most deprived areas and give practitioners and local communities a real opportunity to turn their neighbourhoods around; the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) through their work on schools and parenting contribute to preventing problems escalating and ensuring families get the support they need; the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and their work in tackling litter and fly tipping which can often blight neighbourhoods where antisocial behaviour and crime can take hold; and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) who provide the opportunity to divert young people from the destructive and damaging involvement in antisocial behaviour. The Departmental for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) also contributes to ensure a swift and effective criminal justice system for dealing with the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour activity.

Please see the following table.

Financial year 2005-06	*£ million*
Funding scheme	
Building Safer Communities Fund	74
Safer Stronger Communities Fund	9.4
Youth Justice Board Prevention Budget	12
Positive Futures	5.8
Anti-Social Behaviour Trailblazer/Action areas	5.9
Total funding	107.1

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in each London borough in each month since the penalty was introduced; how many have been breached; how many breaches resulted in custodial sentences awarded in *(a)* adult and *(b)* juvenile courts; and if he will make a statement. [39193]

Hazel Blears: The readily available information is by quarter and is given in the table.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction. These data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

Number of ASBOs issued at all courts, as reported to the Home Office, where restrictions are imposed within Greater London local government authority areas, by period, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

	Period						
	June to December 2000			2001			
Area	June	July to September	October to December	January to March	April to June	July to September	October to December
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Bexley	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Brent	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bromley	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Camden	—	1	4	—	—	—	1
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croydon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Ealing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	3	—
Greenwich	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Hackney	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hillingdon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Islington	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kingston-upon-Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lambeth	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Lewisham	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Merton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Newham	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southwark	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sutton	—	—	3	—	—	—	—
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wandsworth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Westminster	—	6	—	—	—	—	—
Greater London	—	10	9	4	4	4	1

	Period							
	2002				2003			
Area	January to March	April to June	July to September	October to December	January to March	April to June	July to September	October to December
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Barnet	—	—	—	6	1	2	1	—
Bexley	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—
Brent	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3
Bromley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Camden	3	—	1	6	2	10	1	8
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croydon	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4
Ealing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Greenwich	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Hackney	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Hillingdon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	2
Islington	—	—	—	—	1	1	4	1
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Kingston-upon-Thames	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Lambeth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lewisham	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
Merton	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1
Southwark	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	5
Sutton	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
Tower Hamlets	—	1	—	—	1	—	1	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wandsworth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Westminster	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3
Greater London	4	2	1	12	6	20	29	41

Area	Period 2004 January to March	2004 April to June	2004 July to September	2004 October to December	2005 January to March	2005 April to June	Total issued
Barking and Dagenham			1	1	3	—	5
Barnet		3	4	2	2	2	16
Bexley		3	1	—	1	3	20
Brent	1		2	2	3	2	17
Bromley	1			2	—	2	11
Camden	12	5	12	7	7	12	92
City of London		1	3	1	1	1	7
Croydon		6	—	1	—	1	15
Ealing	2	5	4	—	1	2	15
Enfield	2	1	—	—	2	7	13
Greenwich	4		1	—	7	1	19
Hackney		2	2	1	4	2	14
Hammersmith and Fulham	1	4	—	3	4	4	20
Haringey		4	5	8	8	5	30
Harrow		2	3	1	1	—	7
Havering	1		3	3	8	2	18
Hillingdon		3	5	4	11	8	31
Hounslow	3	6	4	4	6	3	31
Islington		1	1	2	3	1	16
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough	1	3	3	1	2	4	15
Kingston-upon-Thames		1	—	2	—	2	9
Lambeth		5	8	3	5	4	26
Lewisham	2	2	4	—	2	4	19
Merton	4	3	1	3	3	1	18
Newham		2	1	2	1	2	10
Richmond upon Thames		1	4	3	6	2	19
Southwark	1		5	1	6	3	22
Sutton		1	1	3	3	7	20
Tower Hamlets	3	—	4	7	10	9	36
Waltham Forest	2	—	5	5	3	2	17
Wandsworth	3	2	4	—	2	3	17
Westminster	2	5	6	7	4	4	39
Greater London	45	71	97	80	119	105	664

[1] Between 1 April 1999–31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area (pfa). During this period nine ASBOs were issued, as reported, within Greater London pfa.

Note

This local authority area table differs from criminal justice system area (cjsa) tables in that an issuing court can be outside the area in which the restrictions have been imposed.

Asylum/Immigration

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many families have *(a)* returned and *(b)* taken steps to return to their country of origin as a result of the pilot implementation of section nine of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004; and how many families subject to this pilot have (i) failed to attend stage three interviews, (ii) lost all contact with the relevant authorities and (iii) had National Asylum Support Service withdrawn. [29462]

Mr. McNulty: As at 11 November 2005, of the 116 cases families in the pilot, one family has returned to their country of origin, and 11 others are taking steps to do so. 53 failed to attend their stage three interview and 37 have lost contact with the relevant authorities. 30 families have had National Asylum Support Service (NASS) support withdrawn for section nine reasons. A further 26 families have had, support withdrawn for reasons other than section nine. These figures are not mutually exclusive, as the same families could be included in more than one category.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers were admitted to Northern Ireland in each of the last 12 months; how many were allowed to remain in the country; and if he will make a statement. [30249]

Mr. McNulty: Over the last 12 months, 12 individuals (excluding dependants) seeking asylum arrived in Northern Ireland.

The following table provides a breakdown on the numbers who arrived in Northern Ireland and claimed asylum on their arrival, for each month, from November 2004 to October 2005.

This information is based on internal management information and, as such, is not published within the official statistics.

Information on how many were allowed to remain in the country is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Number of people (excluding dependants) applying for asylum on arrival at port in Northern Ireland, broken down by month, November 2004 to October 2005

	Number
November	0
December	0
January	0
February	0
March	0
April	1
May	1
June	2
July	0

Number of people (excluding dependants) applying for asylum on arrival at port in Northern Ireland, broken down by month. November 2004 to October 2005

	Number
August	0
September	2
October	6
Total	12

Source:
Data are taken from CID.

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assistance is available to failed asylum seekers' families being returned to *(a)* Angola, *(b)* the Congo, *(c)* Sudan and *(d)* other unstable countries. [32420]

Mr. McNulty: In all circumstances we prefer that failed asylum seekers including families leave the United Kingdom voluntarily rather than have their removal enforced by the Immigration Service, and we promote the benefits of voluntary return to failed asylum seekers.

Failed asylum seekers including families of all nationalities who leave the United Kingdom voluntarily can benefit from the package of reintegration assistance available as part of the Voluntary Assisted Returns and Reintegration Programme (VARRP). This is operated and delivered by International Organization for Migration (IOM) on behalf of the Home Office. Participants in this scheme receive help with re-documentation, flights, and a package of reintegration assistance tailored to meet the needs of the returnees. Depending on the facilities available in the country of origin, IOM typically provide access to vocational training courses, education or assistance in establishing a small business relevant to the locality.

Access to this package of assistance is not available to those who do not leave the United Kingdom voluntarily and subsequently have their return enforced. However in light of the special circumstances in Afghanistan and Iraq only, a package of assistance is available to those whose return is enforced to these two countries.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been returned to Zimbabwe in the last six months. [33015]

Mr. McNulty: In the six months from April 2005 until September 2005 140 principal asylum applicants were returned to Zimbabwe. A further 20 dependants of asylum seekers were removed to Zimbabwe in the same time period. These figures include people departing voluntarily after enforcement action has been initiated against them and people leaving under Assisted Voluntary Returns programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration. Figures have been rounded to the nearest five and are provisional.

Information on removals of asylum seekers is published on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 339W, on asylum immigration, whether he plans to increase expenditure on dispersal and initial accommodation for asylum seekers over the next two years. [33761]

Mr. McNulty: There are no plans to increase expenditure on dispersal and initial accommodation for asylum seekers over the next two years.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* criteria are used and *(b)* process is followed in selecting failed asylum seekers to be returned to Iraq; and what level of access to legal advice to challenge the decision is provided for those being returned. [36309]

Mr. McNulty: Failed asylum seekers returning to Iraq mostly self select—over 1,000 people have returned over the last three years. During that period we have returned 15 people forcibly—all single males from one of the three northern governates, who had had their asylum claims rejected and who had exhausted the appeals process. As with all failed asylum seekers, all had access to legal advice during the asylum process from the point of making the claim up to their removal from the country.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers absconded during their asylum application process before a decision on their case had been made in the last year for which figures are available. [37678]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of asylum applicants who have absconded is not available except at disproportionate cost by the examination of individual case-files.

Work is ongoing to develop methodology to identify absconders using existing data sources and collate reliable data.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department issues to local authorities on housing unsuccessful applicants for leave to remain in the UK in the period between their decision hearing and their deportation. [38212]

Mr. McNulty: Schedule three of the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 sets out the eligibility of various categories of migrant, including failed asylum seekers who have exhausted all avenues of appeal, for local authority support. The Home Office issued guidance on the implementation of schedule three to Local Authorities and Housing Authorities in December 2002.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers have been evicted from their homes in Leeds, North-West before being deported from the UK in the last 12 months. [38216]

Mr. McNulty: Between 1 October 2004 and 30 September 2005, 11 people supported by NASS with addresses within the area of Leeds North West had their support stopped following a final negative decision on their claim for asylum.

Responsibility for eviction rests with accommodation providers. NASS does not keep a central record showing the number of evictions which are confirmed. However, NASS pays providers for accommodation occupied by asylum seekers only. Consequently providers are not be paid for accommodation occupied without authority.

Information on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers who are removed is provided in the quarterly asylum statistics which can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

The statistics do not show where a person was living prior to removal and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when each pilot of section 9 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004 was established; how many families have had support withdrawn to date; and how many children have been affected. [37754]

Mr. McNulty: The pilot was established on 1 December 2004 in three Immigration Service local enforcement areas-the North-East, North-West and London.

Under the section nine pilot, support is only withdrawn where a family whose asylum claim has failed has refused, without reasonable excuse, to take steps to return home. The National Asylum Support Service only withdraws a family's support when this can be done without breaching any person's human rights.

From the pilot involving 116 families, there have been 27 families, including 54 children in total, where support has been withdrawn for section nine reasons.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many enforcement home visits were carried out by immigration service staff in England and Wales between 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005. [37897]

Mr. McNulty: Records show that between 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005 Immigration Service staff conducted 3697 enforcement visits to residential addresses in England and Wales. This is management information only.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 28 November 2005, *Official* Report, *column* 26W, on asylum immigration, if he will make a statement on the increase in deportations of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe. [37948]

Mr. McNulty: The increase in the number of removals of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe was a consequence of resuming enforced returns to Zimbabwe on 16 November 2004. I refer the hon. Gentleman to my statement of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 153–54WS for the latest position.

Police Training Centres

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department was consulted on the timing of the announcement by Centrex that they were to close the police training centres at Bruche, Ashford and Cwmbran; and whether any person in his Department expressed an opinion to Centrex on that timing *(a)* verbally and *(b)* in writing. [16894]

Hazel Blears: The timing of the announcement of the closure of Bruche, Ashford and Cwmbran relates only to the timing of the scheduled Centrex board meeting on 21 July.

As these are Centrex sites, the decision to sell them after they cease to provide foundation training at the end of May 2006 is a decision for the Centrex board. It would not have been possible to make an announcement before the board had made a decision and, given that the closure has implications for individuals' jobs from May 2006, it would not have been right to delay the announcement until after parliamentary recess.

The Home Office has a representative on the Centrex board and a Home Office official was therefore present at the board meeting on 21 July. The timing of the announcement, and the manner in which it would be conveyed to Centrex employees first, and then publicly, was agreed at the board meeting. The Home Office representative at the board meeting was party to this decision and Ministers were made aware of the decision immediately after the meeting and before the announcement was made.

Burglary Prosecutions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful prosecutions there have been for burglary in each of the last seven years. [30477]

Hazel Blears: The available information from the Home Office Court Proceedings Database showing the number of Convictions for Burglary at all courts, England and Wales, 1998 to 2004, is provided in the following table. Recorded crime figures show that the number of burglaries has fallen by 32 per cent. from 1998–99 to 2004–05.

Number of found guilty of burglary, England and Wales 1998–2004[1]

	Found guilty
1998	30,769
1999	29,261
2000	26,222
2001	24,802
2002	26,691
2003	25,726
2004	24,252

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Car Number Plates

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* convictions and *(b)* prosecutions for theft of car number plates there were in England and Wales in each of the last five years. [37450]

Hazel Blears: Theft from a motor vehicle is an offence under Section one of the Theft Act 1968.

It is not possible from the data collected on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform to identify those offences which relate solely to the theft of car number plates from other thefts from a vehicle, as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Citizenship Tests

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many centres carry out the British Citizenship Test; where they are located; what arrangements are made for the administration of the test; if he will list the contracts his Department has awarded to carry them out; and what system is used to monitor the quality of staff carrying out the test. [38126]

Mr. McNulty: 89 centres across the UK are currently offering the test, which is taken electronically, and 11 more will be added in January. Applicants can find their five nearest test centres by entering their postcode in the appropriate section of the Life in the UK Test website (www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk) or by telephoning the test helpline on 0800 0154 245. The helpline is available from 8 am until 10 pm every day, including bank holidays.

The contractor for the development and administration of the test is Ufi Ltd., which itself has entered into contracts with test centres. Test centre supervisors have received full training in the use of the test system and tests are carried out in accordance with the British Standards Institution code of practice for the use of IT in the delivery of assessments. Test centre and test supervisor performance is monitored and annual quality inspection visits will be undertaken to ensure that the required standard is maintained.

Combating Crime

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from small police forces on their ability to cope with terrorism, drugs and organised crime. [35188]

Hazel Blears: Following the publication of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary report "Closing the Gap" the Home Secretary met with Chief Constables and Chairs of Police Authorities on 19 September and started a process for Forces and Authorities to identify how they would address the issues raised in the report including issues surrounding drugs, terrorism and organised crime. This proposal is on-going and only draft responses have been received to date. The Home Secretary will report to the house at an appropriate time.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what inquiries have been undertaken by the Home Office to determine the effectiveness of *(a)* small and *(b)* large police forces in (i) England and (ii) Wales in combating (A) drug crime, (B) terrorism and (C) organised crime. [35189]

Hazel Blears: During the course of 2005, in response to a request by the Home Secretary, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Denis O'Connor undertook an assessment of every police force in England and Wales in relation to their capability and capacity to deliver seven 'protective services'. These protective services are:

Counter Terrorism and Extremism
Serious and Organised Crime
Major Crime
Civil Contingencies and Emergencies
Critical Incidents
Public Order
Strategic Roads Policing

The results of this assessment are contained within the Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary's report 'Closing the Gap'. Essentially the assessment identified that while leadership and organisational experience were also influencing factors, generally the larger forces were more prepared and able to provide a more proactive 'predict and prevent' approach to these types of crimes and incidents, whereas smaller forces tended to react to incidents as they occur. In particular, those forces with more than 4,000 police officers or 6,000 total staff had greater opportunity to adopt a more proactive stance.

Community Support Officers

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers there are in each *(a)* county and *(b)* constituency in Wales; and what the proposed change in each number is for each of the next three years. [39298]

Hazel Blears: The table sets out the number of community support officers (CSO) for each police force in Wales and the number of CSOs in each basic command unit for each force on 30 June 2005. Information on CSO numbers is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Also included in the table are the proposed CSO allocations for each of the Welsh forces in 2006–07 and 2007–08 under the Neighbourhood Policing Fund. The allocation of CSOs to individual basic command units is a matter for the chief officer of police.

Community support officers (CSO) in Wales as at 30 June 2005

Force	*Number of CSOs at 30 June 2005*	*Basic Command Units (BCU)*	*Number of CSOs in BCU at 30 June 2005*	*2006–07 proposed CSO allocation*	*2007–08 proposed CSO allocation*
Dyfed-Powys	26	Carmarthenshire	17	36	95
		Pembrokeshire	9		
Gwent	83	A Division	29	18	146
		B Division	23		
		C Division	31		
North Wales	63	Western Area	18	47	143
		Eastern Area	21		
		Central Area	24		
South Wales	116	Merthyr Tydfil	8	102	292
		Rhondda Cynon Taff	26		

Community support officers (CSO) in Wales as at 30 June 2005

Force	Number of CSOs at 30 June 2005	Basic Command Units (BCU)	Number of CSOs in BCU at 30 June 2005	2006–07 proposed CSO allocation	2007–08 proposed CSO allocation
		Cardiff Central	17		
		Vale of Glamorgan	12		
		Bridgend	16		
		Neath and Port Talbot	15		
		Swansea	22		

Correspondence

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister of State for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green of 14 September on behalf of Miss Kamuna Ngavunu. [37008]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the hon. Member's inquiry of 14 September, to the Head of the Member of Parliament Correspondence Section, on 20 December.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 14 July on behalf of Hemin Mahmood Arif (Home Office reference A1088265, acknowledgement reference B16049/5) and *(b)* 18 July on behalf of Abbas Adele (Home Office reference A1165607). [38115]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Arif on 19 December 2005.

(b) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Adele on 19 July 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 21 June regarding Abdara Haman Mursalin Khan and Family (Home Office reference K386956, acknowledgement reference B14179/5) and *(b)* 5 July regarding Louakel Ali (Home Office reference A575300, acknowledgement reference B15337/5) [38116]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Khan on 19 December 2005.

(b) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Ali on 19 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister of State for Immigration will reply to the letters from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 23 September regarding Amisi Siana (Home Office reference number A1106558, acknowledgement reference B22657/5) and *(b)* of 18 October regarding (i) Mohammed Ilyas Nonil (acknowledgement reference B25061/5) and (ii) Teele Hussain Ahmed (Home Office reference A1021562, acknowledgement reference B24804/5). [38117]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

(a) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Siana on 16 December 2005.

(b) (i) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Nonil on 16 December 2005.

(ii) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Ahmed on 20 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 10 October 2005 on behalf of Skender Bregu (Home Office reference B1062371, acknowledgement reference B23904/5), *(b)* 25 October 2005 on behalf of Karim Mohammed Fatah (Home Office reference F1047285) and *(c)* 31 October 2005 regarding the submission of a DNA report by Mr. Abdirizak (Home Office reference M1200006). [38198]

Mr. McNulty: *(a)* Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Bregu on 20 December 2005.

(b) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Fatah on 20 December 2005.

(c) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Abdirizak's on 16 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 25 October 2005 on behalf of (i) Mary Moukouna Home Office reference M1198475 (acknowledgement reference B25369/5) and (ii) Mohammed Njie (receipt number LR1918021716/1) and *(b)* 3 October 2005 on behalf of Rudolph Bailey (Home Office reference B1053783, acknowledgement reference B23489/5). [38199]

Mr. McNulty: *(a)* (i) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Ms Moukouna on 20 December 2005.

(ii) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Njie on 19 December 2005.

(b) Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Bailey on 16 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 23 September 2005 on behalf of Jeffrey Tichaendepi Zungunde (Home Office reference DBL06850, acknowledgement reference B22764/5), *(b)* 4 October 2005 on behalf of Skender Caraj (Home Office reference C1023261, acknowledgement reference B23417/5) and *(c)* 11 October 2005 regarding Lucie Bakato Mpunda (Home Office reference M1178507). [38200]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

(a) Immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Zungunde on 16 December 2005.

(b) Immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Cenaj on 19 December 2005.

(c) Immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood about Mr. Mpinda on 20 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of *(a)* 9 August 2005 regarding (i) Donovan Lawrence (Home Office reference LR1621000699, acknowledgement reference B187931/5) and (ii) Mohamed Kalid (Home Office reference K1126377, acknowledgement reference B18800/5) and *(b)* 6 September 2005 regarding Umme Kulsum (Home Office reference K1205750). [38201]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

(a) (i) The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, about Mr. Lawrence on 16 December 2005.

(ii) The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, about Mr. Kalid on 19 December 2005.

(b) The immigration and nationality directorate could not find any record of the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, dated 6 September 2005 about Ms. Kulsum.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green of 7 October regarding a constituent, Mr. Hosam Elseknidy (ref LR141100924X/1). [39277]

Mr. McNulty: The director general of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the hon. Member on 22 December.

Court Proceedings Statistics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 32–33W, on court proceedings statistics, if he will publish the statistics due to be published in late November. [35417]

Hazel Blears: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is given in the following tables. It shows the number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates' court for abduction and offences of supplying alcohol to persons under 18 and those under the influence of alcohol together with those found guilty for supply of alcohol to under 18s.

Number of defendents proceeded against for certain offences relating to the sale of alcohol, by region1, England and Wales 2004

Offence description	*Statute*	*Region*	*0*
Permitting drunkenness or riotous conduct on the premises or selling liquor to a drunken person	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 172; Licensing Act (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, Sec 3 (Sch para 6)	North East	1
		North West	3
		Yorkshire and Humberside	1
		East Midlands	—
		West Midlands	2
		Eastern	—
		London	2
		South East	4
		South West	—
		Wales	—
		England and Wales	13
Selling intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sees 169 A&B; Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, Schedule (Sec 3) para 4(1)	North East	63
		North West	228
		Yorkshire and Humberside	59
		East Midlands	36
		West Midlands	81
		East of England	31
		London	162
		South East	66
		South West	33
		Wales	82
		England and Wales	841

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

[2] includes "Wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to a person under 18"

Crime

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of levels of *(a)* violent crime, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* robbery and *(d)* burglary in the Ruislip-Northwood constituency; and if he will make a statement. [39455]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available centrally for the Ruislip-Northwood constituency. This constituency comes within the Hillingdon basic command unit (BCU) and figures for that BCU are given in the table.

Offences recorded in the Hillingdon basic command unit—2004–05

Offence	*Number of offences*
Violent crime	6,782
Car crime	4,812
Robbery	593
Domestic burglary	2,056

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned on the level of crime committed in South Wales by those based outside Wales in relation to the proposals for merger of police forces in Wales. [34486]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary has not commissioned any specific research for South Wales into people migrating to that force area in order to commit crime.

Larger Strategic forces will be better equipped to deal with level two criminality. The public and local communities will benefit from enhanced provision of protective services and neighbourhood policing.

Dangerous Driving (Wales)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders were found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving in Wales in each of the last 30 years. [39296]

Paul Goggins: Available data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of offenders found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving in Wales 1984–2004 are given in the following table. Data prior to 1984 are not available.

Number of offenders[1] found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving[2] offences in Wales, 1984–2004

	Convictions
1984	34
1985	33
1986	18
1987	25
1988	28
1989	29
1990	19
1991	15
1992	20
1993	21
1994	16
1995	16
1996	20
1997	18
1998	16
1999	21
2000	16
2001	6
2002	14
2003	15
2004	9

[1] These data are on principal offence basis.

[2] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 S1 as amended by the Road traffic Act 1991 s3 and Criminal Justice Act 1993 s67.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39108]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office holds data on central Home Office advertising spend. The following table shows the breakdown since 1997. We do not hold data for other bodies and agencies as this would be of disproportionate cost.

The amount spent by the Home Office on advertising and communications was:

	£ million
1997–98	
Campaigns included recruitment of special constables, fire safety, absent voting and electoral registration	1.4
1998–99	
Campaigns included smoke alarms, recruitment of special constables, crime partnerships and electoral registration	1.8
1999–2000	
Campaigns included chip pan safety, fire safety, recruitment of special constables, European Parliament elections and electoral registration	5.65
2000–01	
Campaigns included fire safety, vehicle crime and recruitment of police officers	28.36
2001–02	
Campaigns included fire safety (smoke alarms), vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and special constables and postal voting	14.4
2002–03	
Campaigns included vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, firearms amnesty and recruitment of police officers	9.9
2003–04	
Campaigns included vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and domestic violence	12.487
2004–05	
Campaigns included acquisitive crime, drugs, recruitment of police officers and domestic violence	10.203

Departmental Publications

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of producing each of the publications issued by his Department in each of the last five years. [33884]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The costs provided are those recorded by the Central Home Office Communication Directorate which has a centrally managed publications function.

The costs provided are printing costs only. Other costs involved in production e.g. design, artwork have not been recorded centrally.

	£ million
2000–01	3,128,079.64
2001–02	2,994,877.00
2002–03	2,492,883.96
2003–04	2,986,017.11
2004–05	2,619,652.50

It has not been possible to calculate the cost per publication per year. Collection of this data could only be achieved at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Sarah Teather) of 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1251W, on departmental websites, what the *(a)* set-up costs and *(b)* running costs between August 2004 and August 2005 were of

(i) www.ask-the-football-fans.gov.uk,

(ii) www.getgunsoffthestreets.co.uk,

(iii) www.good2besecure.co.uk,

(iv) www.secureyourmotor.gov.uk,

(v) www.takingastand.co.uk,

(vi) www.technicaladvisory.co.uk,

(vii) www.thinkuknow.co.uk and

(viii) www.together.gov.uk; and how many (A) unique visitors and (B) visits, as distinct from page views, each received between August 2004 and August 2005. [37924]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The sites in question predate August 2004 and therefore have incurred no set-up costs during the period in question. With regards to running costs the Home Office does not maintain its financial information in the basis you have requested and cannot provide such a breakdown without incurring disproportionate costs. The core websites for the Department have recently been redeveloped in order to begin the rationalisation of the sites held by the Department. It is anticipated that the majority of the websites cited in this question will be integrated into the main Home Office website by the middle of next calendar year. Unique visitor and user sessions for these websites from August 2004 to August 2005 are detailed in the following table.

Unique visitor and user sessions for websites from August 2004 to August 2005

	Unique visitors	*User sessions*
www.ask-the-football-fans.gov.uk	735	826
www.getgunsoffthestreets.co.uk	3,562	3,715
www.good2besecure.co.uk	13,645	15,093
www.secureyourmotor.gov.uk	56,491	59,934
www.takingastand.co.uk	7,551	8,922
www.technicaladvisory.co.uk	688	792
www.thinkuknow.co.uk	194,220	223,575
www.together.gov.uk	82,238	121,787

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a Minister in his Department is planned to be nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the Office for Disability Issues; and if he will make a statement. [37089]

Paul Goggins: The Minister for Disabled People, has overall responsibility for the Office for Disability Issues (ODI). She chairs a cross-government steering group which includes ministerial representatives from the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Transport, and Department of Trade and Industry. I am the nominated Minister for the Home Office.

Drug Addicts (Treatment)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition he uses of minimal force in the context of the pilot scheme in Leeds and West London for the treatment in the community of drug addicts who commit non-violent offences; and whether minimal force includes any threat of physical injury. [39593]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The pilot scheme in West London and Leeds magistrates courts is not altering the approach of the courts to sentencing nor introducing any definition of minimal force in relation to the cases within the pilot.

The pilots of a dedicated drug court (DDC) at these sites provide increased continuity of district judge or magistrates from sentence through any reviews of any community order with a drug rehabilitation requirement that may have been imposed. This increased continuity, combined with improved interagency working, is expected to result in an improvement in adult offenders remaining in treatment and successfully completing their orders. The entry point for the DDC is conviction of an adult offender for a trigger offence i.e. an acquisitive crime. The implication of entering the DDC for sentence is that the offender is eligible for a drug treatment order. However, that does not mean that other sentencing options, such as a custodial sentence, are not available

Those sentencing the adult offenders going through the drug court will adhere to current guidelines issued by the Sentencing Guidelines Council on sentencing and on assessing the seriousness of the offence, on community sentences if appropriate, and will take into account any case law relating to minimal force laid down by the appellate courts.

Drunkenness

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders were found guilty of *(a)* drunkenness and *(b)* drunkenness with aggravation in (i) Wales and (ii) each local authority in Wales in each of the last 20 years. [39295]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of offenders found guilty for drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravation in Wales 1985 to 2004 is given in the table. It is not possible to identify those convicted in each local authority in Wales, as the data is not collected at this level of detail. Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Number of offenders found guilty for drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravation in Wales, 1985 to 2004[1]

	Drunkenness[2]	*Drunkenness with aggravation*[3]
1985[4]	n/a	n/a
1986	589	3,258
1987	362	3,398
1988	228	3,480
1989	225	3,228
1990	192	3,102
1991	125	2,387
1992	109	2,255
1993	67	2,126
1994	111	1,577
1995	118	2,527
1996	175	2,979
1997	209	2,779
1998	388	2,872
1999	377	2,405
2000	390	2,135
2001	317	2,037
2002	309	1,647
2003	300	1,505
2004	274	1,635

n/a—not available

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

[2] Includes offences under S.12 Licensing Act 1872, Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc.) Act 1985 SS.1(4), 1A(4), 2.(2) and S.12 Criminal Justice & Police Act 2001.

[3] Includes offences under S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967, S.12 Licensing Act 1872, S.174 Licensing Act 1964, S.9(4) Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969, S.28 London Hackney Carriage Act 1843, SS.101(1)*(a)*/*(b)*, (4) and (5) Merchant Shipping Act 1995, S.2 Licensing Act 1902 and S.61 Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

[4] 1985 data no longer available due to corruption of the dataset.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the Joint Action establishing a programme of exchanges, training and co-operation for persons responsible for action to combat organised crime, *(b)* Committee for the implementation of the incentive, exchange, training and co-operation programme for combating trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children and *(c)* Committee for the implementation of the programme of incentives and exchanges for legal practitioners have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38647]

Andy Burnham: The STOP II, Oisin II, Falcone, Hippocrates and Grotius (general and criminal) funding programmes expired on 31 December 2002. Their Management Committees last met on 23 and 24 July 2002 to agree the successful projects for funding for that final year. They have since been replaced by a single funding programme known as AGIS.

The AGIS Management Committee normally meets twice a year; in the spring to discuss the evaluation of bids for that funding year, and in autumn to discuss the draft annual work programme and call for bids for the following year. Therefore the Management Committee met once during the UK presidency, on 21 September 2005, to discuss the basis for AGIS 2006.

Before the meeting the Home Office conducted preparatory consultations with past bidders, stakeholders, agencies and devolved Administrations to discuss the UK's position in the Committee.

The Committee meetings take place in Brussels and are called and chaired by the European Commission, with member states attending in an advisory role. The UK is generally represented at meetings of these Committees by a Home Office official and an official from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

The composition of the UK delegation is always agreed beforehand and it is possible for Scottish Executive officials to attend meetings of the Committees as part of the UK delegation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on the service in the member states of judicial and extrajudicial documents and on cooperation between the courts of the member states in the taking of evidence in civil or commercial matters, *(b)* committees for the implementation of the programme of exchanges, training and cooperation between law enforcement authorities and *(c)* Committee for the implementation of the incentive, exchange, training and cooperative programme for the prevention of crime have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38825]

Andy Burnham: The Committee relating to the Regulation 1348/2000 on the service in the member states of judicial and extrajudicial documents is separate from the Committee relating to the Regulation 1206/2001 on co-operation between the courts of the member states in the taking of evidence in civil and commercial matters. The European Commission has not called any meetings during the UK presidency of either advisory Committee established under these regulations. However the Council's Civil Law Committee did meet once during the UK presidency to discuss revision of Regulation 1348/2000. This was chaired by an official from the Department for Constitutional Affairs, and an official from the Scottish Executive attended.

The set of five Justice and Home Affairs programmes-STOP II, Oisin II, Falcone, Hippocrates and Grotius (general and criminal)—expired on 31 December 2002. Their Management Committees last met on 23 and 24 July 2002 to agree the successful projects for funding for that final year. They have since been replaced by a single funding programme known as AGIS.

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The composition of the UK delegation is always agreed beforehand and it is possible for Scottish Executive officials to attend meetings of the Committees as part of the UK delegation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the programme of training exchanges and cooperation in the field of asylum, immigration and crossing of external borders and *(b)* Committee on the system for comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of the Dublin Convention have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38826]

Mr. McNulty: The Joint Action 98/244JHA of 19 March 1998 introduced a programme of training exchanges in the fields of asylum, immigration and crossing of external borders—the Odysseus programme—which included a Committee for implementation. Odysseus came to an end and was replaced by the Argo programme in 2002, which expanded on the aims of its predecessor to include visas. The Council Decision 2002/463/EC establishing Argo included provision at Article 13 to create a Committee for the purpose of adopting decisions on which actions merit funding.

This Committee last met in November 2003. It has not met during the UK presidency of the EU.

The Committee established by Article 23 of the Eurodac Regulation 2725/2000 on the fingerprint system which now supports the effective application of Regulation EC No. 343/2003 (the "Dublin II" Regulation) has not met. There are no immediate plans for it to do so.

Immigration and asylum matters are reserved subjects and consequently officials from the Scottish Executive are not members of the Committees. A Home Office official and an official from the United Kingdom (UK) Permanent Representation in Brussels would represent the UK at any future meetings of the Committees.

A meeting of the Eurodac User Group took place in Brussels on 13 October 2005 to discuss operational and technical issues. This meeting was chaired by officials from the European Commission. Home Office officials represented the UK.

European Evidence Warrant

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list types of evidence covered in the proposed European Evidence Warrant. [35642]

Andy Burnham: The draft Council Framework Decision on a European Evidence Warrant is still under negotiation. It is intended to cover objects, documents or data required for use in criminal proceedings. The taking of interviews, examinations of the body including obtaining DNA or fingerprints, information obtained in real-time for example through interception or surveillance, and the analysis of objects, documents or data are all currently excluded from the scope of the Framework Decision unless the evidence is already in the possession of the executing authority.

Experience Corps

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why no report has been available on the work of the Experience Corps since March 2004. [40241]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has not funded the Experience Corps since March 2004 and has not therefore required any report since that date.

Faith Communities (Grants)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what grants his Department has made in each of the last three years to organisations linked to faith communities; for what purposes; and what conditions are attached to funds. [27080]

Paul Goggins: Detailed information on all grants made to organisations linked to faith communities is not held centrally within the Home Office; to gather all of this would incur disproportionate costs. Details of recent grants made by the Communities Group in the Home Office are available.

In 2004–05 the former Faith Communities Unit awarded the following grants to organisations for a range of capacity building projects:

An-Nisa Society (£50,000)

Muslim Council of Britain (£148,160)

The Inter Faith Network (£32,525 and £115,000 strategy grant)

United Religions Initiative (£7,450)

School Development Support Agency (£17,500)

Karimia Institute (£21,750)

British Sikh Consultative Forum (£23,500)

Network of Sikh Organisations (£6,300)

Muslim Youth Helpline (£28,578)

Hindu Council UK (£35,400)

The Festival of Muslim Cultures (£46,000)

In this current year the Cohesion and Faiths Unit have made grants to the following organisations:

Women's National Commission (£83,700)

British Muslim Research Centre (£50,000)

Christian Muslim Forum (£131,000)

The Multi Faith Centre—University of Derby (£48,400)

Tower Hamlets Council of Mosques (£5,000)

All grants awarded by the Home Office are subject to standard conditions (which are the same as those applied to other grants awarded by public bodies) and are conditional on the organisation completing the project within an agreed timescale. The Home Office have also this year launched the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund. The assessment process is currently under way and we expect that successful organisations will be awarded grants in February 2006.

Fireworks

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many penalty notices have been issued in relation to the illegal use of fireworks by each police force area in Wales since the relevant legislation was introduced. [39294]

Hazel Blears: Offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 (made under section 11 of the Fireworks Act 2003) for breach of the national fireworks curfew, the illegal possession of category four fireworks and the possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework attract penalty notices for disorder, as does the offence of throwing fireworks. The offence of throwing fireworks has been included in the penalty notice for disorder scheme since it was introduced nationally during 2004. The offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 were brought into the scheme with effect from 11 October 2004. The numbers of penalty notices issued by police force areas in Wales are provided in the table.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, Wales, 2004 and January-August 2005 provisional figures

	Throwing fireworks		*Breach of fireworks curfew*		*Possession of a Category 4 firework*		*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*	
Police force area	*2004*	*January-August 2005*	*2004*	*January-August 2005*	*2004*	*January-August 2005*	*2004*	*January-August 2005*
Dyfed-Powys	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gwent	1	3	1	1	1	—	—	—
North Wales	8	7	1	1	1	—	—	—
South Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	10	11	2	1	1	1	1	—

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Imitation Firearms

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have received a prison sentence for carrying an imitation firearm in each of the last five years. [24277]

Hazel Blears: The offence of possessing an imitation firearm in a public place without reasonable excuse was created by an amendment to section 19 of the Firearms Act 1968 which was introduced by section 37(1)*(d)* of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The new offence came into force on 20 January 2004.

Since the amendment, the sentencing statistics include data on the new offence under a code that also covers airweapons. Therefore we are unable to provide data for imitation firearms alone. In 2004, 358 people were sentenced for carrying a loaded or unloaded imitation firearm or airweapon in a public place. Of these, 29 were given a custodial sentence.

Forensic Science Service

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the national targets are for the Forensic Science Service; and what the performance of relevant offices in Devon and Cornwall has been against those targets. [38417]

Andy Burnham: The Forensic Science Service (FSS) has a number of national targets; these are set out in the table.

The FSS does not have a laboratory or offices in Devon and Cornwall.

	Measure	*2005-06 targets*
1	Risk adjusted return on capital (ROCE)	15 per cent. ROCE
2	Real reduction in charges versus average earnings index (AEI)	75 per cent. AEI
3	Investment in development work per cent. turnover	10 per cent.
4	External funding for Research and Development	£500,000
5	Percentage of cases with FSS case officer	100 per cent.
6	Deliver training to police and CPS	Customer satisfaction
7	Percentage fast track processing of DNA samples	20 per cent.
8	Average time to analyse and inform customers of DNA intelligence crime scene stain results on database (normal track cases)	[1]5 days
9	Per cent. of target eight delivered in less than 10 days	[1]95 per cent. of intelligence crime stains delivered 10 days
10	Average time to analyse and inform customers of DNA suspect sample results on database (normal track cases)	[1]5 days
11	Per cent. of target 10 delivered in less than eight days	[1]95 per cent. of CJs delivered < 8 days

	Measure	2005–06 targets
12	Per cent. of work delivered in less than 33 days	95 per cent. of work delivered in less than 33 days
13	Maintain ISO accreditation	Maintain accreditation
14	Investors in People	Establish processes and behaviours to retain IIP in 2006–07
15	Maintain diversity programme	Maintain

[1] These figures include one day for the Custodian.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate the Government has made of the percentage of check points of identity cards that will *(a)* check all the biometrics and *(b)* consist of human face-to-face checks; and whether this has been accounted for in the Government's cost-benefit analysis of the scheme. [20866]

Andy Burnham: Primarily, it will be a decision for the user organisation in question to decide if a biometric verification or simple visual verification is necessary, depending on the transaction and their previous relationship with the individual in question. The Home Office has conducted research with potential users of identity services with regard to preferred types of verification method. This was conducted independently by Taylor Nelson Sofres and the report "Identity Cards—An assessment of awareness and demand for the Identity Cards Scheme" is available in the Library and on the Identity Cards website—www.identitycards.gov.uk

Estimates of the volumes of the different methods the Identity Cards Scheme will offer of verifying identity have been made for the purposes of the business case. Human face-to-face checks, where only a visual verification of the card against the person presenting it is made, are not included in these figures as these do not constitute a check against the register and do not incur any costs.

Immigration Appeal

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department has made in handling the immigration appeal submitted by Mrs. J.B. of Aylesbury, reference B1148496; and if he will make a statement. [39239]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

Officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) of the Home Office have confirmed that the appeal of a Mrs. J.B. was received at their Appeals Processing Centre on 12 January 2005.

Appeals arising from a claim refused by the Home Office prior to 4 April 2005 were lodged first, in accordance with the tribunal's procedure rules, with the decision maker before being transferred to the tribunal to be determined by an immigration judge.

The appeal papers are expected to be sent to the AIT within the next five working days. Under current listing arrangements, the appeal will be listed for hearing 28 days after receipt at the tribunal.

Immigration Detainees

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inter-detention estate transfers of immigration detainees were made in *(a)* 1997–98, *(b)* 2001–02, *(c)* 2002–03, *(d)* 2003–04 and *(e)* 2004–05; how many have been made in 2005 to date; and if he will make a statement. [32900]

Mr. McNulty: The figures for the number of inter-detention estate transfers of immigration detainees in 1997–98 are not available.

In 2001–02, there were 30,334 such transfers, in 2002–03, 35,656; in 2003–04, 41,477 and in 2004–05, 54,670. During 2005 to date 31,730 inter-detention estate transfers have been made. These statistics cover all inter-detention movements of detainees including those from prisons, police cells and port holding rooms into Immigration Removal Centres.

IMPACT

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2567–68W, on IMPACT, if he will break down the £7.1 million *(a)* spent and *(b)* committed by main budget heading; and if he will make a statement. [38191]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is as follows:

Technical delivery projects: £2,254,000

Programme definition and development of business case: £3,754,000

Central Services and Programme Support: £1,118,000

The above figures relate to actual spend. It is not possible to differentiate retrospectively between spend and commitment at that time.

International Events (Policing Costs)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding, in *(a)* cash, *(b)* real and *(c)* percentage terms, was made available by his Department to (i) the Metropolitan police and (ii) other police forces in England and Wales to fund the policing of international summits, conferences and state visits hosted by Her Majesty's Government since 1997, broken down by event. [38497]

Hazel Blears: The following table shows the extra funding for the policing of international summits, conferences and state visits for police forces in England and Wales since 1997. The Metropolitan Police Service have not received extra funding. They receive a special payment as part of annual police grant, in respect of London's unique national, international and capital city functions.

International Summit		*Force*	*Amount of Government special grant (£ million)* *Cash*	*Real Terms [2004-05 prices][1]*
1998-99	G8 Summit	West Midlands	1.175	1.345
1998-99	G8 Summit	Staffordshire	0.179	0.205
1998-99	EU Summit	South Wales	2.986	3.419
2000-01	NATO Annual Summit	West Midlands	0.170	0.188
2003-04	UN Progressive Governance Conference	Surrey	0.818	0.835
2004-05	G5 Summit	Derbyshire	0.038	0.038
Party Conferences				
1997-98	Labour Party Conference	Sussex	0.750	0.881
1997-98	Conservative Party Conference	Lancashire	0.750	0.881
1998-99	Labour Party Conference	Lancashire	0.750	0.859
1998-99	Conservative Party Conference	Dorset	0.750	0.859
1999-2000	Labour Party Conference	Dorset	1.581	1.775
1999-2000	Conservative Party Conference	Lancashire	0.892	1.002
2000-01	Labour Party Conference	Sussex	1.660	1.840
2000-01	Conservative Party Conference	Dorset	0.900	0.998
2001-02	Labour Party Spring Conference	South Wales	0.275	0.297
2001-02	Labour Party Conference	Sussex	1.810	1.958
2001-02	Conservative Party Conference	Lancashire	1.072	1.159
2002-03	Labour Party Conference	Lancashire	1.500	1.572
2002-03	Conservative Party Conference	Dorset	0.894	0.937
2003-04	Labour Party Spring Conference	Greater Manchester	0.500	0.511
2003-04	Labour Party Conference	Dorset	2.250	2.298
2003-04	Conservative Party Conference	Lancashire	1.200	1.225
2004-05	Labour Party Spring Conference	Northumbria	1.440	1.440
2004-05	Labour Party Conference	Sussex	3.303	3.303
2004-05	Conservative Party Conference	Dorset	1.185	1.185
2005-06	Conservative Party Conference	Lancashire	1.400	1.366
2005-06	Labour Party Conference	Sussex	3.600	3.512
State visits				
2003-04	President Bush State Visit	Durham	0.800	0.817

[1] Real terms at 2004-05 prices using GDP deflator at 28 September 2005

Note:
Full details of the proportion of costs met by grant are unavailable, but have varied with the circumstances of each case.

Internet (Improper Use)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2845W, on improper use of the internet, when he expects all associated contractual activities to be completed for the business case; and what these contractual activities are. [32855]

Hazel Blears: The IMPACT programme (Information Management, Prioritisation, Analysis, Co-ordination and Tasking) is likely to involve tendering for a variety of contracts over the lifetime of the programme which, as reported in the second progress report on the Bichard inquiry recommendations (Home Office, 7 November 2005), may not be completed until 2010, depending on the strategic options chosen.

However, it is intended to publish the existing outline business case, or extracts relating to specific procurements, before then, as commercial sensitivity permits, but it is not presently possible to say exactly when this might be.

LD50 Test

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of acute lethal toxicity tests in 2004 involving the LD50 test carried out according to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development test guideline 401. [38839]

Andy Burnham: No acute lethal toxicity procedures recorded in the Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals 2004 (Cm 6713) involved LD50 tests carried out according to the former Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Test Guideline 401. Test Guideline 401 was deleted by the OECD on 20 December 2002. A copy of Cm 6713 is in the Library.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department has spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35639]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Costs are outlined in the following table.

	Gross (£)
2005-06	[1]163,804
2004-05	244,369
2003-04	250,547
2002-03	251,232
2001-02	[2]207,859
2000-01	[3]167,800
1999-2000	123,939
1998-99	125,127

[1] Up to 30 November 2005.

[2] The Home Office press office and the Prison Service press office merged in May 2001.

[3] The Home Office press office was expanded in 2000, following an external consultant's review of its staffing and operation in 1999, to better meet the demands of the media.

Mr. Peter Bolton

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the cost to public funds of the prosecution of Mr. Peter Bolton, former deputy clerk to the North Wales Police Authority. [36734]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office is responsible for allocating funding to police authorities but it is for them to decide along with the chief constable how these funds are deployed. The activities of police authorities are subject to scrutiny by the Audit Commission.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints were received regarding the recruitment process for National Criminal Intelligence Service posts at the regional office in Belfast advertised in autumn 2003; and whether changes have been implemented as a result. [38442]

Hazel Blears: Four complaints were received regarding the recruitment process for National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) posts at the regional office in Belfast advertised in autumn 2003.

Following a thorough review, NCIS procedures were revised to ensure all guaranteed interview scheme applicants who met the minimum published criteria would be interviewed.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what disability recruitment guidelines were applied in the recruitment process for National Criminal Intelligence Service posts at the regional office in Belfast advertised in autumn 2003. [38443]

Hazel Blears: The National Criminal Intelligence Service followed guidance provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland during the recruitment process in Belfast in autumn 2003.

Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions use has been made of the powers available to him under section 58(3)*(b)* of the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002; and if he will make a statement. [36820]

Mr. McNulty: Since April 2002, 8583 volunteers have returned to their country of origin under the Immigration and Nationality Department's Assisted Voluntary Return schemes. All of these volunteers are received by International Organisation for Migration (IOM) officials in their country of origin. All of them are entitled to receive assistance with their onward domestic transportation. All of the volunteers have received assistance in regard to expenses incurred by or on behalf of a voluntary leaver, or a member of his family or household, on or shortly after arrival in his new place of residence.

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use has been made of the powers available to him under sections 58 and 59 of the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 in relation to persons returned to *(a)* Angola and *(b)* the Congo. [36821]

Mr. McNulty: Under the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme, 78 asylum seekers or failed asylum seekers have returned to Angola, six to Congo (Brazzaville) and 20 to the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire).

Passports

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports have been reported *(a)* stolen and *(b)* lost (i) in each of the last three years and (ii) to date in 2005. [32308]

Andy Burnham: The numbers of passports reported as *(a)* lost or *(b)* stolen for the last three years are as follows:

	Combined total	*Lost*	*Stolen*	*Other*
2002	166,358			
2003	184,301			
2004	275,040	212,745	50,737	11,558
2005 (current)	262,645	211,112	42,220	10,313

The figures for 2002 and 2003 are based on applications for replacement passports, and may not accurately reflect all passports that were lost or stolen in those years. The figures for 2004 and 2005 have been collated from new arrangements, introduced from 8 December 2003, that more accurately record the numbers of passports reported to the UK Passport Service (UKPS) as lost or stolen. The figure for 2004 supersedes a figure released in a response to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Sarah Teather) on 18 October. "Other" includes passports reported as damaged or destroyed.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2319W, on passports, how many of those whose passport photographs were rejected were under five-years-old; and whether he plans to change the categories of rejection for the passport photographs of the under-fives. [35957]

Andy Burnham: During the period 12 September to 27 November 2005, 15,441 child passport applications were rejected due to photographic standards for children five and under.

On 21 November 2005, the UK Passport Service (UKPS) simplified its photograph standards for children aged five and under. It remains important that the photograph shows a clear image that is a true likeness of the child, with all facial features clearly visible. However, photographs of children five years and under will be accepted if they show the child smiling or frowning, with their mouth open, their eyes looking away from the camera, and reflection or glare on their glasses. Babies under one year do not need to have their eyes open.

Work is in progress to communicate these simplified requirements to customers. On 22 November 2005 a notice was added to the UKPS website regarding passport photograph standards.

Police

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the composition of newly established police authorities will be determined following the amalgamation of two or more police forces. [31513]

Hazel Blears: In order to effectively discharge their functions, we envisage strategic police authorities having no more than some 23 members (as in the case of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)).

To maintain democratic legitimacy, I would expect the majority of police authority members to be local councillors, as now. Councillor members will be selected by the constituent county and unitary councils in the police force area. As envisaged in the Policing White Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime' we will seek to broaden the skills and experience of police authority members by removing the separate category of magistrate members.

We will work with the Association of Police Authorities (APA) to determine a more streamlined method of appointing independent members. We would expect all police authority members to bring appropriate skills and competencies to the role to enable them to effectively discharge their responsibilities.

We will also strengthen accountability at a local Basic Command Unit (BCU)/Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) level so that local communities can effectively hold newly developed forces into account. One promising way of achieving this is through the development of local policing boards. The policing boards would be responsible for setting local policing priorities in consultation with communities and holding the BCU commander to account for the delivery of the policing plan for that area.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for his Department's view that there is a lack of co-operation between *(a)* Merseyside and Cheshire police forces and *(b)* the North Wales police force and the four police forces in Wales. [32907]

Hazel Blears: The consultation process is well under way and once the process has been completed we will carefully assess all options submitted to us and a decision will be made on the preferred option in the new year. As we are in the consultation phase and forces and authorities have not yet worked up business cases outlining their preferred options, we cannot comment on how police forces and authorities are co-operating. The Home Office in its guidance and subsequent correspondence on restructuring to forces/authorities has actively encouraged joint working, collaboration and data sharing on the restructuring programme.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has evaluated on the number of people who die as a consequence of police forces not attending an incident in time. [34496]

Hazel Blears: Although the Home Office has not evaluated any research specifically on the number of people who die as a consequence of police forces not attending an incident in time, it has used findings from the Metropolitan police's research: Multi-agency domestic violence murder reviews to inform the development of multi-agency reviews for domestic violence homicide which are to be established as part of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many internal communication systems are used by the police forces in the South West; how he would unify them in the event of an amalgamation; and what the cost could be. [35686]

Hazel Blears: As part of developing the options for change police forces and authorities are expected to submit worked up business cases including cost benefit analysis of IT systems. It is up to police forces and authorities to develop how systems will be unified and to calculate the associated costs. The unification will be further worked up in the implementation phase after final submissions from police authorities have been assessed.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there are per head of population in each police force; and if he will make a statement. [36489]

Hazel Blears: The data requested is available from the 'Police Service Strength publication as at 31 March 2005'. This report was published on 25 July 2005 and is available in the Library of the House and on:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1205.pdf

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many resignations there were from each police force in England and Wales for *(a)* medical and *(b)* other reasons in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04. [37564]

Hazel Blears: Figures collected by the Home Office on medical retirements and voluntary resignations by force are set out in the following table.

Police officers leaving due to medical retirement or voluntary resignation, by police force area[1].

	31 March 2003		*31 March 2004*	
Police force	*Medical retirements*	*Voluntary resignations*	*Medical retirements*	*Voluntary resignations*
Avon and Somerset	34	55	10	54
Bedfordshire	7	30	1	39
Cambridgeshire	8	27	4	22
Cheshire	27	11	15	24
Cleveland	18	1	11	19
Cumbria	7	9	4	12
Derbyshire	12	16	2	24
Devon and Cornwall	10	31	6	23
Dorset	3	19	9	19

Police officers leaving due to medical retirement or voluntary resignation, by police force area[1]

Police force	31 March 2003		31 March 2004	
	Medical retirements	Voluntary resignations	Medical retirements	Voluntary resignations
Durham	12	11	6	16
Essex	22	46	16	39
Gloucestershire	13	22	5	17
Greater Manchester	33	108	10	126
Hampshire	11	45	11	68
Hertfordshire	7	49	3	58
Humberside	10	34	2	28
Kent	21	54	9	64
Lancashire	..	..	13	39
Leicestershire	9	27	6	35
Lincolnshire	10	15	3	16
London, City of	7	19	8	7
Merseyside	51	28	25	36
Metropolitan Police	156	605	60	563
Norfolk	13	17	6	12
Northamptonshire	3	11	3	26
Northumbria	29	36	9	51
North Yorkshire	9	13	8	19
Nottinghamshire	34	43	12	15
South Yorkshire	13	45	12	47
Staffordshire	22	30	14	26
Suffolk	12	19	8	28
Surrey	12	35	10	34
Sussex	9	73	4	126
Thames Valley	29	82	17	73
Warwickshire	8	17	4	20
West Mercia	20	21	11	36
West Midlands	21	106	13	154
West Yorkshire	23	50	11	67
Wiltshire	13	34	2	19
Dyfed-Powys	11	11	7	6
Gwent	22	10	8	14
North Wales	16	19	6	45
South Wales	33	35	14	21
Total 43 forces	840	1,969	418	2,187

[1] This table contains headcount figures that have not been published.
[2] These figures are unavailable.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department issues to police forces relating to recruitment and promotion of minorities. [37725]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has not issued specific guidance on the promotion of minority groups. However, the "Breaking Through" Action Plan: Promoting Minority Ethnic Employment in the Police Service was launched by the Home Office in January 2004. In addition, we expect forces to monitor promotions in accordance with their equality employment monitoring duties.

Overall guidance in terms of recruitment procedures is issued as part of the National Recruitment Standards.

In terms of specific guidance to forces on the recruitment of ethnic minorities, we have published a 'Toolkit' for running positive action familiarisation events in July 2005. I will place a copy of this in the Library.

The Home Affairs Select Committee recently looked at whether the law should be changed to allow for positive discrimination. They concluded that the best way forward would be for the police service to work harder within the limits of current legislation through promotion and outreach activities and for the Home Office to explore whether, without changing the law, we could prioritise certain skills and knowledge relevant to policing needs which would have the effect of winning the confidence of communities and would also help to reduce crime and disorder.

We are looking into this with the intention of issuing guidance to forces in April 2006.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of officers in the Metropolitan Police carry radios capable of accessing the Airwave network. [37751]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time to an emergency call to the police was in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1997. [40245]

Hazel Blears: Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary (HMIC) collects target times for answering 999 calls and the percentage answered within that time at force level only. This data is published in HMICs annual report at http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/about-us/annual-reports.html

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether additional funding would be available from his Department to the Norfolk constabulary in the event of its merger with other forces. [38862]

Hazel Blears: We will be considering grant arrangements for police authorities in the light of changes to police authority boundaries and of the way the new larger authorities might operate.

I announced details of the provisional police funding settlement for 2006-07 and 2007-08 on 5 December. As part of overall support for policing, I am proposing to take account of prospective force amalgamations when allocating capital grant over the coming two years.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applicants to the police force in each of the last five years had *(a)* an upper second or better degree, *(b)* a lower second or lower degree and *(c)* no A-level qualifications. [27120]

Hazel Blears: Of the 5,801 applicants who were successful at the national assessment centre between 1 November 2004 and 30 September 2005:

	Number	*Percentage*
Post Graduates	178	3
Graduates	1,791	31
Educated to A-level Standard	2,039	35
Educated to GCSE Standard	1,697	29
No formal qualification	93	1.6

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the Staffordshire police force concerning the proposed merger of police forces in the area. [32039]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has not received any such representations from forces or authorities for force amalgamations. The review announced by the Home Secretary in September is still under way. Final proposals from forces and authorities will be submitted by 23 December 2005. The Home Secretary's written ministerial statement on the 11 November 2005 sets out some emerging options across England and Wales. However, ultimately it will be a matter for the police authorities to determine which options are included in their final submissions.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for his Department's view that police forces of fewer than 4,000 officers are *(a)* less qualified to deal with organised crime and *(b)* less efficient than large forces; and if he will make a statement. [32919]

Hazel Blears: The information is as follows:

(a) Forces with fewer than 4,000 officers generally do not have the capacity and capability to deal with level two crime including organised crime. Smaller forces can not usually create dedicated major incident teams to deal with organised crime. This is evidenced in work done by both Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary (HMIC) and independent experts.

(b) Creating strategic forces should ensure brigading of resources takes place, leading to savings and greater efficiency and effectiveness. Duplication of services such as fire arms team and dedicated murder investigation teams should be avoided. Larger forces should also be able to maintain their neighbourhood policing teams and avoid abstraction of officers to deal with major investigations or incidents elsewhere in the force area.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for his Department's view that police forces of fewer than 6,000 employees are less efficient than those with higher manning levels. [32920]

Hazel Blears: As part of Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary (HMIC) report work was done by independent experts who demonstrated that size is a major factor in determining whether a force can not only perform satisfactorily in protective services but also insulate against underperformance.

HMIC's analysis concluded there is clear and evident statistical data to demonstrate this. A minimum figure of between 4,000 and 5,000 could reasonably be expected to meet demand across the range of activities. The 4,000 figure was chosen as a starting point for restructuring. In light of the above forces with fewer than 6,000 staff simply do not have the critical mass to provide the necessary level of protective services.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of policing in Southend was in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how much of the cost was met from *(a)* council tax and *(b)* central Government. [37553]

Hazel Blears: The chief constable of Essex police is responsible for the operational management of the force. I will ensure that he receives a copy of the question and replies to you directly.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time was for a disclosure application to be processed by the Metropolitan Police in the last year for which figures are available; and how many disclosure applications are waiting to be processed by the Metropolitan Police. [31792]

Hazel Blears: The average time taken by the Metropolitan Police Service to process a Disclosure application for the year November 2004 to October 2005 was 33.57 days. By 28 November 2005 the number of applications waiting to be processed had dropped to 79,575 applications. The Metropolitan Police have made a number of changes to their IT systems recently which has led to significant and ongoing improvements in the time they are taking to deal with Disclosures referred to them by the Criminal Records Bureau.

Preventing Extremism Together

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* role, *(b)* remit and *(c)* structure the Preventing Extremism Together working groups will have following the submission of their reports. [34583]

Paul Goggins: The Preventing Extremism Together working groups were disbanded after their final report was published in November.

Prison/Resorative Justice

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the effectiveness of *(a)* prison and *(b)* restorative justice is measured; and if he will make a statement. [35445]

Fiona Mactaggart: The effectiveness of prison is subject to measurement by two public service agreement (PSA) targets. The first target is to maintain the level of escapes from prison and prison escorts to less than 0.17 percent. of the prison population and to ensure no escapes of category A prisoners.The most recent data show a rate of 0.025 percent. of the prison population. There has been no escape of a category A prisoner since 1995.

The second PSA target is to reduce the re-offending of offenders discharged from prison or starting community sentences by 5 percent., from a 2000 baseline. This is to be achieved by 2006. The most recent data are for adult offenders discharged from prison or starting a community sentence in 2001 and show a reduction of -1.8 percent. against the target. Owing to the administrative resources involved, these results are based on a sample of offenders from the first quarter of the calendar year.

The most common measure of the effectiveness of restorative justice (RJ) is re-offending rates (measured through reconviction rates, or sometimes re-arrest or re-sanctioning rates) and victim and offender satisfaction. Final results (including reconviction rates) from a large scale evaluation of three RJ schemes will be available in 2007.

Prisons

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the prison population are serving their first custodial sentence. [34423]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the proportion of the prison population serving their first custodial sentence is not routinely collated. The Social Exclusion Unit's 2002 report 'Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners' reported some results from internal Home Office research. This indicated that, in 1999, one third of adult male prisoners were serving their first custodial sentence.

Probation Services

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether faith-based organisations will be able to secure contracts for the end-to-end management of offenders as part of his proposals for reform of the probation service. [37788]

Fiona Mactaggart: Changes to the way in which probation services are provided will result in regional offender managers (ROMs) commissioning services from probation boards from April 2006. As this process develops, and subject to legislation, it is expected that ROMs will commission correctional services from a range of public, private and voluntary and community sector providers.

As part of this process different organisations can seek to provide services, including offender management services. Decisions in every case will be made on merit—on who offers the best service for the money—through impartial and objective evaluation successful bids will need to comply with the terms of the contract.

Quad Bikes

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the number of quad bikes available to police forces to tackle criminal and antisocial behaviour. [38980]

Hazel Blears: Management of resources, including decisions on procurement of vehicles, are operational matters for the police authority and chief officer.

Racial Hatred

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he issues to police forces on dealing with incidents of incitement of racial hatred, with particular reference to cases involving the display of the St. George flag. [37896]

Hazel Blears: While it is not of itself unlawful to display any flag there are legislative powers to deal with those who cross the line from legitimate debate into inciting violence. A Code of Practice on the reporting and recording of racist incidents was issued in 2000. A racist crime and harassment toolkit was published in 2005.

Religious Hatred

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to collect centrally statistics on cases of religious hatred. [39525]

Paul Goggins: Incitement to religious hatred is not currently a criminal offence. Should it become so, the number of prosecutions and convictions would be centrally collected.

Rural Crime

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking *(a)* to tackle rural crime and *(b)* to improve detection rates in rural areas. [38172]

Hazel Blears: Effective and responsive policing at neighbourhood level, as well as robust partnership working, are both essential parts of our strategy to tackle crime and to sustain the confidence and trust of the public in all parts of the country.

We introduced the rural policing fund in 2000–01 specifically to enhance the visibility and accessibility of policing in rural areas. 31 police authorities with the most widespread populations have benefited from this additional funding. The annual allocation is £30 million. As part of the provisional police funding settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08, we have decided to consolidate four specific grants, including the rural policing fund, into a single provision for each police authority to give authorities more control over how this money may be used. We do not intend to abolish or reduce rural grant allocations. Each authority will receive its current level of funding from the four grants.

We have made a commitment that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales, rural as well as urban, will benefit from dedicated neighbourhood policing teams. These will be led by Police officers and involve special constables, community support officers, volunteers and neighbourhood wardens, amongst others.

The Government acknowledges the need to improve sanction detection rates across all police forces. For that reason, a major drive has been under way since last summer with the aim of achieving a significant increase in sanction detection rates. This includes a range of operational improvements intended to build the investigative capability of the police service, together with some targeted support for forces with performance concerns.

Secure Establishments

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the ratio of staff to residents is in *(a)* Home Office secure establishments, *(b)* secure training centres and *(c)* local authority secure accommodation. [33688]

Fiona Mactaggart: In Prison Service juvenile young offender institutions, for each member of staff the number of young people varies between 0.4 and 1.4. (These figures include all staff working in the establishment. Where a juvenile establishment shares a site with a young offenders institute for 18–20 year olds, the ratio is based on the combined figures for both staff and inmates.)

In secure training centres, the ratio of staff directly supervising the young people is: one member of staff to between 2.5 and 3.5 children. In addition, there are custody officers on site to cover admissions, movements and supervision of visits.

In local authority secure children's homes, the ratio of staff directly supervising the young people is: one member of staff to between 1.3 and two children.

Serious Organised Crime and Police Act

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will issue guidance on lone protesters in relation to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act; and if he will make a statement. [38871]

Paul Goggins: No. The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act is clear. Within a public place in the designated area, any person who organises a demonstration, or takes part in a demonstration or carries on a demonstration by himself, is guilty of an offence if authorisation for the demonstration has not been given by the Commissioner.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the number of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) will be increased; and if he will establish a SARC in Devon. [38551]

Hazel Blears: There are currently 13 Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) in England and Wales. Additionally, three new SARCs, in Calderdale, Kirklees and Cleveland will be opening in the new year with the support of funding from the Home Office Victims' Fund. We have also made offers of a further three grants, which if accepted, will result in another three SARCs in the next year.

The decision to establish a SARC in a particular area must be made locally as they are funded primarily by partnerships between the local police, health services and the voluntary sector. National Service Guidelines on Developing SARCs, published jointly by the Home Office and Department of Health in 2005 strongly recommend the development of SARCs across England and Wales.

Steven Shingler

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will examine the case of the hon. Member for Shrewsbury's constituent, Mr. Steven Shingler, with a view to allowing Mr. Shingler's Russian wife to join him in the UK. [34582]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

I regret that I cannot provide this information as it is not our practice to disclose details of individual entry clearance cases in a public forum. However, my noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, will write to the hon. Member in his capacity of Minister with responsibility for UK Visas about the case shortly.

Stun Guns

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of violence involving the use of stun guns there were in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* the South West in each year since 1997. [36668]

Hazel Blears: Statistics for crimes involving stun guns have only been collected separately since April 2004. Full data for 2004–05 is not yet available but will be published in 'Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004–05', in January 2006.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire, *(d)* Greater London and *(e)* England and Wales he has authorised to have stun guns. [37539]

Hazel Blears: Stun guns are prohibited weapons and can only be possessed with the authority of the Secretary of State under section five of the Firearms Act 1968. Only one authority to possess a stun gun has been issued in England and Wales.

In addition, two authorities have been issued for lasers in England and Wales for supply to the police only. The Taser is deployed in 34 police forces in England and Wales, including the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police, Essex Police and the Hertfordshire Constabulary. The Taser is limited to use by Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs), and in situations where a firearms authority has been given.

It is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police to determine the number of authorised firearms officers in their force. During 2004–05, the

Metropolitan Police Service had 2,134 Authorised Firearms Officers, City of London 89, Essex 202, and Hertfordshire 53.

Tackling Drugs, Changing Lives

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of the tackling drugs, changing lives conference held between 30 November and 1 December. [38221]

Paul Goggins: The tackling drugs changing lives national conference, which was held over two days, was free to delegates, over a 1,000 of whom attended. The event represented a major milestone in the tackling drugs changing lives campaign, which is a ministerial-led programme supporting direct engagement with key stakeholders and partners responsible for delivering the drug strategy across the country.

The cost to the Home Office of this key event was £311,850.89, a cost per delegate of £304.54.

Terrorism Bill

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions *(a)* before and *(b)* after 26 October on which (i) he and (ii) his representatives contacted Kent Police about the Terrorism Bill; and what form that contact took. [37594]

Hazel Blears: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to a question from the hon. Member for Lancaster and Wyre (Mr. Wallace) on 17 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1436W. Beyond the contact with Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) referred to in that answer, there has been no contact with Kent police about the Terrorism Bill.

UK Jurisdiction

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether passengers on aircraft which land for a period, but who do not disembark at UK airports, fall within UK jurisdiction for the period they are on UK soil. [35099]

Mr. McNulty: Passengers who remain on board a plane that lands on UK soil, for example to refuel, are regarded as airside transit passengers. Other than the requirement for certain nationalities to hold a direct airside transit visa, passengers are not normally subject to any immigration control until they seek leave to enter the UK.

An immigration officer may examine anyone who has arrived in the UK, including transit passengers not seeking leave to enter the UK.

In England and Wales, a constable may arrest a person without a warrant under section 24 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. Section 17 provides a constable with the power to enter and search any premises for the purpose of arresting a person for an arrestable offence. An aircraft falls within the definition of premises.

Similar provisions exist in Northern Ireland under Article 26 and Article 18 of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

In Scotland, a constable may detain a person without a warrant under section 14 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 where he has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a person has committed or is committing an offence punishable by imprisonment. Section 14 does not contain any power to enter and search premises prior to detention without a warrant. If the police are satisfied that there is evidence that a person or persons have committed a crime, they can arrest them without warrant at common law where that is necessary in the interests of justice.

Unsolved Murders

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1784W, on unsolved murders, if he will make a statement on the increase in unsolved murders since 2000-01. [37817]

Hazel Blears: The data previously provided referred to the position as at 22 October 2004, when the data collection had been closed in preparation for the annual publication 'Crime in England and Wales 2003-04: Supplementary Volume: Homicide and Gun Crime'. Subsequent court hearings or other information received will change both the number of deaths recorded as homicides, and the number of these that are unsolved, at a particular time. The number of unsolved homicides each year since 2000-01 should not, therefore, be considered definitive as they are likely to decrease as time elapses.

US Bases (Police Authority)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what authority UK police forces have in United States military bases situated in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [36910]

Hazel Blears: Police in England and Wales have the authority to exercise their constabulary powers anywhere within the borders of England and Wales. This applies to police in Scotland and Northern Ireland and their respective borders.

Under Article VII of the Agreement regarding the Status of Forces of the parties to the North Atlantic Treaty (SOFA), United States Forces stationed in the United Kingdom have the right to police the premises which they occupy and may take all appropriate measures to ensure the maintenance of order and security on such premises. Where there are no United States policing and security forces present or a significant threat exists from demonstrator activity, the United States Forces have agreed that the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) can undertake the policing task on their behalf.

The MDP is a statutory British Police Force with constabulary powers as defined in the MDP Act 1987, as amended by the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. Although the MDP can exercise these constabulary powers, incidents solely involving United States Forces personnel and associated civilians will normally be handled by the United States authorities in accordance with SOFA.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

0870 Numbers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 443W, on 0870 numbers, what contractual arrangements her Department has for the provision of the non-profit making 0870 lines. [37640]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills normally obtains non profit making 0870 lines from its current telephone service provider as a published service offering within that contract. The exception to that policy is where advanced notification has been provided of an impending Machinery of Government change and, in these cases, non profit making 0870 numbers are obtained outside of the normal contractual arrangements in order to ease transition to the new Department.

Ability Grouping

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools found to be inadequate by Ofsted in 2004–05 were found not to be making appropriate use of ability grouping. [39514]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not available.

Access Arrangements

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what account is taken by the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service of Child Support Agency decisions on payment when advising the courts on access arrangements to the non-resident parent in any particular case. [38886]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS). Anthony Douglas, the CAFCASS chief executive, will write to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Letter from Anthony Douglas, dated 21 December 2005:

I am writing to you in response to the above Parliamentary Question that you put to the Secretary of State and Education and Skills on 20 December 2005.

It is my responsibility, as CAFCASS Chief Executive, to reply to this particular Parliamentary Question.

Recommendations to the courts are based entirely on the best interests of the child and promoting good quality, and ensuring contact with the non-resident parent where it is safe to do so. Decisions made relating to financial payments would only be considered if they had a direct bearing on the welfare of the child.

I would like to add that CAFCASS is committed to providing a quality service to all its users. CAFCASS believes that the welfare of the child is paramount and any decisions made about a child's future must reflect this principle.

Adult Education (Kent)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funds have been made available in 2005–06 for adult education courses in Kent; and what percentage change this represents over the previous year. [28594]

Bill Rammell: The Government's Skills Strategy, reaffirmed in the White Paper published on the 22 March 2005, sets clear priorities for public funding to support the drive to ensure that employers have the skills they need to be successful, and individuals have the skills they need to be employable and personally fulfilled. Funding for further education (FE) increased by 4.4 per cent. in 2005/06. Funding for non-vocational learning opportunities for adults, delivered mainly through local authority adult education services, has also increased. In 2004/05 we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06.

This funding will enable colleges and other providers to deliver a wide range of learning opportunities to meet the needs of adults in local communities but those who are able to do so will need to pay higher fees in the future. I set out the Government's priorities for the learning and skills sector and the impact on funding in 2006–07 and 2007–08 on the 21 October 2005 and full details can be found in 'Priorities for Success' on the LSC's website.

Total further education funding allocated by the LSC to colleges and other providers in Kent is £107.67 million in 2005/06-up 5 per cent. on 2004/05. Allocations for individual colleges and providers are available on the LSC's website: www.lsc.gov.uk. The 2005/06 funding allocations for Personal & Community Development Learning (formerly Adult & Community Learning) have been made to providers but have not yet been published by the LSC.

My Department does not hold funding figures for college and other providers in Kent. As the level of funding allocations in local areas relates to the LSC's operational responsibilities, Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with further details about Kent's 2005/06 funding. A copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 20 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people in Gravesham have been granted an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of October 2005, 7,872 young people in the Kent Local Education Authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far During the academic year 2004/05, 5,317 young people in the Kent Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or Christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Adult Guidance Provision

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many adult guidance providers are running at a loss. [25086]

Phil Hope: Information, advice and guidance services on learning and work for adults are delivered by the Learning and Skills Council through an integrated

information and advice service comprising the national learn direct telephone and on-line advice service, and 47 local next step information and advice providers.

Operational matters relating to the performance of these providers are a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom the LSC's chief executive has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 16 November 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in which you asked how many adult guidance providers are running at a loss. Mr Phil Hope referred your question to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for a response to be sent to you directly.

Adult guidance providers in England are funded through a variety of public and private income streams. It is therefore impossible to ascertain how many operate at a loss.

However, as part of the LSC procurement process for the provision of adult information, advice and guidance services—delivered under the brand name 'nextstep'—we undertake a financial risk assessment of potential contractors to ensure financial viability.

The settlement from the 2004 Spending Review in 2004–05 enabled the LSC to invest 34,000,000 in the delivery of information and advice services. There are currently 35 'nextstep'—contractors who subcontract information and advice services to a further 600 organisations (predominantly from the voluntary and community sector).

The majority of these providers also access other public funds such as Jobcentre Plus subcontracted provision and European Social funds in addition to private contracts from employers and individuals.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she received from business groups on the decision to merge the adult learning inspectorate with Ofsted. [40431]

Jacqui Smith: A number of business organisations, including the Confederation of British Industry, the Institute of Directors and the British Chambers of Commerce, responded to the consultation "A Single Inspectorate for Children and Learners". As part of the consultation Tri-Energy Consulting facilitated for the Department [five] focus group discussions on the consultation questions relating to the adult learning inspectorate. They concluded that

"ultimately, respondents were not attached to ALI per se, but to what they felt ALI offered. If this could be offered in a different way-improved upon, even-they would generally be happy."

Agency Staff

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which she has responsibility in *(a)* total and *(b)* each region and *(c)* London in 2004–05. [35934]

Maria Eagle: The total number of staff employed by Executive NDPBs sponsored by my Department in 2004–05 was 10,671. Numbers for each nation of the UK and English region, including Greater London are listed as follows:

UK	*Number*
England	9,338
Scotland	1,120
Wales[1]	206
Northern Ireland	7
England	
Greater London	1,803
South West	827
South East	733
North West	808
North East	460
West Midlands	1,984
East Midlands	748
East	1,213
Yorkshire and Humberside	762

[1] Under the Children Act 2004, the Children And Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) function in Wales was devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government on 1 April 2005.

Broadcast and Print Media Analysis

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the use of broadcast and print media analysis. [36040]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not have a policy on the use of broadcast and print media analysis.

Building Schools for the Future

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to schools in Brent under the Building Schools for the Future programme; and if she will make a statement. [40390]

Jacqui Smith: Building Schools for the Future (BSF) aims to renew all secondary schools in England in 15 waves of investment starting from this year. Brent has been informed that it may expect to start in the programme in waves seven to nine. Prioritisation in BSF is based on the relative educational and social needs of geographical groups of schools proposed by the authority; which in the case of Brent is for a single project for all its secondary schools. Funding is not allocated until authorities start in the programme, and details of their projects, including a strong educational vision which supports Government priorities, are agreed.

Child Protection Offences

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria social services use in deciding whether to refer alleged child protection offences to the police for investigation. [40155]

Maria Eagle: The Government's inter-agency guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" states that whenever the social services department encounters or has a case referred to it which constitutes, or may constitute, a criminal offence against a child, it should always inform the police at the earliest opportunity. This will enable both agencies to consider jointly how to proceed in the best interests of the child.

Children with Disabilities

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding was allocated for the provision of after school care for children with disabilities in each London borough in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [39059]

Beverley Hughes: We are making funding available to all local authorities and schools up to 2008 to support them in setting up and embedding extended services in mainstream and special schools. The Government do not specify how much of this funding should be spent on disabled children. It will be for individual local authorities, in discussion with all schools in their area, to take a strategic approach to developing access to after school care through schools.

The Extended Schools prospectus issued in June 2005 makes it clear that children with disabilities or special educational needs must be able to access all new services, and schools have a responsibility to ensure this happens. The needs of children in particular schools will vary. Schools will need to work closely with parents to ensure that services are shaped around the needs of children and the wider community.

Class Sizes

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children aged between 11 and 16 years are taught in classes with a pupil-teacher ratio of more than one teacher to *(a)* 12, *(b)* 15 and *(c)* 18 pupils. [39226]

Jacqui Smith: Pupil-teacher ratios are not available at class level.

In January 2005 the within school pupil-teacher ratio for maintained secondary schools was 16.7.

Information on the number of pupils in secondary schools, in classes taught by one teacher, by class size is shown as follows.

Maintained secondary schools[1,2]: classes as taught by one teacher[3]: January 2005

England

	Taught by one teacher	
	Number of classes	*Number of pupils*
Classes of size:		
One to12	19,997	156,767
13 to 15	10,077	141,705
16 to 18	13,008	221,974
19 plus	100,413	2,587,573
Total	143,495	3,108,019

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes secondary schools with a sixth form.
[3] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
Source:
Annual School Census

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children aged between five and 11 years are taught in classes in state run schools with a size of more than *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25 and *(c)* 28. [39250]

Jacqui Smith: The age of individual pupils in classes is not collected centrally. The available information is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1] classes as taught by one teacher[2]—January 2005

England

	Taught by 1 teacher							
	Key Stage 1[3,4]				*Key Stage 2*			
	Maintained primary		*Maintained secondary*		*Maintained primary*		*Maintained secondary*	
	Number of classes	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Number of pupils*
Classes of size								
1 to 20	7,509	126,157	2	40	5,718	90,240	1	16
21 to 25	15,048	350,486	0	0	15,127	355,002	1	23
26 to 28	13,906	376,462	0	0	17,956	486,472	0	0
29 to 30	18,705	554,968	0	0	19,343	572,352	0	0
31 +	695	22,077	1	34	15,340	498,546	1	31
Total	55,863	1,430,150	3	74	73,484	2,002,612	3	70

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[3] Includes reception classes.
[4] Key Stage 1 classes of 31 or more may contain pupils who have been admitted as exceptions.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Compensation Claims

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 10 most frequent types of compensation claims made against the education system since 1997. [39881]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect this information.

Consultants

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what change there has been in the use of consultants since the National Audit Office and Department for Education and Skills Internal Audit Report compiled in March entitled Engagement and Use of Consultants in the DfES. [39388]

Maria Eagle: Since the issue of the joint Internal Audit/National Audit Office report a range of steps have been taken to enhance the use and monitoring of consultants. These focus mostly on ensuring that managers are better aware of and comply more fully with best practice, including that sound and properly approved business cases are in place and contracts are robustly managed and evaluated. A Good Practice Guide has been produced, a copy of which is in the House of Commons Library. We are also introducing better arrangements to collect information on

consultants, what they are doing, the classification of costs and the implementation of consultants' recommendations.

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the trade union side in her Department will receive a copy of the National Audit Office and Department for Education and Skills Internal Audit Report compiled in March 2005, entitled Engagement and Use of Consultants in the DfES. [39392]

Maria Eagle: The Department's Trade Union Side are aware that Internal Audit Reports are produced for internal management purposes and are not published. However, emerging findings form the Report were shared with the Trade Union Side in December 2004. An outcome of the report was the publication of a Good Practice Guide on the Engagement and Use of Consultants in the Department. This guidance has been welcomed by the Trade Union Side and is available to all staff via the Department's intranet. A copy of this guide has been placed in the House Library.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood dated 26 October regarding Aston Manor School, Birmingham. [36994]

Jacqui Smith: I responded to this letter on 21 December.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) her Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which her Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by her Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40146]

Maria Eagle: The information is as follows:

Land and buildings sold by DfES since 7 May 1997

Property	*Date of disposal*	*Disposal value (£)*
Swindon Skillcentre	1 August 1997	1,435,850
Letchworth Skillcentre	1 October 1998	1,500,000
East Lane House Runcorn	6 May 2003	1,300,000
Total		4,235,850

All of the receipts were remitted to Treasury as Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39091]

Maria Eagle: My Department's expenditure on advertising for the last five years is set out as follows:

	Advertising spend (£ million)
1997–98	7.5
1998–99	10.0
1999–2000	11.9
2000–01	23.9
2001–02	16.6
2002–03	11.3
2003–04	16.9
2004–05	11.8
2005–06 (Spend to date)	2.4

All expenditure is exclusive of VAT. It is only possible at disproportionate cost to provide detail of expenditure on advertising for non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies or dependent statutory bodies.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by her Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39143]

Maria Eagle: The information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent by her Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the United Kingdom, including London. [37464]

Bill Rammell: There is no central record of taxi usage and an assessment of the staff time and associated costs could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the publications from her Department which have been sent to teachers during 2005. [39910]

Jacqui Smith: The Department ceased sending publications automatically to schools in England on a phased basis between April and December 2004. Discussions with Head teachers and detailed research showed that schools wanted to be able to choose the printed publications they needed, when they needed them, and to be able to order multiple copies.

We have given schools this choice by introducing an online ordering system which enables schools to choose whether to download electronic copies or order the paper based publications they need at the right time for them and in the multiples they require. This system is linked directly to the fulfilment service and an existing telephone ordering line. A fortnightly email service to schools informs them of new and important publications.

This has resulted in schools being able to order a wider variety of publications from the Department, putting schools in direct control of what they receive, when they receive it.

Departmental Report

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 940W, on the departmental report, how much funding was received by each of the programmes aggregated under other miscellaneous programmes in table 12.2 of her Department's 2005 departmental report. [38687]

Bill Rammell: The amount of funding allocated in 2005-06 to each programme aggregated under other miscellaneous programmes in table 12.2 of the Department for Education and Skills 2005 departmental report is shown as follows:

	2005-06 plans (£000)
Schools	
Physical Education and Sport	105,000
City Technology Colleges	82,600
Targeted Improvement Grant Excellence in Cities	18,800
School Enterprise Initiative	61,100
Education Action Zones	32,100
Key Stage Central	53,000
Other programmes to Support Secondary Education	14,000
Teaching and Learning: Gifted and Talented Pupils	18,700
Modern Foreign Languages	36,400
Inclusion Programmes (including Behaviour and Aim Higher)	14,600
Music and Ballet Scheme	18,300
British Education Communications and Technology Agency	12,000
Premature Retirement Compensation for Teachers in Voluntary Colleges	11,500
Innovations Fund	10,000
Teachers Pensions—Contractual Costs	9,100
Licensing for School Activities	8,700
School Performance and Accountability—Assessment team	6,400
Assisted Places Scheme	2,500
Research on School Performance	2,500
Energy Savings Trust and Learning Through Landscapes	500
ICT Development and Evaluation	2,000
Teachers' Medical Fees	1,000
Total	520,800
Higher Education	
Student Support Contingency Reserve	132,800
Aim Higher	56,000
Foundation Degree Marketing	18,700
European University—Initiative Subscription	2,800
Europe International Services	1,000
College of Europe Bologna Centre	300
European University Institute Bursaries	300
Student Loans Debt Sale Adjustment[1]	-6,400
Total	205,500
Support for Children, Young People and Families	
Extended Schools	75,000
Vulnerable Children Grant	39,400
Parenting Fund and Activities Supporting Parenting	28,800
Family Fund Trust	22,800
Youth Related Activities	19,800
Special Education Needs including support for Early Years, Communications Aid Project, Disability Tribunal and Non-maintained Special Schools	31,600
Change Fund	14,600
Teenage Pregnancy	12,000
Information Sharing and Assessment	11,800
Disabled Access: Youth Service	8,000
Communication Unit	7,900
Local Authority Capacity and Intervention	6,000
DirectGov	4,700
Section 64 Grant to Voluntary Sector	4,200
Children's Commissioner	3,000
Publicity	3,000
Participation Fund	2,500
Adoption Services	2,000
Invest to Save Funded Children's Agenda Programmes	1,700
Child Contract Centres	1,700
Child Protection Co-ordinators	1,300
Quality Protects Regional Development Fund	1,300
Total	303,100
Further Education, Adult Learning, Skills and Lifelong Learning	
FE Teach Learn Train Bursary	95,900
Student Support	38,000
International Education Programmes	20,300
International Labour Organisation Subscription	9,100
Management Information Across Partners	2,800
Bridging Allowance for 16 to 19-year-olds	1,300
Total	167,800
Activities to Support all Functions	
E-portals	1,400

[1] This represents a gain resulting from an adjustment in the calculation of the student loans debt.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 478W and column 321W, on departmental staff, how much was spent by the Learning and Skills Council on the development of basic skills *(a)* within her Department and *(b)* in all Government Departments in the last year for which figures are available. [36028]

Bill Rammell: Improving the skills of workers who are delivering public services is a key priority for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and they secure basic skills provision through a range of sources, including further education colleges, to meet local needs. As the information requested is of an operational nature Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with further information. A copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 21 December 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, where you asked how much was spent by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) on the development of basic skills a) within her Department and b) within Government departments generally, in the last year for which figures are available. The Parliamentary Question was referred to the LSC by Bill Rammell for me to write to you with further information.

The LSC funds colleges and other education and training providers to provide basic skills training to individuals and employers. Whilst the Council has a strategic interest in the total numbers of individuals undertaking basic skills training, we do not routinely collect data on the employers of individual learners. Therefore the Council has no data on any provision of basic skills training to individuals working within government departments (including the Department for Education and Skills). In addition the Council has no agreement for direct funding of basic skills provision within government departments (including the Department for Education and Skills). Neither are we aware of any direct agreement between any of our funded providers and government departments (including the Department for Education and Skills) for the provision of basic skills.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many civil servants in her Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40292]

Maria Eagle: My Department does not monitor the number of staff who work from home centrally and the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, within the newly launched 10 point plan "Delivering a Diverse Civil Service" there is senior leadership commitment to work life balance and all senior civil service (SCS) and feeder grade posts should be available on a flexible working pattern basis unless robust and objective justification is provided.

Disabled Workers

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to expand skills training for disabled workers in Coventry; and if she will make a statement. [29331]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* More people than ever before with self-declared learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now engaged in LSC funded education and training with 579,000 learners across the post-16 sector in 2003–04 at a total cost of around £1.3 billion. We want to work closely with the LSC to continue to break down the barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing quality training. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 places a statutory duty on the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial groups, men and women, and between disabled and non-disabled. To support that work, the LSC has introduced Equality and Diversity Impact Measures as a planning tool to promote greater equality of opportunity in both fair access to and outcomes from publicly-funded training.

Earlier this year, in our White Paper "Skills Getting on in business, getting on at work" we outlined how the LSC is providing capital funding to support colleges and training providers in making the necessary changes to their accommodation, in order to improve access for disabled learners.

However, responsibility for the planning and funding of skills training in Coventry, including skills for people with disabilities, is the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with further information. A copy of his letter has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 December 2005:

I am writing to you to follow up the Secretary of Stated answer to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding plans to expand training for disabled workers in Coventry.

I know that you have recently met again with Mike Bell, the Executive Director for Coventry and Warwickshire to discuss our plans for transforming the LSC. I believe you agreed to meet with Mike after Christmas for a further update on this topic but I know he will be happy to meet with you sooner if you want further details on our plans for provision for learners with disabilities in Coventry and across the West Midlands.

I am enclosing a copy of the Strategic Review the Secretary of State referred to in her written answer to your question. This was carried out by Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council earlier this year and is now being implemented. Mike and his colleagues will be happy to discuss the detail with you.

I would, however, like to draw your attention to a few points that might help inform a local meeting.

We have increased our overall budget for learners with learning needs and disabilities from £138 million to £157 million for 2006–2007 and this will increase again to £181 million in 2007–2008, rises of 14% and 15% year on year from 2005. These rises are significantly greater than the overall increase in our budget over the same period, which increases by 3% and 5%.

We are making this additional investment in response to the national review of support for learners with disabilities carried out for us by Peter Little. While the review is still out for consultation and we will need to agree nationally how the LSC's expenditure on learning is matched by what other agencies pay for by way of social and domestic support, we acknowledge that our own contribution must rise. This is because the overall numbers of learners with disabilities are rising as medical advances continue.

At a time when numbers of young people are falling and 80% of the workforce of 2010 is already in the labour market we regard it as essential that the aspirations and abilities of all learners are supported and developed. Budgets will shortly be allocated to regions and local LSC's, which will then be able to plan support for next year. Coventry and Warwickshire's local review will be of great help to them in allocating resources appropriately.

We want to get the best support for learners with disabilities by making better use of specialist provision across regions. Mike is leading on this work in the West Midlands and has already begun a review in partnership with the Royal National Institute for the Blind to look at how we better support this particular group of learners. The same approach will apply to a wider review of all specialist support.

We are also working with MIND to appoint specialist coordinators to help us work with learners with mental health problems, which will also improve our ability to meet their needs.

Coventry and Warwickshire LSC chairs the Employment sub-group of the Coventry Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. This group includes representatives from Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, Social Services, Mencap and Henley College and has developed a strategy to improve access to employment for people with learning disabilities.

The local LSC is also working as part of the newly-formed Children and Young People's Partnership for Coventry to improve progression for younger learners with disabilities into adulthood and employment.

I will ask Mike to contact you to as soon as possible arrange a meeting to discuss both these issues, and the detail of your question regarding the effectiveness of vocational education.

Mike will give me feedback once he has met with you, but if you would like any further information before or after your meeting please do contact me.

Drinking Water

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what measures her Department is taking to improve the access of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school students to fresh drinking water; [39527]

(2) what guidance her Department issues to local authorities regarding the provision of drinking water facilities in *(a)* new build schools and *(b)* refurbished schools. [39529]

Jacqui Smith: The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 apply to all existing and new schools maintained by a local education authority: that is, to nursery, community, community special, foundation, foundation special and voluntary schools, and to pupil referral units. These require that a school shall have a wholesome supply of water for domestic purposes,

including a supply of drinking water. The Regulations do not specify how drinking water should be provided for pupils. However, in our guidance note "Standards for School Premises" (DFEE 0029/2000), we say that those responsible should consider the pattern of demand within schools, which can be concentrated within quite short breaks.

We give further advice on drinking water supplies in Building Bulletin 87, "Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools" (2nd Edition Version 1-May 2003). This gives technical guidance, but also makes it clear that adequate supplies of wholesome drinking water should be accessible to staff and pupils throughout the school day. In addition, it states that all water outlets should be labelled as "Drinking" or "Not for Drinking".

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make it her policy to ask each primary and secondary school to draw up a school hydration policy, setting out the measures it will take to improve access to fresh drinking water in the school, promote water awareness amongst students and encourage sustainable use of water resources. [39528]

Jacqui Smith: We are aware of the importance of children drinking water during the school day and the benefits that it brings. The interactive Food in Schools Toolkit, published jointly by Department of Health and DfES, provides a wide range of guidance, resources and interactive tools to inspire and support schools in taking a whole school approach to healthy eating and drinking, including water provision. The 'Water Provision' guidance supports schools in reviewing and improving current provision and in promoting water consumption.

The Cross Departmental "Healthy Living Blueprint", issued to all schools, brings together all government advice and examples of best practice about healthy eating and drinking in schools. It provides schools with advice on how to improve children's approach to food and drink and exercise, and shows how developing whole school approaches can help bring about significant improvements to the health of children.

Healthy School Lunches guidance, published by the DfES, contains the Secretary of State's expectation that drinking water should be available to all pupils every day, free of charge. This view is mirrored in the 'Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools', which states that,

> "all pupils should have access to drinking water at all times at a number of points around the school, preferably not from taps in the toilets. Pupils should be permitted to carry water with them and consumption encouraged both in class and during break and lunch time".

The School Meals Review Panel (SMRP) made a reference to drinking water in recommendation 7 of their report-Turning the Tables: "There should be easy access to free, fresh, chilled drinking water throughout the school day (paragraph 2.32)". The consultation closed on 31 December 2005 and officials are now collating the responses.

It is the responsibility of headteachers and school's governing bodies to decide when water should be made available. We consider that they are best placed to make these decisions in their role of having responsibility of the day to day running of the school and with their knowledge of the individual circumstances of their pupils.

Education Model (Sweden)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has commissioned into the Swedish education model. [37782]

Bill Rammell: The Department, alongside education authorities in Sweden and other member countries of the OECD and the EU, commissions regular international studies of educational attainment from several multilateral research bodies. The picture of the Swedish education system's performance that emerges is mainly strong. Particular strengths are in primary-age reading and in adult literacy; for both, Sweden came first in international studies. For literacy among secondary school pupils Sweden does well but is not one of the leaders, and mathematics performance is average by OECD standards.

From time to time the Department commissions its own studies of education in other countries, covering aspects of the Swedish model. Because of its strong adult education tradition, Sweden has been chosen as one of the exemplar countries for a study entitled "International Comparisons in Further Education", now under way and due to report by mid-February 2006.

It is not possible to ascribe Sweden's success for certain to the nature of its education system. The Swedish model is broadly similar to that of other Nordic countries, at least as regards schools: start of compulsory education at age 7; all-through schools to age 15; pupil testing to standards determined at school rather than national level; and a high degree of decentralisation across the entire system. Swedish and Finnish performance is consistently strong, while Denmark and Norway with similar systems have mixed results.

Educational Psychologists

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of educational psychologists in English schools have a doctorate in psychology. [39505]

Maria Eagle: This information is not collected centrally.

Educational Trips

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to assist families on low incomes, including those above the income support threshold, with the cost of educational trips. [40366]

Jacqui Smith: The consultation on the education outside the classroom manifesto, which endorses all pupils having the opportunity for high quality out-of-classroom educational experiences, will finish at the end

of January 2006. The ten working groups will make proposals for action early next year. No decisions have yet been made on assistance for families on low incomes.

Engineering Apprenticeships

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have *(a)* begun and *(b)* successfully completed apprenticeships related to engineering in each of the last five years for which records are available. [30116]

Phil Hope: Figures for those starting and successfully completing apprenticeships in engineering and related occupations funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) derive from the Individual Learner Record (ILR). This was collated for the first time in 2001/02 (as an Interim ILR) and comparable completions figures are available for the three years from then.

(a) Table 1 shows the number of starts on apprenticeships or NVQ training done within a work-based learning programme in engineering, technology and manufacturing.

Table 1: Number of starts in LSC funded WBL provision in engineering, technology and manufacturing

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Advanced Apprenticeships	16,200	16,600	20,600
Apprenticeships at level 2	8,000	11,400	15,400
NVQ training	7,700	6,400	4,100
Total—any framework or NVQ	32,000	34,400	40,100

Note:
Numbers may not add to totals due to rounding.

(b) Table 2 shows numbers (and proportions) of learners who successfully completed LSC funded apprenticeships or NVQ training done within a work-based learning (WBL) program in engineering, technology and manufacturing.

Table 2: Number of successful completers of LSC funded WBL provision in engineering, technology and manufacturing

	Framework (A)		*NVQ only (B)*		*NVQ successes (A + B)*		*Total learners*
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*
Advanced Apprenticeships 2001/02	5,100	35	1,200	8	6,300	44	14,500
Advanced Apprenticeships 2002/03	6,600	45	1,000	7	7,600	52	14,600
Advanced Apprenticeships 2003/04	6,200	43	1,000	7	7,200	50	14,600
Apprenticeships at level 2 2001/02	1,300	19	900	13	2,200	32	6,900
Apprenticeships at level 2 2002/03	1,900	24	1,100	14	3,000	38	7,800
Apprenticeships at level 2 2003/04	2,800	30	1,100	12	3,900	42	9,400
NVQ training 2001/02			4,000	43			9,100
NVQ training 2002/03			3,300	44			7,600
NVQ training 2003/04			3,000	62			4,800
Total—any framework or NVQ 2001/02					12,500	41	30,600
Total—any framework or NVQ 2002/03					13,900	46	29,900
Total—any framework or NVQ 2003/04					14,100	49	28,700

Note:
Numbers and percentages may not add up to totals due to rounding

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Socrates Committee, *(b)* Erasmus sub-committee, *(c)* Comenius sub-committee, *(d)* Tempus Committee, *(e)* Leonardo da Vinci Committee and *(f)* Advisory Committee on vocational training have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38644]

Jacqui Smith: The EU Socrates Committee, the Leonardo da Vinci Committee and the Comenius sub-committee met once each during the UK's presidency of the EU, and there was also one meeting of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT). In addition, there was a joint meeting of the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci Committees. The Erasmus sub-committee also met once but UK officials were not able to attend as a result of a transport strike in Belgium. There was no meeting of the Tempus Committee.

The United Kingdom was represented by officials of the Joint International Unit for the Department for Education and Skills and Department for Work and Pensions, and an official from the Department for Education and Skills also attended the ACVT meeting. Officials of DG Education and Culture presided over all the meetings. The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the Community action programme concerning co-operation policy in the youth field, including European voluntary service and youth exchanges within the Community and with third countries, *(b)* Scientific and Technical Research Committee and *(c)* Euratom Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee have taken place during the UK

presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [38645]

Jacqui Smith: The EU Youth Programme Committee met once during the UK's Presidency of the EU. Officials of the DG Education and Culture presided over the meeting. The United Kingdom was represented by officials of the Joint International Unit for the Department for Education and Skills and Department for Work and Pensions.

The other committees fall within the responsibility of my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. I understand, however, that the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST) met four times during the UK's Presidency of the EU. Officials from DG Research chaired each meeting. Officials from the Office of Science and Technology and DTI's Innovation Group represented the United Kingdom. The Euratom Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee met once during the UK Presidency. The meeting was chaired by an Italian technical representative. Scientific experts from UKAEA represented the UK.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Advisory Committee on veterinary training, *(b)* Advisory Committee on training in architecture and *(c)* Committee on the second general system for the recognition of professional education and training have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38783]

Jacqui Smith: No meetings of the Advisory Committee on veterinary training or the Committee on the second general system were held during the UK presidency. Two meetings of the Advisory Committee on training in architecture took place during the UK presidency. The meetings were chaired by Dr. James Horan (Head of the School of Architecture at the Dublin Institute of Technology). The representatives, on behalf of all UK countries, were Professor James Low (Head of the School of Architecture of the University of Central England, Birmingham) on 30 September 2005 and Dr. Jon Levett (Head of Education, Architects Registration Board) on 15 December 2005.

Examination Results

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the secondary schools where *(a)* 10 to 20 per cent. and *(b)* more than 20 per cent. of pupils gained no GCSE or equivalent qualification in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by local education authority; and what percentage of pupils in each school was entitled to free school meals. [38942]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The information, for 2004, is provided in the table.

LA name	*Institution name*	*FSM*[1]
Greater than 20 per cent. of 15-year-old pupils achieving no GCSE (or equivalent) qualifications in 2004		
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	Endeavour High School	41
Leicester	New College Leicester	27
Nottingham	The River Leen School	51
	Elliott Durham School	56
Walsall	Rushall Community College	45
Between 10 and 20 per cent. (inclusive) of 15-year-old pupils achieving no GCSE (or equivalent) qualifications in 2004		
Barnet	Whitefield School	33
Barnsley	The Elmhirst School	50
Birmingham	The International School and Community College, East Birmingham	47
	The College High School	55
	Shenley Court Specialist Arts College and Sixth Form Centre	42
	Kings Norton High School	59
	Hodge Hill School	38
	Castle Vale School and Specialist Performing Arts College	37
Bolton	Withins School	33
Bradford	Yorkshire Martyrs Catholic College	25
	Wyke Manor School	32
	Rhodesway School	41
	Immanuel CofE Community College	24
	Buttershaw High School	35
Brighton and Hove	East Brighton College of Media Arts	47
Bristol, City of	Withywood Community School	38
	Whitefield Fishponds Community School	19
	Speedwell Technology College	21
	Portway Community School	20

LA name	Institution name	FSM[1]
	Hengrove Community Arts College	31
	Henbury School	30
Buckinghamshire	Mandeville Upper School	20
Calderdale	South Halifax High School	35
Cheshire	Woodford Lodge High School	32
Coventry	Woodway Park School and Community College	31
	Sidney Stringer Community Technology College	44
	Ernesford Grange School and Community College	30
Croydon	Selhurst High School for Boys	42
Cumbria	Newman Catholic School	20
Derby	Sinfin Community School	36
	Merrill College	35
Derbyshire	Parkside Community School	28
Doncaster	The Armthorpe School	11
East Sussex	The Grove	22
Enfield	Aylward School	39
Essex	The Thomas Lord Audley School and Language College	17
	Colbayns High School	20
	Barstable School	27
Gateshead	Thomas Hepburn Community Comprehensive School	45
Halton	Halton High School	46
Haringey	White Hart Lane Secondary School	50
	Gladesmore Community School	54
Hartlepool	Brierton Community School (A Specialist Sports College)	26
Hertfordshire	Westfield Community Technology College	15
	The Highfield School	9
	Sir Frederic Osborn School	12
	Kings Langley School	7
Hillingdon	The Hayes Manor School	39
Islington	Islington Arts and Media School	55
	Holloway School	51
Kent	The Ramsgate School	31
	Montgomery School	17
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	Sir Henry Cooper School	39
	Pickering High School Sports College	26
	Kingswood High School	36
	Isaac Newton School	38
Kirklees	Birkdale High School	41
Knowsley	St. Edmund of Canterbury Catholic High School	55
	St. Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School, A Specialist Technology College	25
	Ruffwood School	46
	Knowsley Hey School	38
	Higher Side Community Comprehensive School	38
	Bowring Comprehensive School	40
	All Saints Catholic High School	41
Lancashire	Tulketh Community Sports College	32
	Skerton Community High School	42
	Ribbleton Hall High School	47
Leeds	West Leeds High School	33
	Primrose High School	58
	Intake High School Arts College	27
	Cockburn High School	33
	City of Leeds School	46
	Carr Manor High School	37
	Agnes Stewart Church of England High School	45
Leicester	Riverside Community College	40
	Fullhurst Community College	26
Lewisham	Malory School	56
Lincolnshire	The Mablethorpe Tennyson High School	22
	St. Hugh's CofE Mathematics and Computing College	22
	Joseph Ruston Technology College	25
	Haven High Technology College	17
Liverpool	West Derby School	29
	Shorefields School	55
	Parklands High School	52
	Gateacre Community Comprehensive School	25
	Fazakerley High School	35
	De La Salle Catholic High School	36
	Croxteth Community Comprehensive School	51
	Campion Catholic High School	61
	Breckfield Community Comprehensive School	56
	Anfield Community Comprehensive School	38
Manchester	St. Thomas Aquinas RC High School	56
	St. Paul's Catholic High School	35

LA name	Institution name	FSM[1]
	Plant Hill High School	48
	Parklands High School	56
	Our Lady's RC High School	49
	North Manchester High School for Boys	51
	Manchester Academy	51
	Cedar Mount High School	64
Merton	Mitcham Vale School	25
Middlesbrough	Unity City Academy	50
	Hall Garth School	49
Newcastle upon Tyne	West Gate Community College	55
	Benfield School	33
	All Saints College	41
Norfolk	The Park High School	18
	The Blyth-Jex School	23
North East Lincolnshire	Wintringham School	36
North Tyneside	Churchill Community College	28
North Yorkshire	Ripon College	11
Northamptonshire	Ise Community College	14
	Corby Community College	28
Northumberland	Hirst High School	25
Nottingham	William Sharp School	44
	Henry Mellish Comprehensive School	43
	Haywood School	38
	Hadden Park High School	48
	Fairham Community College	29
	Big Wood School	24
Nottinghamshire	The Wheldon School	19
	The Queen Elizabeth's (1561) Endowed School	26
	The Newark High School	28
	Sherwood Hall School and Sixth Form College	22
Oldham	Kaskenmoor School	33
Oxfordshire	Peers School	21
Peterborough	Hereward Community College	36
	Bushfield Community College	22
Portsmouth	St Luke's CofE VA Secondary School	36
	King Richard Secondary School	30
Reading	Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School	14
Redcar and Cleveland	Freebrough Community College	29
Rochdale	Heywood Community High School	32
Salford	The Albion High School	53
Sandwell	Langley High School	30
	George Salter High School	21
Sheffield	Waltheof School	44
	The City School	22
	Parkwood High School	41
	Firth Park Community Arts College	37
	Chaucer School	29
Slough	Langleywood School	22
Solihull	Smith's Wood School	35
Somerset	The St. Augustine of Canterbury School	17
	East Bridgwater Community School	14
South Gloucestershire	The Grange School and Sports College	11
South Tyneside	Jarrow School	37
Southampton	Bellemoor School	18
Southend-on-Sea	The Thorpe Bay School	45
Southwark	Kingsdale Secondary School	64
St. Helens	Newton-le-Willows Community High School	26
	Broadway Community High School	30
Stoke-on-Trent	James Brindley High School	20
Sunderland	Hylton Red House School	30
Surrey	The Matthew Arnold School	9
	Jubilee High School	9
	Esher CofE High School	15
Tameside	Two Trees Community High School	30
	Stamford High School	43
	Littlemoss High School for Boys	22
Thurrock	The Gateway Community College	32
Wakefield	Knottingley High School and Sports College	19
Walsall	Frank F Harrison Community School	28
Waltham Forest	Tom Hood School	37
Wandsworth	Battersea Technology College	43
Warwickshire	Bishop Wulstan Catholic School	18
Westminster	St. George RC School	42
Wiltshire	Wyvern College	9

LA name	Institution name	FSM[1]
Windsor and Maidenhead	Altwood CofE Secondary School	8
Wirral	Rock Ferry High School	53
Wolverhampton	Deansfield High School	44
Worcestershire	Elgar Technology College	20

[1] Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

Excluded Pupils

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils have been excluded from schools in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon and *(c)* Greater London in the last 10 years for which figures are available. [40249]

Jacqui Smith: The available information requested is shown in the following table:

Maintained primary, secondary and all special schools[1, 2]: number and percentage of permanent exclusions

Academic years 1995/96 to 2003/04	Ruislip-Northwood parliamentary constituency		London borough of Hillingdon		Greater London		England	
	Number of permanent exclusions	Percentage of the school population3	Number of permanent exclusions	Percentage of the school population3	Number of permanent exclusions	Percentage of the school population3	Number of permanent exclusions	Percentage of the school population3
1995/96	n/a	n/a	71	0.19	2,250	0.22	12,480	0.17
1996/97	16	0.13	68	0.18	2,190	0.22	12,670	0.17
1997/98	16	0.13	58	0.15	2,030	0.20	12,300	0.16
1998/99	18	0.14	66	0.17	1,780	0.17	10,440	0.14
1999/2000	10	0.08	47	0.12	1,290	0.12	8,320	0.11
2000/01[4]	13	0.10	65	0.16	1,450	0.14	9,140	0.12
2001/02[4]	8	0.06	43	0.10	1,460	0.14	9,540	0.12
2002/03[4]	15	0.11	50	0.12	1,470	0.14	9,290	0.12
2003/04[4]	21	0.15	72	0.17	1,590	0.15	9,880	0.13

n/a = Not available.
[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.
[3] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.
[4] Some schools are known to have under-reported the number of permanent exclusions in their Annual Schools' Census return, so the Department carried out a data checking exercise at local authority level for which the local authority, regional and England levels are based upon. Information at parliamentary constituency level is based upon returns as recorded by schools, so is known to be incomplete.
Note:
Local authority, regional and national totals have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Foundation Schools

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many foundation schools were given notice to improve in each year since 1999. [39306]

Jacqui Smith: Ofsted give a school a notice to improve when they judge that it requires significant improvement. This category came into force on 1 September 2005 and it replaced the previous designation of serious weaknesses. 18 primary and 18 secondary foundation schools went into serious weaknesses during the period 1 September 1999 to 31 August 2005. The breakdown by year is shown in the following table together with the total number of primary and secondary schools found to have serious weaknesses for comparison purposes.

Since 1 September 2005, two primary and four secondary foundation schools have been issued with a notice to improve. This compares with a total of 39 primary and 26 secondary schools that have been placed in this new category.

	Number of foundation schools with serious weaknesses		Number of schools with serious weaknesses	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
1 September 1999 to 31 August 2000	4	2	226	60
1 September 2000 to 31 August 2001	4	2	180	30
1 September 2001 to 31 August 2002	2	3	151	36
1 September 2002 to 31 August 2003	3	3	121	29
1 September 2003 to 31 August 2004	2	3	150	33
1 September 2004 to 31 August 2005	3	5	82	21

Further Education

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of course provision is allocated to *(a)* A-levels and *(b)* other vocational courses in each college in England. [25000]

Bill Rammell: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). We do not agree specific budgets with the LSC for different types of qualifications or budgets for individual colleges and providers. It is for the LSC to determine the most appropriate balance of investment in learning provision, within the funds allocated to it and within the overall framework set by Government. The LSC works closely with Regional Skills Partnerships to ensure that

emerging skills needs are identified and addressed. Local LSCs agree development plans with colleges to meet the needs of local communities both of learners and employers.

This is a matter for the LSC and Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 18 November 2005:

Please find enclosed information relating to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which Bill Rammell has referred to the Learning and Skills Council were you asked 'what proportion of course provision is allocated to a) A-levels and b) other vocational courses in each college in England.

We have provided you with the total number of courses offered in each college, and the proportion of those which are A-levels. The total number of courses includes vocational courses, although we cannot provide details on the number of 'other vocational courses' as there is no specific category for such courses.

Free School Meals

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils attending maintained *(a)* grammar schools and *(b)* comprehensive schools were eligible for free school meals in each year since 1995. [39507]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained secondary schools: number and percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1], position as at January each year: England

	Grammar schools	*All other secondary schools[2]*	*Total secondary schools*
1995			
Number on roll	122,270	2,866,680	2,988,950
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,730	534,710	539,440
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3.9	18.7	18.0
1996			
Number on roll	126,770	2,880,170	3,006,940
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,800	546,110	550,900
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3.8	19.0	18.3
1997			
Number on roll	127,780	2,909,220	3,036,990
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,730	548,170	552,900
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3.7	18.8	18.2
1998			
Number on roll	129,410	2,939,620	3,069,030
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,400	532,670	537,070
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3.4	18.1	17.5
1999			
Number on roll	140,010	2,978,270	3,118,280
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,320	523,020	527,340
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3.1	17.6	16.9
2000			
Number on roll	144,410	3,033,590	3,178,000
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	4,070	519,560	523,630
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.8	17.1	16.5
2001			
Number on roll	145,670	3,081,300	3,226,970
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	3,560	506,120	509,680
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.4	16.4	15.8
2002			
Number on roll	147,790	3,113,140	3,260,930
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	3,260	483,090	486,350
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.2	15.5	14.9
2003			
Number on roll	150,770	3,157,720	3,308,490
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	3,160	475,750	478,920
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.1	15.1	14.5
2004			
Number on roll	152,650	3,174,150	3,326,800
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	3,380	473,910	477,290
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.2	14.9	14.3
2005			
Number on roll	154,100	3,163,490	3,317,590
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals[1]	3,300	462,220	465,520
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.1	14.6	14.0

[1] Prior to 2003 includes dually registered pupils and excludes boarding pupils; from 2003 onwards includes dually registered and boarding pupils.

[2] Includes middle deemed, comprehensive, modern, technical and other secondary schools.

[3] Prior to 2002 numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals were collected at school level. From 2002 onwards these numbers have been derived from pupil level returns.

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

GCSEs

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the total number of level 2 GCSE equivalent awards were in vocational subjects for each academic year since 2001–02. [40444]

Jacqui Smith: The available information is given in the following table.

Table 1: Results[1] of 15-year-old pupils[2] in Level 2 qualifications for pupils in all schools by type of qualification

	Number of Level 2 qualifications			
	2004–05[3]	*2003–04*[3]	*2002–03*[3]	*2001–02*[3]
Full Course GCSEs[4]	3,035,800	3,016,800	2,894,300	2,846,200
Short Course GCSEs[4,5]	197,433	192,454	163,045	149,746
GNVQ Full Intermediate[6]	56,888	45,839	33,361	14,318
GNVQ Part one Intermediate	—	—	47,100	38,269
GCSEs in Vocational Subjects[4,7]	54,178	36,503	—	—
Basic Skills	6,193	123	—	—
Key Skills	5,930	6,581	—	—
VRQ	5,823	1,882	—	—
NVQ Language units[8]	287	—	—	—
NVQ	48	14	—	—
Total awards	3,362,580	3,300,196	3,137,806	3,048,533

1. Including achievements by these pupils in previous academic years.
2. Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August.
3. Figures for 2004–05 are provisional, all other figures are final.
4. Level 2 qualifications include those at grades A*-C for GCSE qualifications.
5. Short course GCSEs are equivalent to ½ Full course GCSE.
6. GNVQ Full Intermediate are equivalent to 4 Full course GCSEs.
7. GCSEs in Vocational Subjects are equivalent to 2 Full course GCSEs.
8. There were no qualifications in NVQ language units prior to 2004–05.

Note:
From 2003–04 a new group of qualifications approved pre-16 were incorporated.

Vocational qualifications include GCSEs in vocational subjects, GNVQs, VRQs, NVQs and NVQ language units.

The following table shows the percentage of level 2 awards in vocational qualifications for each year.

Table 2: Percentage of Level 2 awards in vocational qualifications for pupils in all schools

	2004–05	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2001–02*
Number of awards in level 2 vocational qualifications	117,224	84,238	80,461	52,587
Total number of awards in level 2 qualifications	3,362,580	3,300,196	3,137,806	3,048,533
Percentage of awards for level 2 qualifications in vocational subjects	3.5	2.6	2.6	1.7

Government Policy (Media Coverage)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what analysis her Department has conducted of print and broadcast media coverage of Government education policy in the past 12 months. [36873]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not conduct media analysis of Government education policy.

Graduate Earnings Premium

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring her Department conducts of the Graduate Earnings Premium; and if she will make a statement. [38167]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The Department carefully monitors the labour market for graduates, including the earnings premium, using a variety of methods.

Over recent years we have commissioned a series of projects using independent researchers to investigate the wage benefits to different levels of qualifications. In addition, we have recently published "The Class of '99"—a study of the labour market progress of 1999 graduates[1]. The Department also has strong links with relevant members of the academic and wider research community, to ensure awareness of all recent developments in the literature.

The latest evidence seems to indicate a small fall in the graduate premium in recent years. We don' know if this is a temporary reduction to a specific set of recent graduates—but even if confirmed the average premium would still remain comfortably over £100,000 across the lifetime of a graduate, in today's valuation, compared with a similar individual with 2+ A levels.

Serious academics agree that the earnings benefit to a degree remains substantial, and OECD data shows that the UK has one of the highest rates of return to higher education investment by international standards. But evidence also shows that we still need more graduates to meet the economy's future needs: projections suggest that 50 per cent. of the total new jobs required by 2012 are in occupations most likely to demand HE-qualified workers[2].

[1] All research reports are available at www.dfes.gov.uk/research. "The Class of '99" is DfES research report no. 691.

[2] Research entitled "Working Futures", available at www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/PDF/wf-national.pdf

Graduates

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many British students have graduated from universities in England in each year since 1997; what percentage were entrants from *(a)* the state sector and *(b)* the independent sector; and if she will make a statement. [22921]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures for graduates are shown in the first table. Information for 2004/05 will be available in January 2006. The latest available information on the school background of higher education students covers young (aged under 21) entrants, and is shown in the second table. Figures for 2004/05 will be available in July 2006.

UK domiciled full-time and part-time first degree students graduating from English Institutions

	Graduates
1997/98	192,620
1998/99	196,780
1999/2000	197,460
2000/01	199,545
2001/02	201,215
2002/03	206,350
2003/04	212,570

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
"Students in Higher Education Institutions" published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

UK domiciled young full-time first degree entrants to English Institutions

		Of which proportion from:	
	Total entrants	*States schools and colleges*	*Independent schools*
1997/98	238,350	81.0	19.0
1998/99	229,810	84.4	15.6
1999/2000	229,260	84.1	15.9
2000/01	228,870	85.0	15.0
2001/02	240,080	85.2	14.8
2002/03	251,460	86.4	13.6
2003/04	254,340	86.1	13.9

Source:
"Performance indicators in Higher Education" published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Grammar Schools

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the future of grammar schools. [39918]

Jacqui Smith: We are clear that we are opposed to academic selection and do not wish to see it extended. Primary legislation already prevents the introduction of any new selection by ability and there will, therefore, be no new grammar schools. However, we believe that it is for local people to determine the future of grammar schools where they already exist and we have no plans to change the existing arrangements.

Health and Safety

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidelines her Department has issued concerning the observance of health and safety requirements in order to avoid compensation claims. [39797]

Maria Eagle: DfES issues Health and Safety information to staff through both the Departmental Health and Safety Policy Statement and four Site Safety Policy Statements. These documents set out clearly how health and safety is to be managed and controlled in the Department and the individual responsibilities placed on each member of staff to adhere to the requirements, the emphasis being the prevention of injury.

Key Stage Results

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* mean and *(b)* median total point score in England was at (i) Key Stage 2, (ii) Key Stage 3 and (iii) GCSE in each year since 1995. [34745]

Jacqui Smith: The mean point scores for Key Stage 2 and GCSE for each year since 1995 are available in the House Library.

The mean point score for Key Stage 3 for each year since 2001 is available in the House Library.

The mean point score for Key Stage 3 for the years 1995–2000 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The median point scores for Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and GCSE can be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Learndirect

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the inclusion of a Researching Your Ancestors element on the Learndirect website; and how much this has cost. [39868]

Phil Hope: The Researching your Ancestors article was included on the learndirect website to attract users to the site and to get them thinking about learning opportunities relating to the topic. Ufi does not pay to provide links from the learndirect website to other sites, or receive payment from third parties for the inclusion of their material on the learndirect website. All the links from the article on Researching Your Ancestors to other websites are free public information sites.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost has been of the Learndirect Advice programme; and how many callers it has dealt with during 2005. [39869]

Phil Hope: Ufi, the organisation which runs the learndirect service, plays an important part in helping the Government deliver its Skills Strategy, by providing widespread access to world class learning through its learndirect e-learning network. In the academic year 2004/05, the latest period for which this information is available, the learndirect information and advice service received funding of £14 million. During this time, a total of 5.9 million web and telephone advice sessions were delivered, of which 789,000 were telephone sessions.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills from which budget headings the Learning and Skills Council drew funds to finance the difference between its 2004–05 administration in budget and its actual expenditure on administration. [37120]

Bill Rammell: The total LSC Administration budget for 2004–05 was £248.6 million. This was made up as follows:

£218.4 million allocated as part of the 2004–05 Grant Letter, and a further £30.2 million transferred from the Department during the year. The LSC actually spent £235.3 million, a saving of over £13 million. The following table illustrates this.

The additional £30.2 million Administration budget transferred to the LSC was mainly as a result of technical accounting changes to Depreciation and Cost of Capital Budgets, previously held centrally by the Department. There were also some minor increases to reflect additional work transferred to the LSC.

LSC Administration Budget 2004–05	*£ million*
Initial Grant Letter Allocation	218.4
Increase in Administration Budget in-year	30.2
Administration Budget at year-end	248.6
Administration spend from Accounts	235.3
Administration underspend against Budget	13.3

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people are employed by the Learning and Skills Council in Gloucestershire; how many were employed *(a)* at its inception and *(b)* in each subsequent year; and how many people she expects it will employ after the proposed changes have taken effect. [37337]

Bill Rammell: The LSC is embarking upon a major transformation programme that will make it a smaller, more dynamic and more customer-focused organisation. This will build upon its existing strengths; further develop its relationships with providers and with its partners, and help push the highest proportion of its funding out through colleges and providers into front line delivery. At local level, the LSC will develop small teams of professional staff who will support the delivery of its priority objectives through strategic relationships with colleges, providers and other key stakeholders and so ensure that the needs of local employers and learners are met. I fully support the changes the LSC is making as I believe it will help bring about an organisation that is fit for purpose.

The effects on organisation and staffing are matters for the LSC. I have therefore asked Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, to write to the hon. Gentleman with further information. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 21 December 2005:

In his response to a Parliamentary Question that you raised with Bill Rammell (Minister of State for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning) he suggested that I write to you directly to outline, in more detail, the Learning and Skills Council's strategy for agenda for change and its impact on the Gloucestershire Learning and Skills Council.

The overarching purpose of our programme of change is to ensure that we develop a structure which is fit for purpose as we take forward our agenda for change with colleges and other post-16 providers of education and training. Through this process our front-line relationships with colleges will change to become more strategic, focussing more sharply on what we are buying to ensure its relevance to the needs of learners and employers is both enhanced and increased. In examining the organisational structure to deliver this important change agenda, it is clear that we can channel many of the "back room" functions of our business away from local offices and carry out these functions more efficiently through a more substantial regional office. This will reduce duplication and create efficiencies that will, ultimately, enable us to invest an additional £40 million on learning programmes to support our community of learners.

The effect of this change agenda on the Gloucestershire office of the Learning and Skills Council will be to reduce the cadre of staff, freeing them from more routine activities and thus enabling them to spend more time on the strategic relationship with providers and partner organisations. It is important to emphasise that this smaller cadre of staff will be supported by a regional office whose key function will be to undertake many of the important but routine functions.

When the Learning and Skills Council Gloucestershire became operational in April 2001 it had an establishment of 74 full time equivalent posts. Following the Reshaping exercise in April 2004 the establishment stood at 44 posts. Currently there are 47 full time equivalent posts in the Gloucestershire office which, as a result of this reorganisation, will reduce to a cadre of 13 core posts.

I am confident that this reorganisation will enable us to meet the needs of learners, employers, communities and the economy across Gloucestershire.

I am copying this letter to Pauline Bailey, our Acting Executive Director for Gloucestershire, and I am asking her to keep you informed as the reorganisation develops.

Local Authorities/Schools Relationship

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the working relationship between local authorities and schools since 1997. [37847]

Jacqui Smith: Many local authorities are working effectively with schools and partnerships of schools to raise standards, increase access to education and life chances for pupils. Schools responsibility for driving up standards is reinforced by the New Relationship with Schools, which builds on the freedoms they have increasingly received and also strengthens the changed role of local authorities, which is to challenge and support schools improvement, and, in particular, to intervene to prevent or overcome failure. The recently published White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools For All' continues this direction of travel by building further on and extending school freedoms, and clarifying the new role for local authorities, as commissioner rather than provider. This will be central to the transformation of our school system and to all our reforms across education and children's services.

Local Authority Expenditure

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the local authority in Poole on funding services previously financed by the Safeguarding Children Grant under the Local Government Settlement for 2006–07. [40410]

Maria Eagle: We have had a number of discussions with the Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Social Services about the Safeguarding Children's Grant. The grant has always been consistently described as being for 2004–06.

London Challenge New Views Scheme

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many schools in Islington have been offered the opportunity to participate in the London Challenge New Views scheme; and how many have participated in the scheme; [39613]

(2) what plans she has to extend the London Challenge New Views scheme to other regions of the country. [39614]

Jacqui Smith: The New Views programme of residential visits has been offered to all London secondary schools as part of the London Student Pledge. Every secondary school in Islington has had the opportunity to take part. Eight secondary schools out of the nine in Islington chose to take part in this voluntary scheme.

The consultation on the Education outside the Classroom Manifesto, which endorses all pupils having the opportunity for high quality out-of-classroom educational experiences, including residentials, will finish at the end of January 2006. The 10 working groups will make proposals for action early next year. Decisions have not yet been made on extending New Views outside London.

Mental Health

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department takes to support staff with mental ill-health. [36865]

Maria Eagle: My Department has in place a range of measures to support managers and employees on health and welfare issues. Staff with mental ill-health can access professional counselling and awareness sessions undertaken by the Department's employee assistance provider Right Corecare.

The services of Right Corecare are complemented by internal policies and procedures aimed at ensuring consistent standards of behaviour, enabling fair and prompt mediation in the event of a grievance and through the provision of flexible working options. A number of flexible working options e.g. job share, part-time, part year, compressed hours and home working are available to staff to help them achieve a better work/life balance and to enable them to work effectively within the department.

My Department has developed a draft stress prevention policy based on the HSE Management Standards and is working towards introducing it with supporting procedures early in the new year. Health promotion events and internal communication systems are used to promote occupational health issues including healthy lifestyle options, time management and leisure activities. Leisure activities such as aerobics and the use of on site or local fitness centres are supported and encouraged.

Ministerial Discussions

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* education specialists in (i) the UK, (ii) the North East and (iii) Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency. [37779]

Ruth Kelly: I regularly meet many people from all parts of the country, including people from local authorities and education specialists, to discuss a range of issues.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on how many occasions since 7 July she has used the London Underground in connection with her official duties. [35019]

Ruth Kelly: I have not used the London Underground in connection with my official duties since 7 July 2005.

All Ministers in my Department use the most efficient and cost effective mode of transport for official business which is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in "Travel by Ministers".

Modern Apprenticeships

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of people aged 22 years and under had started a modern apprenticeship by 2004; and if she will make a statement. [40439]

Phil Hope: Final figures for the academic year 2004/05 show that 28.1 per cent. of young people started an apprenticeship by age 22 in that year. This is slightly higher than our PSA Target of 28 per cent. and was a great achievement by all involved in the apprenticeship programme, particularly the Learning and Skills Council and training providers. In meeting this ambitious target we have successfully revived apprenticeships as a highly valued learning option following many years of decline.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people enrolled on advanced modern apprenticeships in each academic year since 2001–02. [40441]

Phil Hope: This information is published in the Statistical First Release "Further Education, Work Based Learning for Young People and Adult and Community Learning—Learners Numbers in England 2004/05", published on 8 December 2005. The document is available from the Learning and Skills Council website www.lsc.gov.uk and copies have been placed in the House Libraries.

Peer Review

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what peer review process is undergone by the conclusions of research *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* produced by her Department. [39508]

Jacqui Smith: My Department decides whether and how the conclusions of research it *(a)* commissions and *(b)* produces should be peer reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Given the diversity or research conducted, my Department does not consider it practical to have a fixed approach.

PR Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by her Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39090]

Bill Rammell: The following list at *(a)* is the public relation companies that the Department have had contracts with:

(a) Ad hoc PR/sponsorship departmental contracts for specific projects/function:

Redhouse Lane—Learning Direct PR, 15 March 1999 to 14 June 1999

Geronimo—Millennium Volunteers PR, 1 October 1999 to 31 September 2000

Geronimo—Age Diversity PR, 4 January 2000 to 31 March 2001

Barclay Stratton—Childcare Recruitment PR, 30 June 2000 to 30 April 2001

Brewer Blacker—Millennium Volunteers sponsorship, 26 November 2001 to 31 March 2002

Premier Consulting—Dads and Sponsorship, 1 November 2001 to 31 March 2002 and 5 June 2002 to 31 December 2002

Pinsents—Business relationships and sponsorship, 16 March 2004 to 31 March 2005

Weber Shandwick—Business relationships and sponsorship, 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2008

Suppliers on a previous framework agreement 6 November 2000 to 30 April 2004:

Coleman Getty

Pure PR

Harrison Cowley

Geronimo

Fishburn Hedges

Countrywide (Porter Novelli)

Suppliers on the current framework agreement 1 May 2004 to 30 April 2007:

August One Communications

Fishburn Hedges

Forster Company, The

Geronimo PR

Harrison Cowley

Hill and Knowlton Limited

Porter Novelli

Trimedia Communications UK (formerly The Hatch Group)

(b) Non-departmental public bodies/executive agencies

Not available except at disproportionate cost.

(c) Independent statutory bodies

This information is not held centrally.

Primary Schools (Haringey)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Key Stage 2 results were in each primary school in Hornsey and Wood Green in each year since 2000; and if she will make a statement. [36757]

Jacqui Smith: This information is published on the Department's website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables/.

They are also available in the House Library.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what timescales have been set for achievement of the 2004 public service agreement target number 5. [29182]

Maria Eagle: PSA target 5 runs until 2008. As set out in the target's accompanying technical note, progress on placement stability will be measured through the DfES annual data collection about looked after children, which measures the position at 31 March each year. Progress on the educational achievement of looked after children is measured each autumn, once the public examination results are available for this group of young people. We are in the process of amending the technical note to reflect this.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the data required to measure the 2004 public service agreement target number 2 are taken from consistent data sources. [29183]

Beverley Hughes: PSA 2 has three elements. The first element of the target—to increase the stock of Ofsted registered childcare by 10 per cent.—is measured using Ofsted registration data. This is administrative data resulting from the process of registering and de-registering childcare providers. It is available quarterly and has been used to monitor childcare places since 2003.The second element—increase the take up of formal childcare by lower income working families by 50 per cent.—is measured using Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data which is sourced from the Department for Work and Pension's Family Resources Survey (FRS). The third element of the target—introduce, by April 2005, a successful light-touch childcare approval scheme—is measured through data provided by the CAS contractor, Nestor. Nestor are managed under contract by the DfES.

These methods of measurement are the most appropriate for each of the elements and are broadly consistent. Both Ofsted registration data and the FRS track formal childcare although the FRS makes use of a marginally wider definition.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what mechanisms the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority uses to monitor examination standards over a period of time. [38471]

Jacqui Smith: QCA has a rolling programme of standards reviews, which began in 1997. The reports are available on the QCA website.

QCA has also established an Independent Committee to advise it publicly on examination standards. A report by the Independent Committee on Examination Standards report was published in December 2004.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has for the Independent Committee on Examination Standards; and what consultation it is carrying out with regard to this. [38472]

Jacqui Smith: Two of the three members of the Independent Committee on Examination Standards, Dr. Barry McGaw (Chair) and Professor Caroline Gipps, have stood down from the Committee due to

other work commitments. Dr. McGaw is now working in Australia and Professor Gipps was appointed Vice Chancellor of the University of Wolverhampton. The Committee will be reconstituted next year and QCA will then ask the Committee to undertake a new programme of work, which will be agreed in advance by the QCA Board.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on its location; and if she will make a statement. [38568]

Jacqui Smith: Ministers and officials have regular discussions with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on a range of issues, including its location. In response to the Lyons Review, the Department has agreed to relocate out of London and the South East around 800 posts from the Department and its partner organisations by 2010. We continue to work with our partners on their business cases for relocation.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on *(a)* the abolition of the Independent Committee on Examination Standards and *(b)* alternative methods of presenting results of tiered examinations; what the outcomes were of the QCA/departmental risk workshop on 6 September; and if she will make a statement. [38569]

Jacqui Smith: I have had no discussions with QCA on *(a)* the abolition of the Independent Committee on Examination Standards; *(b)* alternative methods of presenting results of tiered examinations.

Officials from the Department and the QCA held a joint workshop on 6 September 2005, to discuss the management of risk in projects and programmes.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what methods the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority uses to monitor the effective functioning of its Regulation and Standards Division. [40371]

Jacqui Smith: The management of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is a matter for the chief executive of the QCA, Ken Boston. He will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many members of the Regulation and Standards Division of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are independent of her Department. [40372]

Jacqui Smith: The Regulation and Standards Division is one of seven into which, with the National Assessment Agency, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is organised. The staff of the Regulation and Standards Division are employed by the QCA and are accountable to the chief executive and through him to the QCA Board.

As a non-departmental public body of the Department for Education and Skills, the QCA is accountable to Ministers, including for the regulation of qualifications, which it undertakes independently of the Department.

Religious Services

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2425W, on religious services, what assessment she has made of the level of compliance with DFES circular 1/94. [40423]

Jacqui Smith: Circular 1/94 sets out the legal requirements for religious education and collective worship in maintained schools.

Under the current Ofsted inspection framework, schools are inspected across a range of areas, including those covered by Circular 1/94. In schools which are designated as having a religious character, the content of collective worship is inspected separately along with the teaching of denominational education where this is delivered.

My Department does not make any other assessment of the level of compliance with DfES Circular 1/94.

School Admissions

James Dud[illegible]ge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 135WS, on school admissions, when she expects her Department to lay the revised codes of practice on school admissions and school admission appeals. [39461]

Jacqui Smith: We have not set a date for the laying of revised codes of practice. The existing codes will remain in force for the 2007 admission round.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of secondary school selection was by aptitude in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* local authority, *(b)* school category and *(c)* subject; and how many pupils this involved in each case. [40615]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

School Buildings

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated for *(a)* capital repairs and *(b)* new buildings in (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in (A) the East Riding of Yorkshire and (B) Kingston upon Hull. [39954]

Jacqui Smith: When we make allocations of capital funding to local authorities we do not prescribe what sums should be spent on new buildings as opposed to repairs and, for the most part, funding is not designated between primary and secondary schools. The allocation of funds is decided by local authorities in accordance with their asset management plans and local priorities. No records are maintained centrally that allow a breakdown of the allocations by the categories requested. Total capital funding allocated in 2005–06 to the East Riding of Yorkshire local authority and schools in its area was £17 million, and total capital funding allocated in 2005–06 to Kingston upon Hull local authority and schools in its area was £8.4 million.

School Funding

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out in cash terms the increases for each local education authority in each year from 1997–98 to 2007–08 set out in percentage terms in the school funding settlement published in December. [38888]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

School Meals

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals achieved *(a)* 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C, *(b)* no GCSE qualifications and *(c)* no qualification in the last year for which figures are available. [38940]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The available information is given in the following table. Figures for 2005 will be available in February 2006.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving certain GCSE and equivalent[2] grades by eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)[3] in 2004

	Eligible for FSM
Number of pupils eligible for FSM	82,860
Proportion of pupils eligible for FSM achieving[4] (percentage)	
5 or more A* to C at GCSE	26
No GCSE qualifications	12
No qualifications	11

[1] Pupils aged 15 at the beginning of the academic year (i.e. 31st of August).
[2] Figures include GCSEs and other approved qualifications.
[3] Figures for attainment by pupil characteristics have been derived from the National Pupil Database (NPD).
[4] These figures are for maintained schools only and are not directly comparable with the national attainment figures that underpin the Department's PSA targets.

Schoolchildren

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of children of secondary school age in *(a)* Wellingborough and *(b)* East Northamptonshire local authority area in each of the next 20 years. [40537]

Jacqui Smith: Population projections for Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire are the responsibility of the Office for National Statistics. The 2003 based projections for the population aged 11 to 18 are:

Estimated and projected population aged 11 to 18 at mid-year

	Wellingborough	Thousand East Northamptonshire
Estimates		
2003	7.9	9.3
2004	7.9	9.6
Projections (2003 base)		
2005	7.8	9.7
2006	7.8	9.8
2007	7.7	9.8

Estimated and projected population aged 11 to 18 at mid-year

	Wellingborough	Thousand East Northamptonshire
2008	7.7	9.8
2009	7.7	9.9
2010	7.6	10.0
2011	7.6	10.1
2012	7.5	10.2
2013	7.4	10.2
2014	7.4	10.3
2015	7.4	10.4
2016	7.4	10.5
2017	7.4	10.6
2018	7.4	10.6
2019	7.4	10.7
2020	7.4	10.8
2021	7.4	10.8
2022	7.4	10.9
2023	7.3	10.8

Schools (Charitable Status)

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the Charity Commission about the likely charitable status of *(a)* community schools, *(b)* trust schools, *(c)* special schools, *(d)* city academies, *(e)* pupil referral units, *(f)* federated schools and *(g)* foundation schools under the proposals in the Schools White Paper. [38209]

Jacqui Smith: Under current legislation the governing bodies of foundation, voluntary and foundation special schools have charitable status. The foundations of foundation and voluntary schools also have charitable status. In the case of trust schools both their governing bodies and their trusts will have charitable status. Community schools, community special schools and pupil referral units do not have charitable status. Academies are charitable companies limited by guarantee.

Federated schools are not a distinct category of schools, and federations may include any of the categories of maintained schools listed previously (but not pupil referral units, which are not a category of maintained school). Education law does not explicitly provide for the charitable status of the governing body of a federation so the position will depend on general charity law.

The proposals in the White Paper will not affect the charitable status of any of the institutions listed above. We intend to put in place further safeguards around trusts, in particular by requiring them to have specific charitable objects. Officials and legal advisers from my Department have discussed these safeguards with the Charity Commission. As the White Paper explained, we are considering the implications of trust status for special schools, but we do not envisage the need for any discussions with the Charity Commission about this.

Schools White Paper

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the *(a)* National Governors Council and *(b)* National Association of School Governors on the implications for school governors of the proposals in the Schools White Paper. [37670]

Jacqui Smith: Ministers and officials regularly meet the National Governors Council and National Association of School Governors to discuss a wide range of issues. I met them most recently on 15 December 2005 when we discussed the implications of the proposals contained in the "Better Schools, Higher Standards For All" White Paper.

Science

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many qualified science lecturers there have been in universities in England in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [22911]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table. In 2003/04, changes to the definitions of full-time and part-time staff meant that less academic staff members were classed as full-time. The figures for this year are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Full-time academic staff by major subject of highest qualification English HE institutions

	Major subject of highest qualification			
	Science[1]	*Other subjects*	*Not known*	*Total*
1997/98	51,000	33,830	4,285	89,115
1998/99	51,500	34,700	5,485	91,685
1999/2000	51,015	35,720	4,800	91,535
2000/01	52,065	36,550	5,055	93,670
2001/02	54,665	37,240	4,940	96,845
2002/03[2]	56,790	36,130	4,425	97,345
2003/04[3]	47,495	31,485	7,030	86,010

[1] Science covers Medicine and Dentistry, Subjects allied to medicine, Biological sciences, Veterinary science, Agriculture and related subjects, Physical sciences, Mathematical sciences, Computer science, Engineering and Technology, and Architecture

[2] A new classification of academic subjects was introduced in 2002/03.

[3] The format and coverage of the Staff Record was changed in 2003/04, one effect of which was to reduce the number of staff classified as full-time and increase the number of staff who were classified as part-time. As a result, the figures for these two years are not directly comparable with those for previous years.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency's Staff Record.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many non-British students have studied sciences at universities in England in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement; [22925]

(2) how many British students have studied sciences at universities in England in each year since 1997; what percentage were entrants from *(a)* the state sector and *(b)* the independent sector; and if she will make a statement. [22931]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information showing the number of students on science courses is shown in the table. Information for 2004/05 will be available in January 2006. Information on the school background of young (under 21) higher education students is published annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", but this covers all students and does not show figures for each subject separately. The latest data collected by HESA for 2003/04, covering students of all ages, shows that 11 per cent. of entrants to undergraduate science courses came from the independent sector, compared to 12 per cent. of entrants to all undergraduate courses of any subject. Comparable figures for earlier years are not available centrally at present.

Higher Education students enrolled on undergraduate science[1] courses

		of which, from:	
HE institutions in England	*Total students*	*UK*	*Overseas*[2]
1997/98	429,815	386,445	43,370
1998/99	444,315	402,245	42,070
1999/2000	452,235	410,955	41,280
2000/01	463,990	422,465	41,525
2001/02	474,360	432,580	41,780
2002/03	524,540	477,880	46,655
2003/04	580,885	533,390	47,495

[1] Science covers the following subjects: Medicine & Dentistry, Subjects allied to medicine, Biological sciences, Veterinary science, Agriculture & related subjects, Physical sciences, Mathematical sciences, Computer Science, Engineering and Technology, Architecture, Building and Planning.

[2] Including students from the EU.

Note:

Figures based on a snapshot count as at December 1st . Numbers are given to the nearest 5 so components may not sum to totals.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Secondary School Places

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provision is available to help pupils over the age of 16 but below the age of 18 years to find a secondary school place when they move into a new local education authority. [40541]

Jacqui Smith: There is no statutory duty on local authorities to provide post-16 education via secondary schools. Where they do, it is not necessary for pupils already in the school to apply formally for places in year 12 or year 13, though they may be required to meet specified minimum entry requirements.

Legislation gives parents the right to apply for a place for their child at any school providing post-16 education and if refused, they are entitled to appeal.

The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for planning and funding post-16 provision in England and has a responsibility under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to ensure that all young people aged 16 to 18 have access to education or training through a school sixth form, or further education college or an Apprenticeship.

Sector Skills Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Donated Asset Reserve in the Learning and Skills Council annual report and accounts 2004–05 is; and what guidelines cover its use. [36578]

Bill Rammell: I have overall responsibility for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). However the operations of the LSC are managed and overseen by Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive. Details of the LSC's statutory accounts and the guidelines and policies they use for the donated asset reserve are a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom has written to the hon. Member with further information. A copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

I refer to your recent parliamentary questions in which you asked the Secretary of State a) what the donated asset reserve in the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 is and what guidelines cover its use b) what the Government Capital Reserve in the LSC Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 is and guidelines cover its use. I am pleased to provide the following information answering your questions below.

The Donated Asset Reserve reflects the current net book value of the fixed assets transferred to the LSC from the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) when the LSC was set up. The Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance for 2004–05 provides further detail on the accounting for this reserve. The Government Accounting manual covers the management of assets.

The Government Capital Reserve reflects the current net book value of fixed assets acquired by the LSC. The Government Capital Reserve is credited with the amount of the grant that equates to the asset's acquisition cost. Notes 9 and 10 to the accounts provide further details on the fixed assets of the LSC. The Executive NDPBs Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance for 2004–05 provides further detail on the accounting for this reserve. The Government Accounting manual covers the management of assets.

I trust the above information will be of assistance to you.

Skills for Life Programme

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on the Skills for Life programme in each year since its inception. [40432]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to table 13 of the NAO's report 'Skills for Life: Improving adult literacy and numeracy', 15 December 2004, which sets out estimated actual spend on Skills for Life from 2000–01. Copies of this report have been placed in the House Libraries. Confirmed spend for 2004/05 is not yet available.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Programme

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether she has reviewed the effectiveness of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme; and whether she plans to extend the current earmarked funding for SEAL. [40399]

Jacqui Smith: The Primary Behaviour and Attendance pilot, which included SEAL, has been evaluated by London University's Institute of Education. The evaluators found evidence of a positive impact on behaviour and learning. Their report is due to be published early this year.

As recommended by the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline, we are providing a further year's earmarked funding for the dissemination of SEAL. Standards Fund grants for 2006–07 will include £7 million for this purpose.

Student Grants

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of students *(a)* applied for, *(b)* were granted in full and *(c)* were granted on an income-related taper student grants in each English local education authority area in the academic year 2005/06. [38296]

Bill Rammell: It is assumed that the question refers to the Higher Education Grant (HEG) introduced for new students in academic year 2004/05, and the question has been answered on this basis.

The number of new students in academic year 2004/05 in each English local authority (LA) who applied for support from the Student Loans Company (SLC), and the percentage of those receiving a full or partial HEG are shown in the table.

Local authority [1]	*Number of new students applying for support* [2]	*Percentage of new students receiving a full HEG*	*Percentage of new students receiving a partial HEG*
Barking and Dagenham	990	32	5
Barnet	3,110	22	4
Barnsley	940	19	6
Bath and North East Somerset	1,240	19	4
Bedfordshire	2,610	13	4
Bexley	1,310	19	4
Birmingham	7,400	33	5
Blackpool	720	35	6
Bolton	2,030	26	4
Bournemouth	1,000	24	5
Bracknell forest	710	11	4
Bradford	3,440	31	5
Brent	2,790	24	4
Brighton and Hove	1,680	27	4
Bristol	2,390	23	4
Bromley	2,330	15	4
Buckinghamshire	4,000	13	4
Bury	1,380	22	5
Calderdale	1,350	25	5
Cambridgeshire	4,370	17	5
Camden	1,620	35	3
Cheshire	5,110	14	5
Cornwall	3,480	25	6
Coventry	2,150	24	7
Croydon	2,830	20	5
Cumbria	3,080	16	6
Darlington	680	18	6
Derby	1,500	28	4

Local authority	Number of new students applying for support	Percentage of new students receiving a full HEG	Percentage of new students receiving a partial HEG
Derbyshire	4,150	16	6
Devon	4,960	22	6
Doncaster	1,440	21	6
Dorset	2,540	17	5
Dudley	1,630	19	6
Durham	2,930	19	7
Ealing	2,700	28	6
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,300	18	5
East Sussex	2,990	18	5
Enfield	2,530	25	5
Essex	7,230	14	4
Gateshead	1,150	23	6
Gloucestershire	3,870	16	5
Greenwich	1,650	34	5
Hackney	1,860	38	3
Halton	730	23	6
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,160	37	5
Hampshire	8,300	13	5
Haringey	2,170	34	4
Harrow	2,550	23	6
Hartlepool	510	24	7
Havering	1,220	16	5
Hertfordshire	7,510	15	4
Hillingdon	1,720	18	3
Hounslow	1,690	22	7
Isle of Wight	680	22	6
Islington	1,490	41	3
Kensington and Chelsea	890	30	3
Kent	8,760	15	4
Kingston upon Hull	1,230	25	5
Kingston upon Thames	1,230	16	4
Kirklees	2,990	27	5
Knowsley	840	29	6
Lambeth	2,190	33	4
Lancashire	9,080	26	6
Leeds	4,390	21	6
Leicester	2,530	32	8
Leicestershire	4,510	14	6
Lewisham	2,160	31	5
Lincolnshire	3,900	18	6
Liverpool	3,040	32	5
Luton	1,380	32	7
Manchester	3,270	41	4
Medway	1,480	18	6
Merton	1,460	20	5
Middlesbrough	980	24	4
Milton Keynes	1,360	18	5
Newcastle upon Tyne	1,810	23	4
Newham	2,560	50	4
Norfolk	4,110	17	6
North East Lincolnshire	970	21	6
North Lincolnshire	940	21	6
North Somerset	1,350	17	4
North Tyneside	1,260	17	5
North Yorkshire	4,180	15	6
Northamptonshire	3,860	16	5
Northumberland	2,020	16	6
Nottingham	1,550	29	5
Nottinghamshire	4,380	17	6
Oldham	1,530	24	4
Oxfordshire	4,430	13	4
Plymouth	1,730	26	4
Poole	880	17	5
Reading	770	16	5
Redbridge	2,300	25	5
Redcar and Cleveland	840	22	4
Richmond upon Thames	1,580	14	3
Rochdale	1,480	27	5
Rotherham	1,180	19	6
Salford	1,010	26	5
Sandwell	1,500	30	7
Sefton	2,280	19	7
Sheffield	3,140	24	5

Local authority [1]	*Number of new students applying for support* [2]	*Percentage of new students receiving a full HEG*	*Percentage of new students receiving a partial HEG*
Shropshire	2,920	17	6
Slough	910	24	5
Solihull	1,500	13	5
Somerset	3,350	18	6
South Gloucestershire	1,430	13	3
South Tyneside	840	27	5
Southampton	1,100	25	4
Southend on Sea	960	20	6
Southwark	2,120	34	3
St. Helens	1,130	22	6
Staffordshire	6,320	18	6
Stockport	2,140	17	5
Stockton-on-Tees	1,310	19	5
Suffolk	3,860	18	6
Sunderland	1,680	23	7
Surrey	7,600	11	4
Sutton	1,340	11	4
Swindon	990	15	5
Tameside	1,290	23	6
Thurrock	580	23	5
Torbay	830	24	9
Tower Hamlets	1,690	59	3
Trafford	1,830	21	6
Wakefield	1,650	18	7
Walsall	1,420	25	6
Waltham Forest	1,920	37	5
Wandsworth	2,080	28	4
Warrington	1,270	15	5
Warwickshire	3,600	15	5
West Berkshire	1,000	10	4
West Sussex	5,590	15	4
Westminster	1,120	34	3
Wigan	1,870	19	6
Wiltshire	2,940	12	5
Windsor and Maidenhead	1,060	13	3
Wirral	2,330	20	5
Wokingham	1,320	8	4
Wolverhampton	1,770	32	7
Worcestershire	5,130	17	6
York	1,300	19	4
Total	336,170	21	5

[1] Data for LAs whose returns are made by another LA on their behalf will be included in the data of the LA making the return.
[2] Numbers rounded to the nearest 10.

It is not possible to provide the percentage of students applying specifically for a grant, therefore the total number of students applying for support has been provided. Students make a single application for student support and are assessed for all elements of the support package. They will receive a grant if they are assessed to be eligible and meet the necessary criteria.

Data on HEGs for 2005/06 will be available in summer 2006.

Sure Start

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are participating in the Sure Start programme in Stroud constituency. [39244]

Beverley Hughes: There is one mini Sure Start local programme (Dursley and Cam) in Stroud constituency. Numbers of children registered at or seen by mini Sure Start programmes are not held, but each programme was intended to reach around 150 under-fours. This programme is linked to a 50 place neighbourhood nursery (Treetops nursery) in Dursley with additional outreach and family support services being delivered from Rednock community centre in Dursley and from the GL11 Community Project in Cam. This provision is being developed into a children's centre to reach around 1,200 children under five and their families in the Dursley, Berkeley, Cam East and Cam West wards by March 2006.

Surplus School Places

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2432W, on surplus school places, who will be charged with determining whether authorities have a sufficiently strong strategic vision for the delivery of secondary education in their area to be prioritised under the Building Schools for the Future programme under the proposals in the Education White Paper; and what role the proposed Schools' Commissioner will have in this process. [40412]

Jacqui Smith: As Minister of State for Schools and 14–19 Learners, I have responsibility for determining whether authorities have a sufficiently strong strategic vision for the delivery of their local Building Schools for the Future programme. The advice of senior departmental officials is a key consideration in my

determinations, as will be the advice of the Schools Commissioner, particularly in relation to the issues of delivering diversity, choice and fair access for parents in the provision of secondary education.

Vulnerable Minors

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which 50 areas have the highest proportion of registered vulnerable *(a)* children and *(b)* young adults per 10,000 head of population. [39292]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not collect data on the number of registered vulnerable children and young adults. This is not a category of children and young people defined within the legislation covering social services functions. Information showing local authority areas with looked after children aged under 18 years of age per 10,000 head of population can be found in "Children looked after by local authorities, year ending 31 March 2004". This is available on the Department's website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000569/index.shtml

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vulnerable *(a)* children and *(b)* young adults are in placements outside their own local authority area by social services Departments. [39293]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not collect data on the number of vulnerable children and young adults. This is not a category of children and young people defined within the legislation covering social services functions. Information about the number of looked after children aged under 18 years of age and placed out of authority is collected centrally. I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1402W.

Work Experience

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 5 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2785W, on work experience, what the figures were for *(a)* 2000–01, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2002–04. [25064]

Jacqui Smith: There is a majority take up of Work Experience among Key Stage 4 pupils, however, the actual breakdown of numbers per sector participating in WE is the responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom, chief executive of the LSC, will be writing to my hon. Friend, and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

Further to your question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills requesting the number of Key Stage 3 pupils who undertook work-experience placements between 1995 and 2005.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) collects data for work-experience placements for Key Stage pupils in Years 10 and 11. It does not collect information on Key Stage 3 students as part of the LSC Education Business Link funded activity.

WorldSkills Competition

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of hosting the WorldSkills Competition in the UK on the *(a)* economy and *(b)* skills levels of (i) the host regional areas and (ii) the UK. [39309]

Phil Hope: It is difficult to assess the potential impact of an event such as the WorldSkills Competition as it has benefits to the UK, to the host region, and a number of wider, less tangible, legacy effects. These benefits include enhancing the value which, as a nation, we place on skills, changing our attitudes towards vocational and academic qualifications, raising the aspirations of individuals, providers and employers, and improving permanently the supply of and demand for world class skills in the UK.

Prior to submitting our Expression of Interest PricewaterhouseCoopers was commissioned to carry out a study looking at the feasibility of a UK bid to host WorldSkills. Their report considered the wider social and economic benefits of a UK bid. The hosting region would benefit directly from increased visitor expenditure, as well as from visitor travel to and from the event. Other benefits, for both the region and the UK as a whole, would include an enhanced commitment to skills development, increased attainment in skills and participation in training, leading to increased productivity and earnings. In addition, because highly trained people tend to have higher lifetime earnings, this would be expected to lead to additional taxation receipts which would benefit the UK as a whole over time.

The UK bid is adopting a partnership approach as a way of securing direct and indirect legacy effects throughout the UK. At its first meeting on 7 December, the UK wide Steering Group confirmed the value of this approach and stressed the importance of 'diversity' and 'inclusion' to help build a sustainable skills competitions infrastructure in each region of the UK. This has the support of the Government and Ministers in each of the Devolved Administrations and will help to make the UK bid distinctive and, hopefully successful.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 10 January 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare Bill

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate the Government have made of the cost to local authorities of implementing the Animal Welfare Bill; and how this will be funded. [39494]

Mr. Bradshaw: Our estimate of the costs to local authorities of implementing our proposals under the Animal Welfare Bill is detailed in the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), which was published alongside the Bill. We estimate that the Bill will not impose any significant additional costs on local authorities.

Avian Influenza

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice and information is being issued to keepers of *(a)* captive bred and *(b)* wild disabled birds registered with her Department on (i) avian influenza and (ii) obtaining seasonal influenza injections. [38436]

Mr. Bradshaw: Guidance on biosecurity and on keeping birds separate from wild birds has been issued very widely to those who keep birds commercially, to veterinary practices and to many others including wildfowl trusts, the RSPCA and the Pet Care Trust. Further guidance on local risk assessments and contingency planning is on the DEFRA website. Advertisements have been placed in a variety of journals to bring the biosecurity guidance and the ban on shows, fairs and sales to the attention of keepers of backyard flocks and captive birds respectively.

DEFRA is guided by the Department of Health in relation to advice on seasonal influenza vaccination. The current position is that routine vaccination of poultry workers, veterinarians or those dealing with wild birds with seasonal human flu vaccine is not recommended, but should be used in a confirmed outbreak of avian flu as a protection against the possibility of re-assortment with human flu virus for those people who might be exposed to the virus during disease control activities.

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will compensate those whose livelihoods have been affected by the ban on bird shows; and if she will make a statement. [38874]

Mr. Bradshaw: I announced on 20 December 2005 that all bird shows are now allowed to go ahead under a general licence; details are available on the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/poultrykeepers.htm#birdfair

There are no plans to offer compensation to those who have been affected by this ban.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) why her Department has not banned live importation of birds from poultry shows in other European Union countries; [38170]

(2) whether live birds may be imported from poultry shows in European Union countries; and what risk assessment she has undertaken of the potential importation of Avian influenza from these sources. [38171]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Live birds may be brought into the United Kingdom from poultry shows within the EU as long as the correct import procedures are followed. Rules on importing poultry are available on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/int-trde/animl-im/animl-im.htm

The movement of birds within the EU is controlled by Community rules, which do not require birds to be quarantined. However, the UK's Salmonella controls require all fowl species (for example chicken, ducks and turkeys) arriving in the UK from other member states to be isolated for at least 112 days after arrival.

Defra carries out qualitative veterinary risk assessments when officially notified of a disease outbreak in an EU-member state, a country on the border of the EU or one of the UK's trading partners worldwide. There are currently no cases of High Pathogenic Avian Influenza in EU member states. Based on veterinary risk assessments, we consider that the risk to birds in the UK is currently low.

If an EU member state experiences an outbreak of serious disease such as Avian influenza, existing EU trade rules set out the measures that must be adopted by that member state to prevent the spread of the disease. If the situation demands it, the European Commission will propose additional safeguard measures. It is not open to other member states to take unilateral action which goes beyond Community trade rules.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the United Kingdom's poultry imports came from China in 2004–05. [39238]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Imports of poultry products from China into the UK for the period 2004 to September 2005 are as shown. The final row in the table shows that these represented 0.1 per cent. (by value) of total poultry imports into the UK for the period January to September 2005.

The figures in the table below reflect imports of processed bird feathers, which have undergone treatment to ensure no pathogens are transmitted and are permitted for import from China. Imports of any other poultry products from China are not permitted.

	2004		January to September 2005	
	Thousand tonnes	£ million	Thousand tonnes	£ million
Imports from China	2	1	1	1
Total imports	622	1,153	495	854
Proportion of imports from China (percentage)	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1

Note:
2005 data is subject to amendments.
Source:
H M Revenue and Customs
Data prepared by Trade statistics, Food Chain Analysis 3, DEFRA

Aviation Emissions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures to reduce aviation emissions the Government are considering. [39727]

Mr. Morley: The Government believe the best way for aviation to contribute to the long-term goal of climate stabilisation is through a well-designed emissions trading scheme. This work programme was a priority for the UK Presidency of the EU and under our Presidency, the European Council endorsed the inclusion of aviation into the EU ETS. The European Commission aims to bring forward a legislative proposal by the end of 2006 and we are pressing for inclusion from 2008 or as soon as possible thereafter.

We are also encouraging industry to improve their operational practices; invest in research and development programmes; and to take voluntary action to control their greenhouse gas emissions. We have committed to offset carbon dioxide emissions from official air travel in central Government starting from April 2006 and continue to explore the use of other economic instruments, such as taxes and charges.

On local air quality, local authorities have a statutory duty to review and assess the local air quality in their area for the purpose of local air quality management. Where it is likely that the air quality objectives will not be met by the relevant deadline, the local authority must designate an air quality management area and take action, along with others, to work towards meeting the air quality objectives.

Air quality management areas in respect of the Nitrogen dioxide national air quality objective have been designated in the vicinities of Heathrow and Gatwick airports. The local authorities involved have drawn up or are working up air quality action plans, in partnership with the airport operators and other interested parties, setting out proposed measures to tackle the problem.

Batteries

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to regulate the *(a)* sale and *(b)* disposal of batteries in the UK; and what current EU regulations apply to batteries waste. [39721]

Mr. Bradshaw: Directive 91/157/EEC (as amended) on batteries and accumulators containing certain dangerous substances is the sole EU legislative measure applying to batteries. This directive only covers those batteries containing specified levels of mercury, cadmium or lead, which are deemed hazardous.

However, proposals for a new batteries directive, to cover all batteries, is currently undergoing negotiation, and we expect the directive to be finalised this year. The proposed directive will require member states to adopt appropriate measures to collect and recycle their waste batteries. Once the directive has been agreed, HMG will consider how to transpose its requirements, including requirements relating to sales and disposal, into UK law.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to transpose European Union legislation regarding the sale and disposal of batteries in the UK. [39722]

Mr. Bradshaw: Negotiations on the proposed Batteries Directive have not concluded yet, and so we do not know what the final requirements will be. Once the Directive is agreed, HMG will consider how to transpose its requirements into UK law.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether those on fixed term contracts in her Department's Animal Welfare Unit dealing with the current tuberculosis trials have been given notice of redundancy; and what assessment she has made of the implications of this for future badger studies. [40461]

Mr. Bradshaw: Staff have been informed that their fixed term contracts will end on 31 March 2006.

Our 10 year strategy to address bovine tuberculosis includes a delivery plan for Government funded research.

Climate Change Programme Review

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government will publish their Climate Change Programme Review. [39913]

Mr. Morley: We are aiming to publish the revised climate change programme as soon as possible in the beginning of this year.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the access authorities which have taken part in the Access

Management Grant Scheme; and what total level of funding has been granted to each such authority since the scheme's inception. [31842]

Jim Knight *[pursuant to the reply, 30 November 2005, Official Report, c. 505–06W]:* My answer was incorrect, and should have been as follows:

The Access Management Grant Scheme is administered by the Countryside Agency on behalf of DEFRA. The Agency's records show that up to 1 November 2005, 53 access authorities have been granted a total of £3,063,591 in funding under the Access Management Grant Scheme, as follows:

	£
Barnsley	15,018
Bath and North East Somerset	2,475
Bedfordshire	11,260
Blackburn with Darwen	9,333
Bolton	6,026
Bracknell Forest	269
Bradford	27,076
Brighton and Hove	19,955
Buckinghamshire	41,432
Calderdale	123,525
Cambridgeshire	17,392
Cornwall	86,333
Cumbria	322,952
Derbyshire	3,777
Devon	135,821
Doncaster	19,845
Dorset	337,316
Durham	184,884
East Riding of Yorkshire	42,477
East Sussex	42,953
Essex	12,000
Gloucester	28,692
Hampshire	95,596
Herefordshire[1]	41,463
Hertfordshire	11,865
Kent	23,213
Kirklees	21,313
Lancashire	221,045
Leeds	23,608
Leicestershire	39,000
Lincolnshire	9,016
Norfolk	39,000
North Lincolnshire	5,807
North Yorkshire	159,281
Northumberland	144,805
Nottinghamshire	12,190
Oldham	8,714
Oxfordshire	31,080
Poole	8,038
Redcar and Cleveland	381
Rochdale	4,219
Shropshire	67,380
Somerset	31,397
South Downs (East Sussex)	110,932
South Glouc. stershire	17,261
Staffordshire	26,239
Suffolk	196,105
Tameside	5,100
Wakefield	10,639
West Berkshire	2,225
West Sussex	130,350
Wiltshire	50,388
Worcestershire	25,133

[1] Excludes funding for the Open Access Black Mountains project.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much petrol fuel her Department's vehicles have used in each year since 1997; and at what cost in each year. [21416]

Jim Knight: DEFRA and its Executive agencies do not hold central records on the amount of petrol used by official vehicles or the costs incurred.

Dog Wardens

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many dog wardens are employed by each London borough. [40408]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra does not collect these figures.

Fisheries

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many UK fishing vessels of 12 metres of more in length, operating in ICES areas VII e, f, g, h and j and using bottom set gillnet or entangling net will be required from 1 January 2006 to use acoustic deterrent devices under Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 (art.2); [38830]

(2) what the total *(a)* length and *(b)* effort in kilometres per hours is of bottom set gillnet and entangling net used by UK fishing vessels of 12 metres or more in length operating in ICES areas VII e, f, g, h and j. [38832]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are approximately 20 UK vessels of 12 metres or more in length regularly prosecuting this fishery. Gill nets are used for catching hake all year round and entanglement nets are used for catching monkfish, turbot and rays from March to September; a number of vessels prosecute more than one fishery, including wreck netting.

We estimate that the 12 regular hake netters deploy some 240k of nets; the 14 regular entanglement netters some 11,200k; and, the 6 wreck netters some 24k. This gives a total for the fishery of 11,464k of nets.

The data are not available to calculate the effort in kilometres per hour.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it will be her Department's policy to follow the scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of Our Seas at the December Fisheries Council meeting. [38840]

Mr. Bradshaw: The International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) produces scientific advice annually on the state of stocks in the north Atlantic. Following these assessments by ICES, further advice on the status of stocks covered by the Common Fisheries Policy is received from the Commission's Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF). The advice from ICES and STECF informs the decisions taken but the Fisheries Council must balance environmental, economic and social considerations in reaching its decisions.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is her Department's policy to agree increases in quotas on species with a high cod by-catch on condition that measures to reduce this by-catch are implemented. [38846]

Mr. Bradshaw: At the December 2005 Fisheries Council, the Government gave priority to addressing the small mesh fisheries which take cod as a by-catch. These include the beam trawl sector and the sector which catches nephrops. The measures adopted by the Council include a cut in the number of fishing days for these sectors and incentives for them to adopt more selective gear.

Decisions on total allowable catches and quotas need to take into account the state of the target stocks as well as their by-catches of cod and other species. On this basis, the Council was able to adopt significant increases in nephrops TACS which will be of significant benefit to the UK fishing industry.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library advice received by Ministers regarding the decision in March 2001 to carry out a contiguous cull of farm animals. [38993]

Mr. Bradshaw: The background to and justification for the contiguous cull is set out in Chapter 10 of the Report "Foot and Mouth 2001: Lessons to be Learnt Inquiry" published on 22 July 2002. I have placed a further copy in the Library.

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many legal cases involving foot and mouth disease clean-up contractors are pending. [38994]

Mr. Bradshaw: Currently, five cases are the subject of High Court litigation.

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library in respect of all court cases where proceedings are complete relating to foot and mouth disease clean-up contractors; what the *(a)* dates and times of proceedings, *(b)* verdicts and *(c)* costs incurred by her Department were; and if she will make a statement. [38995]

Mr. Bradshaw: The registry of each court keeps a publicly accessible register of claims which have been issued out of that court or court office. There is no central register held of all cases held in all courts. The only register of this nature is held for the county courts (which can be found at www.registry-trust.org.uk). Her Majesty's Court Service database contains judgments dating back to 1996 (which can be found at www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk.

If the proceedings are from the civil or criminal divisions of the Court of Appeal, or from the administrative court, both WordWave International's Casetrack website (official shorthand writer to the court), and the BAILII website (British and Irish Legal Information Institute) may provide further information. If the case (or cases) my right hon. Friend is interested in is (are) from the High Court, the Court itself should be contacted for a copy(ies) of the judgment(s). House of Lords judgments delivered since 14 November 1996 are available on the House of Lords website at www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk

It is not possible to provide details of the final outcomes of all court cases where legal proceedings are completed relating to foot and mouth disease clean-up contractors because in some cases (sometimes at the instigation of the contractor) both parties have agreed to keep the terms of settlement confidential.

The Department has been diligent in pursuing those cases where it believes it was overcharged by contractors and valuers during the FMD outbreak.

Where it has the evidence to pursue fraud in either a civil or criminal context it will do so. The Department will have finished its review of all contractor accounts by the end of March 2006 but is dependent on judicial time scales and the work of the relevant investigating authorities in concluding all the commercial and valuer disputes. There have been delays in settlement because of the unwillingness of some contractors to engage in dispute resolution procedures and these have in come cases necessitated, and will necessitate, legal proceedings. The Department has spent to date £30.341 million on professional services investigating close to £1.3 billion of expenditure on goods, services and works arising out of the FMD outbreak. Direct savings of £88.237 million have been achieved to date and, currently, five cases are the subject of High Court litigation.

Integrated Pollution Legislation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many court cases have *(a)* the Environment Agency and *(b)* her Department taken on breaches of the integrated pollution prevention and control legislation; and what the outcome was in each case where proceedings are complete. [37340]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2003 the Environment Agency prosecuted Kvaerner Engineering and Construction UK Limited for a breach of the PPC Regulations.

In 2004 the Environment Agency prosecuted Sita Southern Limited for a breach of the PPC Regulations.

In 2005 the following companies were prosecuted by the Environment Agency for breaches of the PPC Regulations: Global Commodities (UK) Limited, HLC Waste Management Services Limited, Istil (UK) PLC, James Cropper PLC, Monckton Coke and Chemical Company Ltd, Robert Wiseman & Sons Limited and Sita Southern Limited.

A table providing additional information such as the offence, the date of prosecution and the outcome of each prosecution will be deposited in the Library of this House.

This Department does not itself take prosecutions, but some installations are regulated by local authorities rather than the Environment Agency.

We publish statistics annually which give the number of prosecutions taken by local authorities, although do not distinguish between those taken under their air pollution powers from those under their integrated pollution prevention and control powers.

In 2004–05 13 prosecutions were reported. This information is listed in table 12a of the recently published Statistical Survey at this address http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/lapc/survey0405/index.htm . The survey reports for both 2002–03 and 2003–04 are also available on the same website at this address http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/ppc/index.htm .

Landfill

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the burden on local waste disposal authorities of the current *(g)* landfill tax penalties and *(h)* landfill allowance targets; what financial support will be made available to assist them in funding the new waste disposal technologies; if she will take steps to return to the waste disposal authorities who pay landfill tax the funding raised by the tax to assist them in funding their minimisation and recycling initiatives. [38996]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information is as follows:

(a) There are no penalties within the Landfill Tax regime. Budget 2003 announced that future increases in the standard rate of landfill tax would be introduced in a way that is revenue neutral to business as a whole and to local government, reflecting the need to consider the social and economic effects of the increase. In last year's Spending Review funding through increased levels of landfill tax where recycled back into the Environmental Protective and Cultural Services block of the Formula Spending Share.

(b) Funding has been made available on a consistent basis to assist local authorities in developing new waste technologies. In last years Spending Review the Government announced an increase in the Environmental Protective and Cultural Services block of the Formula Spending Share of £888 million by 2007–08 over 2004–05. Over the three-year period to 2005–06, authorities are also benefiting from a total of £294 million invested through the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund and its successor the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant, will provide a further £260 million over the three years to 2007–08. Finally, through the private finance initiative credits worth £355 million have been made available over the three years to 2005–06, with a further £535 million available in 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress is being made in meeting EU Landfill Directive targets for *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2013 and *(c)* 2020. [38901]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government, through the Office for Government Commerce are currently undertaking an information gathering project with the Local Government Association and other local government stakeholders to assess the current and future diversion capacity in England. The information from this project will give a clear indication about how the targets are being met. Data collection from waste collection and waste disposal authorities was undertaken in July, with a 70 per cent. response rate. The results of the exercise are currently being analysed and will be used to assess the potential LATS diversion, recycling recovery and data for current and future procurement contracts. The results will be published early in 2006. The intention is to review this project annually, to allow the Government to closely monitor and evaluate progress towards the targets.

Municipal Waste

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much municipal waste was produced in each of the last 10 years. [38975]

Mr. Bradshaw: Information on municipal waste arisings is available from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey. Annual estimates for England are only available from 1996–97 to 2003–04.

	Thousand tonnes
1996–97	24,588
1997–98	25,711
1998–99	26,337
1999–2000	27,480
2000–01	28,057
2001–02	28,905
2002–03	29,494
2003–04	29,105

Nappies

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of *(a)* household waste sent to landfill and *(b)* total biodegradable waste sent to landfill was made up of disposable nappies in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [39562]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not collect information on the amount of disposable nappies used nor of the disposal route for specific waste streams.

The Strategy Unit report 'Waste Not Want Not' estimated that in 2000–01 nappies comprised around 2 per cent. of household waste, equivalent to 350,000 tonnes. In 2003–04 72 per cent. of our household waste was sent to landfill and just under 9 per cent. went to incineration.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of vehicular rights likely to be extinguished under clause 62 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill if enacted in its current form. [39420]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Clause 62 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill will extinguish certain unrecorded public rights of way for mechanically propelled vehicles. For the very reason that these rights of way are unrecorded, it is difficult to give an accurate account of the number of vehicular rights that are likely to be affected.

A study commissioned by the Countryside Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales, which reported in March 2002, estimated that there are 2,700 km of rights of way (both unrecorded or recorded as other categories of rights of way) that, but for this legislation,

would be likely to qualify as byways open to all traffic. It is likely that public rights for mechanically propelled vehicles will be extinguished over all of these routes under the new legislation.

In addition, it is likely that public rights for mechanically propelled vehicles will be extinguished on most of the routes that are currently recorded as roads used as public paths. These extend to about 6,000 km in England and Wales, roughly 3 per cent. of the current rights of way network. However, some of these routes would already have been included in the results of the study referred to above, although we cannot quantify the extent of this overlap.

Public rights of way for vehicles that are not mechanically propelled will not be affected, nor will private rights for mechanically propelled vehicles.

Poultry

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many poultry owners are registered with her Department; and what the flock size is of each registered poultry owner. [38029]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* As of midnight on 13 December 2005, 88 eligible poultry premises have been registered on the new GB poultry register. In some cases, an owner has registered more than one premises. The total numbers of poultry on each registered premises are as follows:

Poultry premise	*Total number of poultry*
1.	50
2.	50
3.	50
4.	51
5.	55
6.	59
7.	59
8.	60
9.	60
10.	60
11.	60
12.	60
13.	60
14.	62
15.	65
16.	70
17.	70
18.	75
19.	75
20.	78
21.	80
22.	84
23.	85
24.	90
25.	100
26.	100
27.	100
28.	101
29.	105
30.	106
31.	107
32.	108
33.	108
34.	109
35.	113
36.	115
37.	120
38.	120
39.	125
40.	126
41.	128
42.	140
43.	145
44.	150
45.	150
46.	154
47.	155
48.	165
49.	170
50.	182
51.	194
52.	200
53.	210
54.	218
55.	220
56.	220
57.	245
58.	250
59.	260
60.	275
61.	290
62.	300
63.	340
64.	405
65.	443
66.	465
67.	500
68.	705
69.	1,190
70.	1,200
71.	1,400
72.	1,800
73.	2,502
74.	3,000
75.	3,000
76.	4,000
77.	16,000
78.	16,000
79.	24,000
80.	24,000
81.	25,000
82.	26,000
83.	36,000
84.	36,800
85.	39,000
86.	75,000
87.	83,000
88.	800,000

Racehorses (Whipping)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1854W, on racehorses (whipping), what recent representations she has received about the practice of whipping racehorses. [39278]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have received occasional correspondence on the whipping of racehorses.

Radioactive Waste Management Committee

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to receive the final report of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management. [36867]

Mr. Morley: The final report is due in July 2006.

Rare Birds

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to protect the rare birds population on the North East coast. [39158]

Jim Knight: There is a suite of statutory sites protecting bird populations along the North East coast of England which form part of a national, European and international network of protected sites. Those areas designated for their national importance, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), underpin and extend beyond the boundaries of six Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified under the EC Birds Directive. Three of these SPAs are also designated as Ramsar sites under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat. These sites are protected for their nationally and internationally important populations of waders, wildfowl, terns and seabirds[1].

[1]Farne Islands SPA

Coquet Island SPA

Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA

Lindisfarne SPA and Ramsar site

Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar site

Recovered Fuel Oil

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the status of recovered fuel oil in the definitions of waste recovery contained in the revised Waste Framework Directive. [39391]

Mr. Bradshaw: On 21 December 2005 the European Commission published a proposal for a Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste and associated legislative proposals. The latter includes a revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) (Council Directive 75/442/EEC as amended). The proposals are available on the Commission's website at http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/strategy.htm

The draft WFD published by the Commission includes a proposed revision of the definition of "recovery". The purpose of the revised definition is to enable a more effective distinction to be made between waste disposal operations and waste recovery operations—both of which are subject to control under the existing WFD. The revised definition of "recovery" does not affect the status of recovered fuel oil (e.g. its classification as waste).

The UK has actively participated in the Commission's consultations on the Waste Thematic Strategy and associated consultations; and will continue to be active in negotiations with the Commission and other member states on the revised WFD. In doing so, we will comply with the guidance on "UK handling of EU proposals" available on the Cabinet Office's website at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/europe/uk_handling/index.asp—including appropriate consultation with external stakeholders.

Recycling

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of plastics used for baling on farms has been recycled in each of the last five years. [39196]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not keep such records.

Waterways (Public Access)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of amending the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to cover public access to waterways. [37010]

Jim Knight: We commissioned research into the opportunities and demand for water-based sport and recreation during the passage of the then Countryside and Rights of Way Bill through Parliament. The report, 'Water-Based Sport and Recreation: the facts', was published in December 2001. It concluded that there is some unmet demand for white water and long distance routes for canoeists, but that for most canoeists, as for most other water users, overall supply is roughly in balance with demand. We therefore concluded that the case for a statutory right of access had not been made and that we should pursue a voluntary approach instead.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are being taken to improve public access to waterways. [37011]

Jim Knight: Following publication of the report, "Water-Based Sport and Recreation: the facts" in 2001 we commissioned the Countryside Agency to work in partnership with other Government agencies to pilot four demonstration projects to develop best practice for access agreements for canoeists on key stretches of water in England. The feasibility study indicated that voluntary agreements can offer a means of increasing access to water and we asked the Environment Agency to complete agreements in all four pilot areas. In addition we have agreed to the development of a strategic approach to recreational access to water inland waters, led by the Environment Agency but in collaboration with other key stakeholders.

Rural Communities (North-East)

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to improve the economy of rural areas in the North East. [39159]

Jim Knight: Defra and other Government Departments have provided a significant amount of funding to improve the rural economy in the North East. This includes:

Over £12.5 million which has been allocated over the six years of the current England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) project-based schemes (Rural Enterprise Scheme, Vocational Training Scheme and Processing and Marketing Grants);

A significant amount of money will also be provided from ERDP agri-environment schemes to farmers to manage the landscape. This will offer wider economic gains in rural areas from a well maintained countryside;

£11 million has been spent on average per annum through Structural Funds;

The One North East Regional Rural Programme will deliver £20 million of assistance over the period 2005–08;

£16 million of Regional Development Agency single pot assistance will also be delivered over the same 2005–08 period by Sub-Regional Partnerships in Durham, Tees Valley and Northumberland under the Rural and Environmental Programme.

In addition, the West Durham Pathfinder project, one of eight local pathfinders announced in Rural Strategy 2004, is looking at a range of measures to contribute to improving the economic performance of the area, including developing the knowledge economy, and skills and enterprise development in support of sustainable tourism.

I am placing more details of the projects Defra is supporting in the Library of the House and on the Department's website.

Sustainable Development

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what penalties are in place for Government Departments which fail their sustainable development targets, as reviewed by the Sustainable Development Commission on 16 December. [39726]

Mr. Morley: These are internal targets that don't involve penalties but are open and transparent. The targets are set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. In accordance with that Framework, all Government Departments are responsible for their own performance and data. The Sustainable Development Commission reported on progress for the first time this year, in line with the commitment in the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy that future reports should be 'wholly independent of Government'.

Waste Exports (Carbon Cycle)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research has been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the implications for carbon life cycle of shipping recyclable waste abroad. [38896]

Mr. Bradshaw: No such research has been commissioned. The logistics of international cargo movements, including those of wastes for recycling, can enable containers to be used as efficiently as possible. For example, containers used to import goods into the UK may be offset by use of the same containers to take wastes for recycling to overseas destinations. In some circumstances the containers could otherwise be returning empty.

Wild Bird Ringing

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information her Department collects on wild bird ringing groups operating in the UK and licensed by the British Trust for Ornithology; and what advice and information her Department has circulated to such groups in each region on *(a)* monitoring of possible avian influenza and *(b)* obtaining seasonal influenza injections. [38435]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA continues to have regular discussions with a number of ornithological organizations in Great Britain for assistance in implementing a surveillance programme for avian influenza in wild birds. This comprises three strands:

Reporting and sampling unusual mortality events in wild bird species

sampling by cloacal swabbing of live caught birds at Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust sites at several locations across the UK

taking faecal samples by cloacal swabbing from freshly shot birds submitted by the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) from various sites across the UK

Stewardship of the network of ringing groups lies with the ornithological organisations, including the BTO, and they have been working with DEFRA to identify the key issues concerning bird migration and behaviour, habitats, distribution of species of interest and issues around sensible measures for the protection of both employees and volunteers who may come into contact with wild birds through ringing and other activities.

Following consultation with the Department of Health, advice is available on the DEFRA website regarding submission of bird carcasses from unusually high mortality events. DEFRA has also issued advice cleared by the health authorities to those that are conducting sampling of birds for wild bird surveillance.

Further information can be found on DEFRA website at:

http://defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/wildbirds/survey.htm

DEFRA is guided by the Department of Health in relation to advice on seasonal influenza vaccination. The current position is that routine vaccination of poultry workers, veterinarians or those dealing with wild birds with seasonal human flu vaccine is not recommended, but should be used in a confirmed outbreak of avian flu as a protection against the possibility of re-assortment with human flu virus for those people who might be exposed to the virus during disease control activities.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

9. **Richard Burden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs If he will make a statement on the prospects for peace in the middle east. [40205]

Mr. Straw: Important progress has been made in recent months: the level of violence on both sides has been significantly reduced, and whilst much remains to be done, overall prospects have been transformed by the withdrawal from Gaza and northern settlements in the West Bank, in mid August. The UK and EU have been heavily involved in all this. Elections in the Occupied Territories for the Palestinian Legislative Council are due on 25 January, and a general election is due in Israel on 28 March.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon deserves great credit for his courage and foresight in leading many of the recent positive developments. I am sure the whole House will join me in sharing my deep concern about his illness; our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends and the people of Israel.

19. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Israeli Government about the peace process in the middle east. [40215]

Dr. Howells: We regularly discuss progress on the Middle East Peace Process with the Israeli Government, at all levels. Since disengagement in September 2005, both my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have met with members of the Israeli Government to discuss progress on their Roadmap commitments. The Israelis tell us that they remain committed to making progress against the Roadmap.

Collinson Grant Report

12. **Andrew Mackinlay:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the findings of the Collinson Grant report. [40208]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office commissioned Collinson Grant to further improve its operations and efficiency and accepts many of the reports' conclusions. Actions resulting include substituting locally engaged for some UK-based staff; rationalising the various programmes intended to bring change in the FCO; reducing the number of people providing short term cover or working on temporary duties; improving the workings of the internal market and reducing administrative costs.

Extraordinary Rendition

13. **Angus Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with EU colleagues about extraordinary rendition. [40209]

Mr. Straw: On 21 November last year, EU Foreign Ministers discussed United States handling of detainees and agreed to ask for clarification of the reports of US transfer and detention of terrorist suspects through and in European countries. I subsequently wrote to EU partners to convey the response of the US Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice.

There have been further discussions about the matter at subsequent meetings in Brussels, and I have spoken bilaterally to EU Foreign Minister colleagues. I gave evidence on this matter to the Foreign Affairs Committee on 12 December.

Iraq

14. **Mr. David Anderson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what financial assistance and advice has been given to the Iraqi Government to help build civil society. [40210]

Dr. Howells: The Government are committed to supporting the development of a vibrant civil society in Iraq. Since 2004 we have committed over £17 million to programmes to help build civil society capacity. While we have built a strong relationship with the State Ministry for Civil Society the majority of our funding is targeted directly at civil society organisations. Projects have focused included protection of minority rights, trade unions, justice and the rule of law, inter-faith dialogue and media development.

22. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Iraqi elections. [40218]

Dr. Howells: Certified results have not been announced. However the fact that almost 11 million Iraqis from all communities voted illustrates their desire to determine their country's future. This shows great progress in building a new political system.

All parties are engaged in determining the formation of a fully representative Government. This Government will face many challenges and there is much we and the international community can continue to do to assist.

Iran

15. **Richard Ottaway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Iran's nuclear programme. [40211]

Mr. Straw: In 2003, Iran was forced to admit that for many years it has been operating secret facilities to enrich uranium, in clear contravention of its obligations under the non-proliferation treaty. Other breaches relating to plutonium have been ascertained. We also know of Iranian contact with the Pakistani nuclear weapons expert A. Q. Khan, who admitted working with clandestine nuclear weapons programmes in Libya and North Korea.

Since 2003, the United Kingdom, French and German Governments, with Javier Solana, the EU high representative, have worked tirelessly to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation by Iran through ensuring that it complies fully with its international obligations. As part of this, I ran agreed towards the end of 2003 to suspend enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.

This morning, I regret to say, the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that Iran had broken seals at nuclear facilities, including its uranium-enrichment facility at Natanz, with a view to resuming research and development, including the introduction of uranium hexafluoride into the centrifuges. That is enrichment. This is a profound concern. It is a further rejection by Iran of IAEA board requests and a violation of the commitments that Iran made in the Paris agreement in November 2004. In view of all that, I shall be meeting my French and German colleagues and Javier Solana as soon as this can be arranged, to discuss our joint and firm response.

24. **Mr. Dismore:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent comments by the President of Iran concerning Israel. [40220]

Dr. Howells: I condemn unreservedly President Ahmadinejad's calls for Israel to be relocated or destroyed, and his denial of the existence of the Holocaust. Such remarks are wholly unacceptable, and

have no place in civilised debate. The United Nations Security Council has also condemned them, with our full backing.

World Trade Organisation

16. **Jim Sheridan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs What discussions he has had with EU counterparts on the World Trade Organisation ministerial conference in Hong Kong. [40212]

Ian Pearson: My ministerial colleagues and I meet regularly with our EU counterparts. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Round is often discussed in that context. Ahead of the ministerial conference in Hong Kong, EU Foreign Ministers discussed the issue at several meetings chaired by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry chaired meetings of EU Trade Ministers in Hong Kong

Albania

17. **Mr. David Chaytor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Albania's prospects for becoming an applicant country for membership of the European Union. [40213]

Dr. Howells: The EU confirmed in June 2003 that the future of the Western Balkans lies in Europe. Albania has been negotiating a Stabilisation and Association Agreement since January 2003 as a first step towards realising its EU aspirations. Albania's progress toward the EU is conditional on implementing reforms, especially those needed to tackle organised crime and corruption.

India

18. **Helen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on UK relations with India. [40214]

Dr. Howells: Britain's bilateral relations with India are stronger than they have ever been. India is and will continue to be a key strategic partner for this country.

The Prime Minister had a further productive summit meeting with Manmohan Singh in September 2005. There is a constant flow of ministerial visits in both directions.

Afghanistan

20. **Linda Gilroy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further steps his Department is taking to encourage other Governments to give financial support to Afghanistan. [40216]

Dr. Howells: We routinely lobby countries for financial support for the Government of Afghanistan's counter narcotics programmes. We have also lobbied for Afghanistan election funding on behalf of the UN.

The UK is playing a leading role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We will host a London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January–1 February, co-chairing with the UN and the Afghan Government. The conference will seek continued international support for Afghanistan.

Lisbon Agenda

21. **Mr. Crabb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Lisbon agenda. [40217]

Dr. Howells: 2005 marked the midpoint of the Lisbon Agenda—and saw real progress on Better Regulation and the Services Directive and agreement on REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals), balancing the interests of the environment with the competitiveness of EU industry. There remains a need to build momentum behind reform. Member states have underlined their commitment to this by submitting individual Lisbon National Reform Programmes.

Lebanon

23. **Mr. David:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of Syria's involvement in Lebanese internal affairs. [40219]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary visited Lebanon on 4–5 January and was concerned by the extent to which Syrian behaviour still dominates Lebanon. For this reason we support the full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

British Prisoners Overseas

25. **Dr. Pugh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British subjects are known to be in foreign jails. [40221]

Dr. Howells: On 31 March 2005, we were aware of 2,764 British nationals in detention overseas. This, which is the most recent definitive figure we have, includes detainees on remand, as well as those serving custodial sentences.

China

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on religious freedom in China. [40039]

Ian Pearson: The Government are concerned about limitations on freedom of religious belief in China and the treatment of religious practitioners, including the political "re-education" of monks and nuns in Tibet. We regularly raise our concerns with the Chinese Government. We did so at the last UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in June 2005. Freedom of religion was a focus of the last EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place under the UK presidency in October 2005. I spoke at length about the persecution of Christians in China during an Adjournment debate on 5 July 2005. The EU Troika raised freedom of religion with the Chinese Government in Beijing on 29 December. Individual cases of concern were raised at this meeting and at the Dialogues. We will continue to raise our concerns about religious freedom with the Chinese authorities at every appropriate opportunity.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action has been taken under the UK's EU presidency to advance the European Parliament's resolution of 8 September on

religious freedom in China, with particular reference to the calls for the release of Pastor Zhang; and if he will make a statement. [40631]

Ian Pearson: The Government remain concerned about freedom of religion in China. Progress was made in advancing the European Parliament's resolution on this matter in a number of respects during the UK presidency. Freedom of religion was a focus of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in October 2005. The UK presidency led a follow-up EU demarche in Beijing in December 2005. Several individual cases were raised at the Dialogue and in the demarche, including that of Pastor Zhang, whose case we continue to follow closely. An EU-China seminar on the ratification of the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights was held in December 2005; and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture visited China in November 2005. We will continue to raise religious freedom with the Chinese Government, and urge further progress on points raised in the resolution.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of the People's Republic of China over the jailing of Xu Wanping. [40720]

Ian Pearson: We monitor closely the treatment of human rights defenders in China and regularly raise individual human rights cases with the Chinese Government, including at the biannual UK and EU-China Human Rights Dialogues. The Government have not made representations to the Chinese Government over the recent imprisonment of Xu Wanping, but we will look into his case.

Cigarettes

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact on visitors from the UK to France and Belgium of French proposals to limit the carrying outside the home of more than 200 cigarettes at any one time; and if he will make a statement. [37860]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have not made an assessment of the impact French proposals to limit the carrying of cigarettes outside the home would have on visitors from the UK to France. However, national measures concerning France's domestic treatment of tobacco purchased for personal use are a matter for the French Government, subject to compliance with their obligations under EC law.

Common Agricultural Policy

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals for Common Agricultural Policy reform the Government has made; and if he will make a statement. [40235]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: EU Heads of State and Government agreed in December a proposal from the UK presidency for the Union's budget over 2007–13, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). That proposal included a provision allowing member states to transfer up to 20 per cent. of their funding for CAP market support and direct payments to rural development. This Government have always supported moving funds in this direction, and will continue to do so. The agreement in December also contained a commitment to review all EU expenditure, including the CAP, in 2008–09. On 2 December, the Government published a paper setting out the UK's vision for reform of the CAP, which we hope will inform that debate. This is available at http://www.hm-treasury.gov/uk/media/E76/04/a_Vision_for_the_CAP.pdf. The Government are in on-going discussions with other member states and other stakeholders about their views on that vision, and their own ideas for the future of the CAP. The UK presidency also managed to secure agreement with other member states in November on a historic liberalising reform of the EU sugar regime.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40140]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: A list of the buildings and land sold by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the British Council, a Public Corporation receiving a grant-in-aid from the FCO, since the start of financial year 1997–98 will be placed in the Library of the House. No FCO non-departmental public bodies have sold buildings or land since 1997. The BBC World Service is part of the BBC, a public corporation, and is funded by the FCO through a grant in aid. It has sold only one property since 1997, a building in Singapore in 2001, the proceeds of which were approximately £3.3 million and which were re-invested in the World Service's Oman transmitter project.

It was agreed in the 1997 Comprehensive Spending Review settlement that the FCO should retain 100 per cent. of the proceeds from property sales for re-investment, up to an agreed ceiling for each spending review period, which has not been exceeded. We do not re-value properties once sold, and could not do so now without incurring disproportionate costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39140]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not categorise expenditure down to this level of detail in its accounts. In addition, the FCO delegates budgets for such equipment to individual internal departments and does not therefore hold a centralised record of such purchases. The information could therefore only be provided at disproportionate cost.

GREAT BRITAIN HOUSE OF COMMONS
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)
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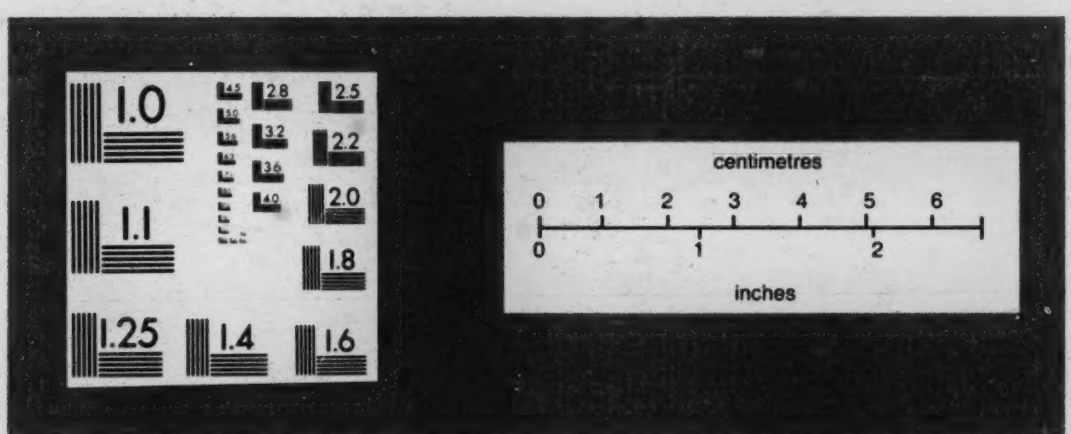

Standard FCO guidance applies to the purchase of television equipment. This is based on achieving value for money.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40060]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The breakdown of the administrative costs in 2004–05 for each of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) non-departmental public bodies (NDPB) is as follows:

British Council

	£000
Employee costs	55,897
Accommodation costs, rent, rates etc.	22,000
Office service costs	44,373
Depreciation and cost of capital charges	6,642
Other non-cash items eg auditors' remuneration	155
Total	129,067

	£
Westminster Foundation for Democracy	
Employee costs	546,309
Accommodation costs, rent, rates etc.	54,086
Office service costs	218,583
Depreciation and cost of capital charges	11,359
Other non-cash items eg auditors' remuneration	8,114
Total	838,451
Great Britain and China Centre	
Employee costs	177,576
Accommodation costs, rent, rates etc.	43,784
Office service costs	15,836
Depreciation and cost of capital charges	5,739
Other non-cash items eg auditors' remuneration	2,891
Total	245,826
Britain Association for Central and Eastern Europe	
Employee costs	169,196
Accommodation costs, rent, rates etc.	40,471
Office service costs	16,977
Depreciation and cost of capital charges	5,858
Other non-cash items eg auditors' remuneration	21,175
Total	253,677
Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission	
Employee costs	245,204
Accommodation costs, rent, rates etc.	0
Office service costs	19,000
Depreciation and cost of capital charges	0
Other non-cash items eg auditors' remuneration	23,850
Total	288,054

NDPB expenditure, including the administrative costs of all FCO NDPBs, is classified as "non-identifiable" for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analysis.

EU Agreements (Human Rights)

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what review mechanisms the EU has established to assess how its agreements with third countries are being implemented with regard to human rights. [39319]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: EU Heads of Mission and European Commission delegations report regularly on human rights issues in third countries. The EU holds regular political dialogue with all countries with which it has agreements, and this includes discussion of the relevant human rights provisions. Under the Barcelona Process, the EU is establishing sub-committees with all Mediterranean partners with functioning Association Agreements to monitor the implementation of their human rights commitments. The European Neighbourhood Policy, through its country-specific Action Plans, links the development of relations with the EU to economic and political reform, including human rights and democracy. The Partnership Agreement with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (the Cotonou Agreement) provides under its Article 8 for a systematic dialogue on the three essential elements of human rights, democratic principles and rule of law, with formal consultation procedures which have already been invoked on a number of occasions. The Council's Working Group on Human Rights is also developing a regular overview of EU dialogues with third countries.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has received representations from the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights network on their human rights review on the EU and Israel. [39320]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: On 9 December 2005, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office met with representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights network to discuss its human rights review. They discussed at length the recent agreement between the EU and Israel to establish a working group on human rights. My officials were grateful for the information provided by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights network and are in contact with them regarding specific human rights issues.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on arrangements for assessing compliance with the terms of the EU-Israel Association agreement. [39321]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU maintains a regular dialogue at official and ministerial level with Israel to monitor our respective commitments under the framework of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. In this respect, the EU-Israel Political Dialogue and Co-operation sub-committee met for the first time on 21 November 2005 to assess the implementation of the political clauses in the EU-Israel Association Agreement and the Israel European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan. At the meeting, the EU and Israel proposed the creation of a new working group on human rights.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the EU has set up a human rights sub-committee under the EU-Israel Association agreement. [39323]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU and Israel agreed to establish a working group on human rights at the EU-Israel Political Dialogue and Co-operation sub-committee on 21 November 2005. The European

Commission will be consulting Israel and member states on the modalities of the EU-Israel Human Rights Working Group with a view to a meeting taking place in the first quarter of 2006. Reinforcing our dialogue with Israel on human rights through this working group will help to monitor the implementation of the relevant provisions of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

EU Committees

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK Joint Ministerial Committee meetings regarding European Union issues have been held since 1 July 1999. [39218]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe) meetings were held in 1999 and 2000, two meetings were held in 2001, two in 2002, four in 2003, 11 in 2004 and nine in 2005.

Kyrgyzstan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the prospect for democratic change in Kyrgyzstan. [39696]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As presidency of the EU, the UK noted that the presidential elections in July 2005 marked tangible progress by the Kyrgyz Republic towards meeting Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe commitments, as well as other international standards for democratic elections. The UK, both through the EU and bilaterally, is now encouraging the Kyrgyz Government to take forward the recommendations of the International Election Observation Mission and to pursue further democratic reform, including constitutional reform.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to foster democracy in Kyrgyzstan. [39697]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has funded a variety of projects to promote democracy and good governance in Kyrgyzstan. Up to £150,000 is available for smaller scale project work in these areas in Kyrgyzstan for 2005–06.

Projects completed in the current financial year have included electoral support initiatives, prison reform and media/freedom of expression projects. On-going projects cover voter education, advancing parliamentary accountability and dialogue between citizens and parliamentarians, and promoting the abolition of the death penalty. The FCO also funded 10 per cent. of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights election monitoring missions for both the Kyrgyz parliamentary and presidential elections in 2005. Additionally, the Department for International Development's programme work in Kyrgyzstan includes an allocation of £4.9 million over a five-year period aimed at the modernisation of public administration and promotion of transparent management of revenues by Government, both of which support democracy building.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans are being discussed to celebrate throughout the Commonwealth the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen's Accession in 2012. [40535]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Planning for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 of Her Majesty The Queen's Accession has not yet started. However, I have no doubt that the suggestion of celebrations throughout the Commonwealth will be factored into the planning process.

UK Embassies/Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many consulates have *(a)* closed and *(b)* opened in the last 10 years. [39688]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has closed 11 and has opened six consulates in the last 10 years. The following table provides further details. Like any well-run organisation, the FCO continues to realign its resources flexibly in line with UK interests.

Consulates

	Country	*Closed*	*Opened*
1997–98	Colombia	Barranquilla[1]	
1998–99	Malaysia	Kuching	
	Thailand	Chiang Mai	
	Togo		Lome[1]
1999–2000	USA	Cleveland	
	China		Chongqing
	Japan		Fukuoka
	Sweden		Gothenburg
2000–01	Haiti		Port-au-Prince[1]
	USA		Denver
2004–05	Cameroon	Douala[1]	
	Portugal	Oporto	
2005–06	USA	Dallas	
	USA	San Juan[1]	
	Japan	Fukuoka[1]	
	Germany	Frankfurt	
	Germany	Stuttgart	
Total		11	6

[1] Consulates staffed by locally engaged staff only.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* cultural and *(b)* military attaches are based at each UK embassy. [39689]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Cultural work overseas is the lead responsibility of the British Council. The British Council has 291 UK-based staff working overseas. Whether or not such staff hold the formal title of Cultural Attache depends on various factors, including local diplomatic practice. The UK Defence Attache network consists of 123 posts. To obtain the information in the format requested would incur disproportionate costs as it is not held centrally.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* non-UK citizens, *(b)* UK citizens, *(c)* non-EU citizens and *(d)* non-Commonwealth citizens are working at British embassies and consulates. [39690]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office employs 12,973 staff overseas, of which 2,910 are UK-based and 10,063 are locally employed. UK-based staff are British citizens. Local Staff nationality records are not maintained centrally but are held at individual posts. This information could therefore only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* embassies and *(b)* consulates there are outside capital cities. [39691]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The British embassy in Kazakhstan is in Almaty. We are planning to move to the new capital Astana in the course of 2006. There are 65 United Kingdom consulates outside capital cities.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* embassies and *(b)* consulates are shared with another country. [39932]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Eastleigh (Chris Huhne) on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 646W.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how much the Commission spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40332]

Nick Harvey: The cost of providing bottled water for Westminster Hall, Committee and other meeting rooms in 2004–05 was £11,400.

Energy Wastage

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps the Commission is taking to limit energy wastage on the Parliamentary Estate; and if he will make a statement. [40464]

Nick Harvey: A range of measures are being taken to improve energy efficiency on the Parliamentary Estate. A new Energy and Water Saving Policy which contains targets for energy consumption, water consumption and carbon emissions was adopted in late 2005 by both Houses. These targets mirror those set by most Government Departments as proposed in the 'Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate', published by DEFRA.

Consultants have been recently appointed to advise on the renewal of the current basement heating and cooling systems and the Carbon Trust has been working with the Parliamentary Estate since 2004 to advise on methods to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. Recently consultants have advised on heating controls, kitchen energy use and heating, ventilation and air conditioning plant and have identified scope for energy consumption reduction in some areas.

To raise staff awareness of the importance of energy efficiency the Parliamentary Estates Directorate is embarking on an awareness campaign. The December 2005 issue of 'inHouse', the staff magazine for the House of Commons and the House of Lords, contained an article on the Parliamentary Estate's Energy Savers Group. Guest speakers are to be invited to make presentations on environmental issues to staff every few months. The first presentation was made by Professor David Bellamy on 21 November 2005, entitled "Sustainability and governance" and was very well received. A second speaker, Dave Hampton has been asked to make a presentation during February 2006 on reducing carbon emissions.

Mobile Phones

Sarah Teather: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many mobile telephones are *(a)* rented and *(b)* owned by the House authorities; and what the total cost was in 2004–05. [40407]

Nick Harvey: At 1 January 2006 the Parliamentary ICT service provided 275 mobile phones for use by staff of the House of Commons and the Parliamentary ICT service itself. All these telephones are owned by the House authorities. No mobile telephones are rented.

The cost of the service in 2004–05 was around £54,600.

Office Equipment

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how *(a)* computers, *(b)* printers, *(c)* telephones and *(d)* office furniture no longer required by the House Estate are disposed of; how many computers have been disposed of in the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [39064]

Nick Harvey: The House of Commons currently has a number of arrangements in place for the disposal of computers and printers. All of these ensure that the equipment is disposed of in a secure and environmentally sound manner. If possible equipment is offered for resale Member's equipment with useful life remaining is redeployed within the House Administration. There is no record of the number of computers disposed of across the House during the last 10 years.

Telephone handsets are refurbished and reused if possible and otherwise disposed of safely. Redundant mobile telephones are sent for recycling and the proceeds are donated to the children's ward at St. Thomas's Hospital. Office furniture is sold at auction by a Government approved auction house.

Project Costs

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1369W, on project costs, if he will list *(a)* the 250 readily identifiable projects and *(b)* other construction projects costing in excess of £100,000. [38368]

Nick Harvey: A list of the 250 readily identifiable projects has been placed in the Library. This list includes construction projects costing in excess of £100,000.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Administration Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39818]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The objectives of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) are set out in the "Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Annual Report 2005" (Cm 6526, June 2005).

The total net administration costs incurred by ODPM (excluding the Government Offices for the Regions) for 2004–05 were £166,963,000. ODPM does not monitor the regional breakdown of administration costs relating to the central Department. Such a breakdown could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total administration costs for his core Office are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39843]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The total net administration costs incurred by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (excluding the Government Offices for the Regions) for 2004–05 were £166,963,000.

For the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses, 67 per cent. of these costs are identifiable and 33 per cent. are non-identifiable.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39852]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In 2004–05, gross administrative costs for executive agencies sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister were as follows:

Executive agencies	*Admin costs (gross) (£)*
The Fire Service College	[1]4,786,000
The Planning Inspectorate	[1]47,670,000
The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre	[2]6,710,000
Total	59,166,000

[1] identifiable
[2] non-identifiable

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40061]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In 2004–05, administrative costs for executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) were as follows:

Executive NDPBs	*Admin costs (£)*
English Partnerships	[1]40,000,000
The Housing Corporation	[1]42,341,000
The Leasehold Advisory Service	[1]781,162
London Thames Gateway Development Corporation	[1]1,234,320
The Standards Board for England	[2]9,534,000
Stonebridge Housing Action Trust	[1]3,733,000
Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation	[1]1,125,099
West Northants Development Corporation	[1]109,190
The Valuation Tribunal Service	[2]10,793,000
Total	109,650,771

[1] identifiable
[2] non-identifiable

Cleveland Fire Authority

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to re-examine to top-up the proposed changes to the 'A' risk formula grant share in relation to Cleveland Fire Authority in the light of the Hemel Hempstead oil depot fire. [39156]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The category classification of risk is obsolete and therefore the 'A' risk indicator is no longer used in the formula grant calculations.

Following full public consultation over the summer, my hon. Friend the Minister for local government confirmed on 5 December 2005 that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister propose an indicator to measure top tier control of major accident hazards (COMAH) sites per head as the high risk top up element in the formula.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will consider all points raised in the current consultation before putting forward our proposed formula for use in 2006–07 and 2007–08, which the House will have the opportunity to debate.

Departmental Mobile Phones

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the criteria are for allocating mobile telephones to staff in his Department. [40391]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A business justification must be provided to support the purchase of mobile phones. The justification must include; why the provision of a mobile phone is necessary, the type of equipment to be provided and which members of staff will make use of the phone.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many short message service messages were sent via mobile telephones owned by his Department in the last year for which figures are available. [40392]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Faith Communities

John Battle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the publications his Department and its predecessors have produced relating to faith communities since 1989. [35352]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established on 29 May 2002, since then the publications produced relating to faith communities are as follows:

2002—The Community Cohesion Guide' Report of the ICRC Community Cohesion Seminar in Bradford.

2004—ODPM Home Office revised version of the Community Cohesion Guide. Tools for Regeneration—A Holistic Approach to Faith Communities'.

2005—Diversity and Neighbourhood Renewal fact-sheet. 'The Local Inter-Faith Guide: Community Co-operation in Action'. This was produced with the Inter-Faith Network for the UK.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of supporting borrowing by local authorities in England and Wales for each year since 1997; and what estimates have been made for each of the next five years. [40868]

Mr. Woolas: Government support for borrowing by local authorities is issued as part of the Revenue Support Grant Settlement. Revenue Support Grant is an unhypothecated resource and therefore it is not possible to separately identify figures for the costs of supported borrowing. Neither are there estimates of supported borrowing for future years.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to ensure that the quality of British environmental science is not harmed by the proposed closure of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Monks Wood; and if he will make a statement. [39547]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The Government are fully committed to maintaining the quality of environmental science in the UK and provides funding to the Natural Environment Research Council for this purpose. NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders on proposals on how best the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology can contribute on a sustainable basis to this. I am sure that NERC Council will consider all evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposals, including proposals for the closure of the CEH site at Monks Wood.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the merits of a statutory race Committee in relation to the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights; and if he will make a statement. [39418]

Meg Munn: The Government believe that Committees can play a valuable role in supporting the work of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights through enabling engagement with the communities it serves and ensuring that they can contribute to its strategy and policies. It has therefore provided wide ranging and flexible powers in the Equality Bill for the Commission, as an independent body, to establish Committees as it sees fit and to delegate functions to them. It will be open to the Commission to decide to establish a Committee to oversee its race equality work including its partnership with the Racial Equality Councils and its role in promoting good relations between communities.

Data Storage

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department has taken to ensure that users of internet data storage companies are informed of the data protection legislation governing providers based in the EU and US. [39427]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Enforcement and guidance regarding the Data Protection Act, which is derived from the EU Data Protection Directive, is the responsibility of the Information Commissioner, details of the Commissioner's work can be found at (http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/). The Data Protection Act puts an obligation on UK-based companies to ensure that data is adequately protected, regardless of where the data are stored.

Advice regarding data protection legislation has been provided as part of the DTI's information security business advice web pages (http://www.dti.gov.uk/industries/infonnation_security/) and through various information security publications. The advice is generic and not targeted at any specific sector. It's based upon how Information Security standard BS 7799 can contribute towards meeting the security requirements of the UK Data Protection Act.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department has taken to encourage the development of the UK data storage industry. [39733]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The DTI's Technology Programme supports strategically important technologies and knowledge transfer, often cutting across the needs of specific sectors. The Programme aims to fund industry-academic collaborative research and development projects focusing on industrially relevant leading-edge technology development. It is currently funding a £10 million competition focusing on "Data and Content Storage, Management, Retrieval and Analysis".

In addition, UK Trade and Investment aims to attract key businesses to set up or extend high value added operations in the UK, as well as to market the strengths of the UK's ICT sectors generally. Activities include inviting overseas companies that are interested in buying from, partnering with or exchanging technology to the UK to meet with UK companies. The UK has attracted and retained several businesses with interests in data storage. Notable examples are, Hewlett Packard, which conducts storage research within its laboratories in Bristol, Seagate Technologies which manufactures key magnetic components in Northern Ireland and an

Atlanta based company called Iron Mountain who recently established a data storage centre in Scotland, providing 100 jobs.

The Government recognises that information technology more widely is a key source of business competitiveness and productivity and is backing a coherent strategy and action plan for IT skills, spearheaded by e-Skills UK, the Sector Skills Council for IT, Telecoms and Contact centres. Employers across the sector are pledging support for the concept of an e-Business Academy as a national hub for IT-related skills development and support.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his answer on 31 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 698W what the total cost of *(a)* publications and *(b)* surveys by his Department were including (i) commissioning costs and (ii) printing costs. [28889]

Alan Johnson: To distinguish between surveys and other types of publications and to identify separate costs for commissioning and printing could only be done at disproportionate cost as this information is not held centrally.

Pursuant to my answer on 31 October 2005, when I informed you that between 1 January 1997 and 20 October 2005, the number of titles produced by my department was 10,066, the total cost of producing these titles including commissioning and printing amounted to £66,007,130. This equates to an average cost of £6,600 per title.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings of the *(a)* Standing Committee for the approximation of the laws of the member states concerning pressure equipment, *(b)* Committee on electronic signatures and *(c)* Advisory Committee on the implementation of open network provision (ONP) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39005]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

(a) The mandate of the pressure equipment Standing Committee is contained in Article 7.2 of the Pressure Equipment Directive 97/23/EC. The provisions of this Article have not yet been put into effect and the Committee has therefore never met.

(b) The Electronic Signatures Committee, set up under Article 9 of Directive 1999/93/EC, did not meet during the UK presidency.

(c) The Advisory Committee on the implementation of open network provision (ONP) did not meet during the UK presidency.

No provisions would have been made for representation of the devolved governments as these are not devolved issues.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of directives on the removal of technical barriers to trade in the sector of measuring instruments and methods of metrological control; *(b)* Committee for the adaption to technical progress of directives on the removal of technical barriers to trade in the sector of construction plant and equipment and *(c)* Committee for the adaption of technical progress of directives on the removal of technical barriers to trade in the sector of pressure vessels have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39007]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

(a) Unfortunately it is not possible to identify a committee which precisely fits the description provided. However no meeting of the Measuring Instruments Committee set up under directive 2004/22/EC (concerning measuring instruments and methods of metrological control) have taken place in the UK presidency.

(b) Unfortunately it is not possible to identify a committee which precisely fits the description provided. The sort of plant and equipment mentioned might typically fall under the scope of directive 98/37/EC on the approximation of the laws of the member states relating to machinery. The Standing Committee set up under Article 6 of this directive met in Brussels on 11–12 October 2005. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission and one official from the Department of Trade and Industry and one from the Health and Safety executive represented the United Kingdom.

(c) There is no 'pressure vessels directive' and so there is no such Committee. There is a Simple Pressure Vessels Directive (87/404/EEC) but this does not include any provision for such a Committee to be established. Issues concerning the administration of 87/404/EEC would, in principle, be handled by the Committee provided for under the Pressure Equipment Directive (97/23/EC). I am responding separately to the hon Member's question about the Directive.

No provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments as these are not devolved issues.

Foreign Registered Companies

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list foreign registered companies that have received a grant from each regional development agency (RDA) in each year since RDAs were created. [35836]

Alun Michael: England's regional development agencies do not generally keep details of companies based on country of registration for all their programmes.

Internet Rogue Dialling

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to compensate victims of internet rogue dialling. [40298]

Alun Michael: In the first instance it is a matter for the telecoms companies to resole the problems their own customers may face with charges from internet rogue diallers. Customers with disputed bills can use the alternative dispute resolution schemes, of which all telecoms companies are members, to sort out disagreements.

The Government have taken action to ensure consumers are adequately protected from internet rogue diallers. As a result of discussions with ICSTIS, the

premium rate services regulator, a prior permission scheme for internet diallers was put in place in August 2004. This means that all diallers have to be approved by ICSTIS before they can be released. ICSTIS can order service providers to pay redress if they breach the Code, with the threat of automatic barring from providing any premium rate service if they default. The number of complaints has fallen dramatically since the scheme was introduced in August 2004. Complaints to ICSTIS fell to a low of about 50 per month in recent months, down from 10,000 per month when this problem was at its peak in 2004. The Government also asked the media and telecoms regulator, Ofcom, to review premium rate regulation in August 2004.

Ofcom made a number of recommendations to reduce the scope for consumer harm. Many of these recommendations have already been implemented including raising the maximum penalty to £250,000 for those that abuse premium rate services. The flow of funds from network operators to service providers has now been slowed down. This will keep money in the system, which can then be used to pay redress to consumers who have been the victims of a scam. New rules on compensation for consumers who have been subject to a scam are being implemented. This change will mean that not only will ICSTIS be able to order refunds from service providers but also to collect the money from the telecoms companies to compensate consumers if it is not forthcoming from the service provider.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures the Government are taking to tackle internet rogue dialling. [40300]

Alun Michael: The Government have taken action to ensure consumers are adequately protected from internet rogue diallers. As a result of discussions with ICSTIS, the premium rate services regulator, a prior permission scheme for internet diallers was put in place in August 2004. This means that all diallers have to be approved by ICSTIS before they can be released. ICSTIS can order service providers to pay redress if they breach the Code, with the threat of automatic barring from providing any premium rate service if they default. The number of complaints has fallen dramatically since the scheme was introduced in August 2004. Complaints to ICSTIS fell to a low of about 50 per month in recent months, down from 10,000 per month when this problem was at its peak in 2004. The Government also asked the media and telecoms regulator, Ofcom, to review premium rate regulation in August 2004.

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Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the cost of internet rogue dialling to consumers in each year since 2003; and how many consumers he estimates were affected in each year. [40301]

Alun Michael: Internet rogue diallers are regulated by the premium rate services regulator, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS).

ICSTIS has no information on the cost of Internet rogue diallers to consumers either as a cumulative figure or in year on year statistics.

ICSTIS is not in possession of sufficient information to estimate the number of consumers affected by rogue diallers though ICSTIS does record and investigate all complaints that the public submit.

To this end, ICSTIS received the following numbers of complaints about dialler services in the years 2003 until 2005.

	Number
2003	4,600
2004	57,750
2005	4,550

As the figures clearly demonstrate, ICSTIS received record numbers of complaints about dialler services during 2004, which resulted in the introduction of a prior permission regime by ICSTIS for the software that enabled these services. This includes prominent pricing and premium rate number information prior to access of the service as well as the requirement to provide an on-screen clock that displays call duration and cumulative costs for a user.

The level of complaints in 2005, demonstrates the impact that ICSTIS has had on the number of complaints received from members of the public.

In the first instance it is a matter for the telecoms companies to decide how to resolve the problems facing their own customers over charges from Internet rogue diallers. Customers with disputed bills can use the services of the alternative dispute resolution schemes, of which all telecoms companies are members, to sort out disagreements. New rules on compensation for consumers who have been subject to a scam are also being implemented by ICSTIS. This change will mean that not only will ICSTIS be able to order refunds from service providers but also to collect the money from the telecoms companies to compensate consumers if it is not forthcoming from the service provider.

Natural Environment Research Council

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what total financial support from public funds was allocated to the Natural Environment Research Council in each of the last five years. [39548]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Amounts allocated to the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) from the Science Budget are as follows (as set out in the Science Budget allocations publications, http://www.ost.gov.uk/research/funding/budget01-04/index.htm.)

Science budget	*£ million*
2000-01	181.8
2001-02	192.9
2002-03	205.4
2003-04	264.1
2004-05	314.2

In addition, NERC receives public funding from a number of other Government Departments and agencies.

Retirement Age (Public Sector Workers)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the retirement age for existing public sector workers will remain at 60 years. [34655]

Mr. Des Browne: I have been asked to reply.

Retirement age is not the same as the normal pension age but simply the age at which workers leave the labour market. The normal pension age is the age at which scheme members can draw an unreduced pension from the scheme—this has been the subject of recent negotiations.

On 18 October 2005 the Government reached agreement with unions on a set of principles underpinning reform in the civil service, NHS and teachers pension schemes. The main focus of that agreement was the proposed increase in the normal pension age from 60 to 65. The TUC accepted that new schemes for new entrants would have a normal pension age of 65, and that these schemes would be launched as soon as practicable following a period of scheme-specific consultation to be completed by June 2006. Existing staff are not being compelled to move to a normal pension age of 65. Other aspects of scheme reform, apart from the normal pension age issue, will be considered in scheme specific negotiations to be completed as soon as practicable.

Technology Programme

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many projects have been funded through his Department's technology programme and its nearest equivalent predecessors in *(a)* small and medium-sized enterprises, *(b)* other businesses, *(c)* universities and *(d)* other organisations in each year since 1997; what the total sums awarded were in each case; and what the total value was of contributions to funded projects required from participants in each case. [35497]

Alun Michael: Substantive information addressing sizes and type of organisation offered support, sums involved and contributions from recipient organisations is contained in Annex A to the annual report of the Technology Strategy Board which is in the Libraries of the House. Work is progressing on a catalogue of support for applications to the first three competitions are due to be published in March 2006.

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much funding was provided for each individual project that has been awarded funds under his Department's technology programme; over how many years this funding is provided for the project; what the name is of each participant in the project; what category of organisation each falls into; how much funding was provided to each participant; and what the value was of each contribution required to be made by a participant in each case. [35498]

Alun Michael: The restricted commercial nature of support offered by the technology programme to consortia and the stage reached by them accepting and confirming their intra-project collaborations, prevents the release of detailed information on individual projects. However, substantive information addressing sizes and types of organisations offered support, sums involved and contributions from recipient organisations is contained in Annex A to the annual report of the Technology Strategy Board which is in the Libraries of the House. Work is progressing on a catalogue of support for applications to the first three competitions are due to be published in March 2006.

Temporary Migration

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to encourage temporary migration by workers from abroad. [33418]

Mr. Sutcliffe: While the Home Office has lead responsibility for migration policy, my officials are working closely with their Home Office colleagues to ensure that the needs of business for migrant workers are taken into account.

The UK needs migration—tourists, students and migrant workers make a vital contribution to the UK economy. We need to ensure, however, that while we let in migrants with the skills and talents to benefit Britain we stop those who are trying to abuse our hospitality and place a burden on our society.

The aim is to ensure that those who can contribute most to the UK are selected for entry and that the country takes in only as many people as our economy needs at any one time.

The 5-year strategy on Immigration and asylum published in February 2005 set out the next stage of the Government's comprehensive reform of the UK's immigration and asylum system of which the points-based selective migration system was a part. It puts the interests of Britain first with strict controls that work.

The main aims of the new points-based system will be, to:

improve public confidence in the system;

fill skills gaps;

attract highly productive and highly skilled workers and students;
attract investment and increase productivity and flexibility in the labour market; and
ensure people leave at the end of their stay.

The new system will be clearer and more transparent and easier for applicants and employers to understand and use and there will be more objective and easily verifiable criteria.

The consultation period on the consultation document "Making Migration Work for Britain" closed on 7 November. The Home Office are now analysing all the responses received. We anticipate the Government response to the consultation exercise will be published in the new year, together with a clearer timetable for the next steps. We will continue to consult with key stakeholders on specific issues as we formulate our response and during future stages of the process.

We are also aware that migrant workers may face difficulties in understanding and asserting their rights. We have offered to work with the Governments of all the new member states, to prepare bi-lingual "know before you go" leaflets, giving advice on questions to ask before leaving the country and on legal protections offered to workers including agency workers. It is particularly important to reach workers in the host country before they leave as it is often much harder to help workers, who may not speak English and have no accommodation arranged, once they arrive.

To date we have produced leaflets in partnership with the Polish and Lithuanian Governments. These followed a similar leaflet we produced in partnership with the Portuguese Government, and benefited from input from the TUC, the CBI and other stakeholders. These have been distributed widely in both the workers' home country and the UK. In Poland, for example, they have been publicised on television and our embassy and the Polish authorities have worked hard to distribute them via job centres, recruitment fairs and other channels. The text of the leaflets is also available on the DTI website—ttp://www.dti.gov.uk/er/agency/migrant_workers.htm

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Olympics

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what provision she is making for access for disabled and elderly spectators at the Olympics in 2012. [40603]

Tessa Jowell: Provisions for disabled people and the elderly are based on the successful 'Games Mobility' model used at the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002. This will operate throughout both the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and covers every spectator service from disability awareness training for staff, inclusive ticketing processes, special transport and drop-off systems. Among other things, the service will include pre-booking of various forms of wheelchair; bookable access to individual electric buggies for transfers to competition venues; provision of personalised travel plans at the point of event ticket purchase; provision of wide access at airport-style security screening; appropriate signposting; audio-visual information provision; and induction loops at stations.

Transport plans for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games will provide excellent access for all spectators and all competition venues will be served by fully accessible transport options. Mobility impaired spectators travelling by car will either be able to park close to venues or at spectator transport malls, and use Games Mobility facilities to transfer to public transport.

The interim Olympic Delivery Authority is developing its approach to the design of the Olympic Park and venues to ensure they are accessible environments, the principles for which will be contained in the 'Access for All' strategy which is currently being prepared as part of the planning process. This strategy is expected to be ready later this year.

Libraries

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* books, *(b)* DVDs, *(c)* video cassettes, *(d)* computer games and *(e)* audio books have been available in library service stock in (i) Brent and (ii) London in each year since 1997. [40679]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 1 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 899W, on the total book stock held by libraries across inner and outer London and my answer to her of 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1612W, on audio-visual materials held by Brent Libraries and by other libraries across Greater London. The numbers of books held by Brent from 1997–98 is shown in the table. Information about the number of computer games is not held centrally. However, the number of multi-media, open learning and language packs and, separately, CD-Roms and Software items held by Brent Libraries and those in the rest of Greater London (including Brent) is shown in the table.

	Total bookstock held by Brent libraries
1997–98	579,669
1998–99	644,330
1999–00	532,094
2000–01	483,798
2001–02	466,792
2002–03	451,221
2003–04	443,185

	Brent		*Greater London*	
	Multi-media, opening learning and language packs	*CD-roms and software*	*Multi-media, opening learning and language packs*	*CD-roms and software*
1997–98	[1]—	[1]—	17,567	4,607
1998–99	536	103	20,369	5,767
1999–2000	[1]—	[1]—	11,443	7,401
2000–01	203	505	13,342	18,846

	Brent		Greater London	
	Multi-media, opening learning and language packs	*CD-roms and software*	*Multi-media, opening learning and language packs*	*CD-roms and software*
2001–02	518	1,372	9,977	40,415
2002–03	25	[1]—	24,765	19,118
2003–04	1,475	85	33,447	18,143

[1] No return entered to CIPFA in this category for this year

Source:
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Public Library Statistics

Public Service Agreement

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how her Department defines high quality for the purposes of its public service agreement performance target 1; and if she will make a statement. [40253]

Mr. Caborn: The document 'High Quality PE and Sport for Young People—A Guide to recognising and achieving high quality PE and sport in schools and clubs' (DfES/DCMS, March 2004), provides a detailed description of the outcomes of high quality physical education and school sport. For the purposes of the joint DCMS/DfES PE and school sport public service agreement target, high quality PE and school sport produces young people with the skills, understanding, desire and commitment to continue to improve and achieve in a range of PE, sport and health-enhancing physical activities, in line with their abilities.

A further document, 'Do You Have High Quality PE and Sport in Your School—A guide to self-evaluating and improving the quality of PE and school sport' (DfES/DCMS, January 2005), helps teachers to use the pupil outcomes of high quality to carry out self-evaluation of the quality of PE and sport they provide. Copies of these documents have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Debt Management

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department to disseminate best practice on debt management. [40595]

Hilary Benn: We have established procedures and guidance on debtor management and these are linked into specific targets. Quarterly senior management reports include data on debtors to ensure that debtor management has a high profile within DFID.

Our Finance Training Strategy provides for debtor management training. Training is modular based and is linked into our systems and procedural training. There are also e-modules aimed at ensuring information and guidance is widely available across DFID.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40147]

Mr. Thomas: DFID did not bring to book its assets until 2001–02 so any disposals before that are not recorded within the accounts. We have not sold any properties or land since that time.

There are no DFID Agencies, or non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) who own properties or land. DFID wholly owns the CDC Group plc, which sold the lease on its London headquarters building in 2004. The proceeds of the sale were £24.5 million which was retained by the CDC. No estimate of the current value of this building is available, but in any event this would be misleading as it has undergone significant refurbishment since the sale.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the annual expenditure on training and development by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40001]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not currently hold all training and development cost details centrally, and we do not have a breakdown by UK region.

As far as we are able to ascertain from our individual Divisional records, expenditure for training and general staff development throughout DFID during the last three financial years was as follows:

Financial year	*Training and other staff development (£ million)*
2002–03	[1]2.28
2003–04	5.22
2004–05	5.7
2005–06[2]	5.6

[1] The method of acquiring, recording and reporting information on costs changed during 2002–03, providing for a higher degree of accounting accuracy for subsequent years.

[2] Planned.

EU Agricultural Trade Policies

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will take steps to encourage the EU to adopt a rigid timetable for the liberalisation of its agricultural trade policies. [38726]

Mr. Thomas: The Government are working hard to encourage the EU to liberalise its agricultural trade policies, including through promoting reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as well as continuing to press for an ambitious outcome in the overall round of current World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks beyond that just concluded at the WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong.

HM Treasury and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) released in December 2005, "A Vision for the Common Agricultural Policy", to stimulate further debate in the EU. In the document the Government have laid out how, within the next 10 to 15 years, we will work towards promoting a European agricultural industry which does not distort international trade and the world economy. In addition, in the context of the WTO, we have successfully worked with EU member states, the European Commission and other WTO members in Hong Kong to agree an end date of 2013 for all forms of agricultural export subsidy, with a substantial part to be phased out by 2010. These are the most unfair and distorting of agricultural subsidies.

HIV/AIDS (China)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the Government of China on tackling HIV/AIDS. [40590]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the hon. Member for Buckingham to the response I gave to my hon. Friend for Hartlepool on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1488w.

DFID frequently discusses the HIV and AIDS situation with the Chinese authorities. During my visit to China last month, I had a specific discussion on 2 December with the vice minister of health, Mr. Huang Jiefu.

Pakistan (Earthquake)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid his Department is giving to the Government of Pakistan to enable victims of the earthquake in Pakistan to be moved away from affected areas by road. [40797]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* DFID has provided financial assistance to the United Nations, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This support (both financial as well as in-kind support) has enabled them to provide assistance to the affected population whether this is in their places of origin or in the areas to which they have been displaced. In some cases this has included activities such as medical evacuation undertaken either by road or by helicopter.

In addition, we have provided targeted support to the International Community's overall logistic (including transport) capacity which has supported the Government of Pakistan's overall efforts to bring assistance to the affected population.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many helicopters the British Government have made available for relief efforts in the Pakistan earthquake zone; what plans he has to change *(a)* the number of helicopters available and *(b)* the frequency of aid flights that they make; and if he will make a statement. [40798]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* DFID worked to ensure that helicopters were available as quickly as was possible. It was important however to ensure that only those helicopters that were suitable to the task were sent. Once DFID identified two available PUMA helicopters, it tasked the Ministry of Defence to airlift them from Spain to Islamabad for use by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). These arrived on 17 October. In addition, DFID committed £1 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) and £2.5 million to the ICRC, both of which included support to helicopter provision, and £1.7 million to United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) specifically for helicopters. Three Chinook helicopters were also provided through the Ministry of Defence from 25 October until 28 November to transport relief items and carry out medical evacuations.

The priority now is to ensure that there is enough helicopter capacity to continue delivery of assistance to remote areas throughout the winter period which lasts until March. Therefore DFID, at the request of the WFP, contracted four helicopters for four months (80 flying hours per helicopter per month), from 24 November as part of a £5.5 million package of support to UNHAS.

Palestine

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he has taken to ensure that *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU assistance to agencies working in Palestinian territories complies with International Court of Justice injunctions in relation to the wall constructed by Israel. [39322]

Hilary Benn: The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004 recognised two legal obligations for states operating in the occupied Palestinian territories: not to recognise the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the barrier; and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the

situation created by such construction. In addition, states who are parties to the fourth Geneva convention are required to ensure Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law as embodied in that convention. The UK Government continue to urge Israel to route the barrier away from occupied territory. UK and EU assistance complies with the ICJ legal obligations.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government take to ensure that aid to the Palestinian Authority is used for legitimate and accountable purposes; and if he will make a statement. [40814]

Hilary Benn: The Government are committed to ensuring that all UK development assistance is properly accounted for, used for the intended purposes and represents value for money.

Since 2004, all DFID financial support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) budget has been provided through a Reform Trust Fund managed by the World Bank. Funding is conditional on the achievement of benchmarks for reform, progress against which is carefully monitored. These conditions have helped the Palestinian Authority improve its financial control and management.

Other forms of DFID assistance for Palestinians are channelled through organisations whose accounts are independently audited.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many renewable energy projects his Department has undertaken since 1997; in what year each was undertaken; in what location; and what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* cost was of each project. [38224]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* DFID has funded 22 energy projects since 1997 through our knowledge and research (KaR) programme. These had a total value of just under £3.4 million giving an average project value of £154,000. These projects covered a wide range of technologies including wind, small hydropower, solar photovoltaic and biomass. The following table shows a breakdown by year, location, nature of project and cost.

The projects typically covered a period of two or three years. Some involved the development and improvement of technologies while others studied the institutional and financial issues surrounding the greater deployment of renewable energy sources in developing countries. Most of the projects were carried out in developing countries, working with local organisations and community groups.

In addition, DFID funded the installation of three wind turbines to generate electricity on the island of St. Helena, completed in 1999. This was part of a wider (electricity) generation and load management project carried out at a capital cost of approximately £625,000.

Our overriding interest in energy is to improve access in developing countries to affordable and reliable energy services, especially to the poor and in support of pro-poor growth and social development. We are encouraging the World Bank, through our support to the energy sector management assistance programme (ESMAP), to give greater attention to renewable energy as part of their efforts to improve access to energy. The World Bank is scaling up its financial support for renewable energy and energy efficiency and has recently announced a rise to $748 million for the year to June 2005, compared to $339 million the previous year. This exceeds the commitment they made in 2004 to increase by 20 percent. per annum their renewable energy and energy efficiency investments over the next five years. We very much welcome this increased focus by the World Bank on clean energy investments.

We continue to work with various UK-based and international organisations and partnerships working towards the greater use of renewable energy as part of the effort to improve access to energy services.

DFID engineering knowledge and research projects in renewable energy since 1997

Start year	*Location*	*Nature of Project*	*Cost (thousand GBP)*
1997	Kenya	Renewable, general	292
1997	Nepal, Colombia, Peru	Hydro	178
1997	Various	Photovoltaic	62
1998	Peru, Sri Lanka	Wind	123
1998	China	Wind	50
1998	China, India, South Africa	Wind	104
1998	Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia	Renewable, general	106
1998	Nepal, Sri Lanka	Hydro	90
1998	China	Hydro	59
1999	Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Peru, Kenya, Nepal	Renewable, general	114
1999	China , India, South Africa	Renewable, general	111
1999	Uganda, Zimbabwe	Biomass	137
1999	Various	Photovoltaic	70
2000	Various	Hydro	99
2000	Bangladesh, Vietnam	Biomass	248
2000	Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, Sri Lanka	Renewable, general	206
2001	Cuba, Colombia, Peru	Renewable, general	374
2001	Tanzania, Ghana, Kenya	Renewable, general	199

DFID engineering knowledge and research projects in renewable energy since 1997

Start year	Location	Nature of Project	Cost (thousand GBP)
2002	India	Hydro	149
2002	South Africa, India	Renewable, general	300
2002	Nepal, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Uganda	Renewable, general	235
2002	Vietnam, Philippines	Renewable, general	77
		Total	3,383

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Equal Pay

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what the difference in pay was between *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time male and female workers in each year since 2001. [26801]

Meg Munn: The table shows the difference in pay between male and female full-time and part-time workers in the UK in each year since 2001. These figures are from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings from the Office for National Statistics.

The difference in pay between male and female part-time workers is less reliable than for full-time workers and there is more uncertainty in the trend over years for part-time workers. This is due to:

differences in life-time working patterns of male and female workers;

the number of male part-time workers being about 25 per cent. of the number of female part-time workers which results in lower sample sizes for male part-time workers.

	Full-time Median hourly earnings (£)			*Part-time Median hourly earnings (£)*		
	Male	*Female*	*Percentage difference*[1]	*Male*	*Female*	*Percentage difference*[1]
2005	11.31	9.84	-13.0	6.50	6.67	2.6
2004	10.97	9.38	-14.5	6.14	6.31	2.8
2003[2]	10.58	9.04	-14.6	6.00	6.08	1.3
2002[2]	10.26	8.67	-15.5	5.68	5.71	0.5
2001[2]	9.84	8.23	-16.4	5.30	5.50	3.8

[1] Difference between female and male median hourly earnings as a percentage of male median hourly earnings.
[2] Due to changes in survey methodology, estimates for years 2001 to 2003 are not entirely consistent with estimates for 2004 and 2005. Estimates are available on both the old and new basis for 2004. For 2004 the percentage difference for full-time workers is 14.1 per cent. when calculated on the 2001–03 basis, compared with the figure of 14.5 per cent. shown in the table, a change of 0.4 per cent.

TRANSPORT

Bus Travel

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus passenger journeys there were in *(a)* 2000–01 and *(b)* 2004–05. [40841]

Ms Buck: There were 4,319 million bus journeys undertaken within Great Britain in 2000–01. The equivalent number in 2004–05 was 4,609 million.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2220W, on rail subsidies, whether the Government plans to make further grants available to London and Continental Railways Limited for the completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction of section 2. [39385]

Derek Twigg: In accordance with the 1996 Development Agreement, Government have continued to contribute towards the construction cost of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link by way of grants (£109 million in 2001, £444 million in 2002, £342 million in 2003 and £1,097 million in 2005), and is due to contribute a further £1,149 million before the completion of construction of section 2 in 2007.

In addition, from March 2005, Government have made a grant of up to £402 million available to London and Continental Railways Limited (LCR) to construct Temple Mills Depot. This asset will eventually transfer to LCR in exchange for Waterloo International Station and North Pole Depot.

Christmas Celebrations

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Department is taking to celebrate Christmas this year. [36749]

Ms Buck: The Department took a number of steps to celebrate Christmas last year, including publicising the Whitehall carol service and the DfT, ODPM and DEFRA carol service.

Concessionary Transport

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has held with Transport for London on discounted or free parking in London for resident pensioners. [40611]

Ms Buck: None, although Transport Ministers meet the Mayor and the Commissioner of Transport for London from time to time to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Responsibility for parking enforcement in London generally rests with the relevant borough. It is a matter for individual local authorities to decide on the nature and scope of parking controls and to balance the needs of residents, emergency services, local business and those who work in and visit the area.

Connex South Eastern Franchise

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 895W, on railways, how much his Department spent on external consultants in connection with the termination of the Connex South Eastern franchise under section 30 of the Railways Act 1993, broken down by consultancy. [39381]

Derek Twigg: The information is as follows:

	£
First Class Partnerships	670,000
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	595,000
KPMG	421,000
Linklaters	385,000
Eversheds	261,000
Clifford Chance	156,000
AB Publishing Ltd.	54,000
Hwe8 Ltd(J McLaren)	17,000
Total	2,559,000

Damages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1309–10W, on damages, if he will make a statement on each case to which he refers. [39719]

Ms Buck: The Department's policy is that damage claims are subject to special control procedures as laid out in government accounting, which is available at www.government-accounting.gov.uk. Every claim is looked at on a case-by-case basis, and following careful appraisal legal advice is sought where necessary. It would not be appropriate to reveal further specific details of individual cases where these would conflict with commercial or legal confidentiality.

Departmental Correspondence

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of how much correspondence from his Department was addressed to people who have *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house in each of the last five years. [40048]

Ms Buck: The Department does not keep a record of returned correspondence and is therefore unable to provide the information requested. The only exception is for vehicle registration documents transactions carried out by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, where all Post Office returned registration documents were analysed. This showed that, over the five years ending December 2005, a total of 533,864 (0.6 per cent.) of the 86,505,364 registration documents issued were undelivered.

Of these 84 were returned because the intended recipient had died and 71,812 because the intended recipient had "gone away".

A further 174,042 were returned because the intended recipient was not known at the address given, 277,626 because of application error by the licensing dealer or customer and 10,330 without a specific reason being given.

Departmental Data

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what methods his Department employs to ensure that its data are up-to-date, with particular reference to information on people who have *(a)* moved house and *(b)* died. [37789]

Ms Buck: A variety of means are used to ensure that the Department keeps the personal data it holds up to date including:

Internal cross checking across business units;

Customer helpdesk/inquiry unit;

Proactive communications with clients;

Website facilities; and

Where it is appropriate and lawful, sharing personal data between government departments and other parts of the public sector.

Specific details for the Department's Agencies are as follows:

DVLA

It is a legal requirement for drivers and vehicle keepers to notify DVLA of a change of name, address or vehicle details. DVLA is dependent on the motoring public to inform the Agency of new information as soon as the change occurs. Until a change is notified, DVLA remains unaware that the record is out of date. Because of legislative constraints, DVLA is unable to use third party information to update its records.

DVLA has introduced several initiatives aimed at improving the accuracy, traceability and up to dateness of its records. These initiatives include the introduction of the new vehicle taxation rules (continuous registration), rollout of the new vehicle registration certificate to all vehicle keepers, and an intensive accuracy publicity campaign.

DVLA marks the record of those who have died on the basis of information received from the Office of National Statistics to prevent further correspondence being sent out which may cause distress to the bereaved's family.

The results of DVLA's 2005 Accuracy Survey indicate that 97.4 per cent. of vehicle keepers are able to be traced from the information on the vehicle record. The equivalent figure for 2003 was 90 per cent.

DSA

The Driving Standards Agency keeps registers of approved trainers and instructors, including Approved Car Driving Instructors (ADIs) and LGV Driving Instructors. Instructors are encouraged to inform the

Agency of any change of name or address within 10 days. All ADIs are provided with a change of address card when they register. The four yearly renewal of instructors' registration and periodic testing of ADIs' continued fitness and ability to give instruction, require up to date information. Otherwise an instructor could face removal.

DSA is introducing an Integrated Register of Driver Trainers. To ensure information on the new Register is as current as possible DSA wrote to all instructors last year. The details requested included their email address for possible future communications.

DSA is establishing an Internet service that will enable instructors to update their own records electronically.

Details are checked when instructors contact DSA. In addition, DSA sends a quarterly magazine Despatch and ad hoc updates to instructors. Any returns are checked against DSA and DVLA records to see if a more up to date address is available.

MCA

Customers are encouraged to provide up-to-date information to validate our records whenever they require the services of the agency. Re-validation of certificates, which occur on a regular basis, for both ships and seafarers require up-to-date information.

VOSA

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) does not hold data on the public.

Users of the computerised MOT system are responsible for updating their records on the system. Site Managers annually receive a reminder to confirm or amend information about their site including personnel details. When VOSA receive notification of a person's death their record is amended accordingly. Instructions on these processes are included in the system user guide and internal VOSA Operating Instructions.

Pre-funded account holders are similarly responsible for updating VOSA on any changes in their contact details.

Operator licence holders update their records with VOSA's traffic area offices through a self-service system.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40137]

Ms Buck: The Department was formed in May 2002.

The requested information has been placed in the Library of the House. Information on the current value of sale prices can be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Sale proceeds were retained by the following DfT agencies: Driving Standards Agency, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency and the Highways Agency.

All Northern Lighthouse Board and Trinity House Lighthouse Service sale proceeds are remitted to the General Lighthouse Fund.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39137]

Ms Buck: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, on train operating companies, what the size is of the specialist team within his Department continuously managing the franchise contracts with train operating companies. [39374]

Derek Twigg: The Rail Service Delivery Directorate, which manages the delivery of rail franchises within the Department, consists of 77 posts. 43 are directly involved with the management of franchise delivery.

Docklands Light Railway

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2299W, on the Docklands Light Railway, what assessment he has made of the merit of bringing forward from 2009 the in-service date for increased capacity on the Docklands Light Railway. [40821]

Ms Buck: The upgrades to the Docklands Light Railway are the responsibility of Transport for London and the London Mayor. The planned upgrade to three car services on some sections of the Docklands Light Railway will require works at affected stations, to ensure that all platforms can accommodate the longer trains. On this basis, 2009 remains the preferred date for the introduction into service of the longer trains.

Light Rail Schemes

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria he used to assess the competence of *(a)* the Greater Manchester passenger transport executive, *(b)* Merseytravel and *(c)* Nottinghamshire passenger transport executive to develop and run a light rail scheme. [35259]

Derek Twigg: In deciding whether to approve light rail schemes, the Department takes account of a number of factors, including value for money, the proposed contractual structure, financial and other risks, and deliverability. The competence of the authority in question is not separately assessed but can be relevant to the considerations noted above.

London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of sections 4 to 19 of the London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003. [39707]

Ms Buck: The London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003 ("the Act") resulted from a private bill jointly promoted by the Association of London Government (ALG), the City of Westminster and Transport for London (TfL). The operation of the Act under sections 4–19 (the whole of Part II) is a matter the ALG, TfL and the London boroughs. For more information contact:

Association of London Government Transport and Environment Committee

New Zealand House

80 Haymarket

London

SW1Y 4TE

Parking Fines

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the total value of unpaid parking fines was in each year since 1997; [38457]

(2) what the total revenue raised by parking fines has been in each year since 2001. [38607]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

Information on unpaid parking fines and the revenue raised from parking summary offences is not available centrally.

The information collected by the Home Office identifies the number of fixed penalties ordered to be paid and the number and amounts of court-imposed fines issued for such offences. Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs currently estimates the overall payment rate for fines in general to be 80 per cent. It is not possible to establish accurately the total value of unpaid parking fines.

Under the Road Traffic Act 1991, Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers allow local authorities to take over responsibility for enforcing parking contraventions from the police. Data on Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) from individual local authorities operating Decriminalised Parking Enforcement was first published in the Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales 2002 Supplementary tables'. The latest publication detailing 2003 information lists data by local authorities partaking in the scheme, [Tables 22*(a)* -22*(b)* refers], a copy of which is available in the Library. This publication can also be accessed on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics (RDS) website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

Railways

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with officials from the Growth Areas Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the reinstatement of passenger rail services to link Kettering to Corby. [39786]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Discussions were held with the ODPM in 2005 which resulted in the East Midlands Development Agency providing a grant of £200,000 to carry out a detailed study of the technical feasibility of restoring rail passenger services to Corby. Catalyst Corby has commissioned Network Rail to carry out the study and work is now under way.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the performance of Arriva Trains Wales on the Wales and Borders network since 2003. [40244]

Derek Twigg: The Arriva Trains Wales performance figures since 2003 are published in 'National Rail Trends', a copy of which is available in the Library.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many miles of track have been repaired in each year since 1997; and how many miles of track are awaiting repair; [38460]

(2) how many miles of track have been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* decommissioned in each year since 1997; [38465]

(3) how many new miles of railway track have been commissioned for installation in each of the next five years. [38468]

Derek Twigg: Maintenance and renewal of the national rail network is the responsibility of Network Rail (NR). I have asked NR to respond directly to the hon. Member.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the morning peak *(a)* annual passenger count for use of Leeds Station and *(b)* passengers in excess of capacity figure for trains entering (i) Leeds and (ii) London was in each of the last 10 years. [38720]

Derek Twigg: Information on the numbers of passengers arriving at Leeds station in the morning peak is not held by the Department. The Passengers in Excess of Capacity (PIXC) regime applies only to London and so PIXC figures for Leeds are not available. The figures for London are set out in the National Rail Trends Yearbook, a copy of which is available in the House Library.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many kilometres of railway track there are in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* each of the English regions and *(d)* Northern Ireland; and how many kilometres are (i) double or multiple-track and (ii) electrified in each case; [39211]

(2) how many *(a)* kilometres of track and *(b)* railway junctions in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales, (iii) each of the English regions and (iv) Northern Ireland are controlled by (A) colour light signal systems, (B) radio-electronic token signals and (C) mechanical semaphore signals; [39212]

(3) how much track in kilometres in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* each of the English regions and *(d)* Northern Ireland has electronic train protection. [39213]

Derek Twigg: Operation of the rail network in Great Britain is the responsibility of Network Rail (NR) and I have asked NR to write direct to the hon. Member. Railways in Northern Ireland are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Office.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans South Eastern trains has to increase fares for passengers in 2006. [39261]

Derek Twigg: In line with current fares regulation, South Eastern Trains will increase their regulated fares by 1 per cent. above inflation in 2006. The unregulated fares, which are set by the Train Operating Company and are not linked to inflation have increased by an average of 3.1 per cent.

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce the final decision on the frequency of trains during the rush hour on the Hayes line as a result of the consultation conducted by the Strategic Rail Authority. [39172]

Derek Twigg: The Integrated Kent Franchise has now been awarded to London and South Eastern Railway Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Govia) and it is for the new operator to develop and agree a detailed timetable with Network Rail. The new franchise commences on 1 April 2006.

Road Improvements

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to introduce hard shoulder running on major routes. [40664]

Dr. Ladyman: Controlled use of the hard shoulder during periods of traffic congestion is due to be introduced on the M42 by March 2007, as part of the Highways Agency's Active Traffic Management (ATM) pilot project.

In order to measure the impact of hard shoulder running, a period of 12 months of operation is required during which comprehensive monitoring will be undertaken. Initial conclusions about the effectiveness of this measure and the possibility of its further use on the network are therefore not expected until 2008. Due to the relatively low number of accidents that occur on motorways, three years of accident data will be needed before overall conclusions can be reached on the impact of hard shoulder running on safety.

Speeding Fines

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much of the total revenue raised by speeding fines has been paid to the Treasury in each year since 1997; [38454]

(2) what the total value of unpaid speeding fines was in each year since 1997. [38455]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the total revenue from speeding fines is not collected centrally.

The information collected by the Home Office identifies the number of fixed penalties ordered to be paid and the number and amounts of court-imposed fines issued for such offences. Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs currently estimate an overall payment rate for fines in general of 80 per cent. It is not possible to establish accurately the total value of unpaid speeding fines.

Toll Charges (Buses)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what multiple of the car toll is charged for public service buses on each publicly operated toll charging *(a)* bridge and *(b)* tunnel. [40350]

Dr. Ladyman: The following information relates to publicly-operated bridges and tunnels in England.

Humber Bridge—for a bus designed to carry fewer than 17 passengers the toll charge is 1.8 times the toll charge for a car. For a bus designed to carry 17 or more passengers, the toll charge is four times the car toll charge.

Mersey Tunnels—for a bus with two axles the toll charge is the same as for a car. For a bus with three axles the toll charge is treble the car toll charge.

Tamar Bridge—there is no toll charge for public service buses that take part in the bridge's tag system and are registered with the bridge operator and the local authority.

Tyne Tunnel—for a bus designed to carry fewer than 16 passengers the toll charge is the same as for a car. For a bus designed to carry 16 or more passengers, the toll charge is 1.2 times the car toll charge.

Itchen Toll Bridge—there is no toll charge for public buses.

Train Protection Systems

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* miles of track and *(b)* junctions in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales, (iii) each of the English regions and (iv) Northern Ireland are not covered by (A) electric and (B) electronic train protection. [39587]

Derek Twigg: Operation of the rail network in Great Britain is the responsibility of Network Rail (NR) and I have asked NR to write direct to the hon. Member. Railways in Northern Ireland are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Office.

Transport (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his projections are for traffic growth on trunk roads in Gravesham for each of the next 10 years. [40622]

Dr. Ladyman: The current traffic growth forecast for the section of A2 trunk road, which runs through Gravesham district and south of Gravesend town, is an average of 1.6 per cent. per annum between 2006 and 2016. This compares to the national forecast growth rate of 1.5 per cent. per annum over the same period.

Urban Bus Challenge Fund

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Government have spent on the Urban Bus Challenge since its inception. [40840]

Ms Buck: There have been three annual competitions held for Urban Bus Challenge awards, the first in 2001 and the last in 2003. The Department awarded £53 million to 106 schemes in the competitions. Schemes were typically funded over three years. Grant payments made so far are expected to total £44 million at the end of the current financial year. The remainder of the £53 million will be paid to authorities in subsequent financial years.

DEFENCE

Arctic Emblem

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1678W, on the Arctic Emblem, if he will ensure that, once the design has been agreed, the Arctic Emblem can be worn on both the Atlantic Star and the 1939–45 Star; and if he will make a statement. [38204]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2350W.

Armed Forces (South African Personnel)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his South African counterpart about the extent to which South Africans serving in the UK armed forces have received the required approval to do so under the relevant South African legislation. [28326]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 November 2005]:* Approval is not currently required from the South African Government for South African personnel to serve in the UK armed forces. There is, however, draft South African legislation on mercenaries and private military and security services which has recently been issued, and is due to be presented to their Parliament in the near future. If enacted, this would require permission to be sought for South African personnel to serve in the UK armed forces.

Catering/Entertainment Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37489]

Mr. Touhig: Present arrangements for catering and entertainment are being replaced by 'Super Multi-Activity Contracts' (S MACs) to provide, among other services, catering, retail and leisure facilities to military personnel and civilian staff throughout the United Kingdom. Seven contracts were let in financial year 2005–06. The total value of the catering, retail and leisure elements of these contracts is anticipated to be in the region of £145 million over seven years. A breakdown of this figure by Government office region is shown in the following table. This figure does not necessarily represent all expenditure in the fields of catering and entertainment as there are a number of other existing contracts that provide these kinds of services. Cost information on these contracts cannot, however, be broken down to identify these elements separately without incurring disproportionate cost.

Region	*Value (£ million) over 7 years*
Scotland	11.6
The North East/North West of England[1]	14.4
Yorkshire and the Humber[2]	31.0
South East	55.9
East Midlands	16.4
London	16.3

[1] One S MAC contract covering two Government office regions.
[2] Catterick Garrison only

South Africa/Mozambique Visits

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2347W, on visits to South Africa, what the names were of employees of his Department who took part in the visits to South Africa and Mozambique. [39908]

Mr. Ingram: Dr. John Thompson, named in a UN Security Council Report on the investigation of alleged use of CW in Mozambique in January 1992, was one of the staff. However, in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act, I am unable to release the remaining names as to do so would contravene the data protection principles.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2347W, on visits to South Africa, whether the combined UK and UN team found that chemical weapons had been used in Mozambique; and if he will make a statement. [39912]

Mr. Ingram: The findings and conclusions of the United Nations investigation can be found in a UN Security Council Report, S/24065 dated 12 June 1992, available on the United Nations website at http://www.un.org.

The report stated that

"we cannot conclude that a chemical warfare agent was used in the attack."

Defence Contracts (Wales)

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many defence contracts have been awarded to facilities or organisations operating in Wales since 1997; what the value of these contracts was; and how many jobs have been created. [39131]

Mr. Ingram: Information relating to facilities or organisations operating in Wales is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many defence contracts have been awarded to facilities and organisations in Wales since 1997; what the value of those contracts was; and how many jobs have been created as a result of the contracts. [40489]

Mr. Ingram: Information relating to facilities or organisations operating in Wales is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Training Review

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on manufacturing and engineering companies in the West Midlands if Cosford is chosen as *(a)* a Super site and *(b)* a preferred location for aeronautical training as part of the Defence Training Review. [40386]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review (DTR) Programme is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. The impact on manufacturing and engineering companies and the extent to which they are drawn into training design, delivery and support and the exploitation of third party opportunities and revenue depends on Bidders' training and estates solutions. Until the evaluation phase is complete and a decision has been taken to select a preferred training partner, currently expected in summer 2006, I am not in a position to make any detailed comment on the wider impact of the DTR solution.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on the retention and recruitment of training staff if defence training activities are moved to areas outside reasonable daily travel times as part of the Defence Training Review. [40427]

Mr. Touhig: The ability of the bidding consortia to retain and recruit suitably qualified staff throughout the duration of the contract is being evaluated under clearly defined criteria to determine the overall deliverability of proposed solutions. This assessment will contribute to the selection of the preferred training partner, which will not take place until summer 2006, once the evaluation and Ministry of Defence approval process has concluded.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40133]

Mr. Touhig: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his (i) Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40087]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40339]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value is of *(a)* pay supplements, *(b)* bonuses and *(c)* other incentive packages that are payable in his Department on the basis of geographic location; how many people are in receipt of each payment; and what the total cost to his Department of each payment was in 2004–05. [35889]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has national pay scales for the 70,000 staff below the senior civil service who are covered by the MOD main pay deal. Staff appointed/recruited to London since 1999 receive a four per cent or 7 per cent. pay supplement (dependent on pay level) while they work in London—the higher rate applies to junior administrative staff and equivalents. Staff serving in overseas locations also receive the London pay supplement. Overall, 3,075 staff are in receipt of the London pay supplement at an annual cost of £3,149,909.40.

As MOD establishments are generally in remote locations, local recruitment and retention allowances (RRA) are payable in a number of areas. There are 137 locational RRA's in operation currently payable to 15,022 staff in total at an annual cost of £28,421,339.32.

Bonuses and other incentive packages are not payable on a geographic basis.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40294]

Mr. Touhig: It is Ministry of Defence policy that alternative working patterns, including home working, are open to all staff if the business needs can be met. The agreements are made locally between the individuals and their line managers and funding to provide equipment to work at home is also authorised locally. The Ministry of Defence only records full-time non-industrial home workers and as at 1 April 2005, there were 120 such non-industrial staff recorded. Information on those staff who work at least one day a week could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what initiatives are being taken in his Department to help civil servants with chronic back pain. [34975]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence is sympathetic to all staff with back problems. All staff using display screen equipment are required to undertake an on-line workplace assessment which includes ergonomics and posture. In cases of severe ongoing discomfort workplace assessments can be carried out by the Department's occupational health (OH) adviser or another expert specialising in back problems. For staff with chronic back problems specialist seating and other aids (footrests etc.) are provided on an individual basis on the advice of the individual's GP or the Department's OH adviser. The MOD also provides training on

manual handling and lifting where appropriate. These policies are supplemented by procedures appropriate to the individual circumstances. These procedures are:

Confidential advice from a member of the Occupational Welfare Service.

Time off for medical appointments and treatment (including physiotherapy);

Reasonable adjustments to hours of work and the nature of their duties;

Early involvement and support from our occupational health experts;

Gradual rehabilitation including reduced hours and duties;

A comprehensive suite of work/life policies, including home working, and flexible working hours.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of relocation opportunities within the next five years in relation to the Bristol-Bath-Shrivenham Defence Cluster. [36999]

Mr. Touhig: As we have already announced, it is our intention that the Defence Logistics Organisation co-locate within the area. No further relocations into the area are currently planned, but we keep the size and location of the estate under continuous review.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the initial activity undertaken by his Department in response to those recommendations in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People, where lead responsibility was assigned to all Government Departments. [37060]

Mr. Touhig: The initial activity undertaken by the Ministry of Defence in response to the recommendations in this report relates mainly to its duties as an employer. These duties correspond closely to the obligations placed on public authorities by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Ministry of Defence is currently developing an overall equality scheme which will fully take into account those obligations. Any other recommendations in the report for employers will be progressed once we have advice from the ministerial group.

Japanese Compensation Scheme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the bloodlink connection in the Far Eastern Civilian Prisoners of the Japanese Compensation Scheme requiring applicants to be born in the UK or have a parent or grandparent born in the UK was introduced; for what reason; whether it was also imposed on former military personnel held by the Japanese as prisoners of war; and how many applicants who did not have this bloodlink *(a)* were paid prior to its introduction as a criterion and *(b)* have been refused since its introduction. [39440]

Mr. Touhig: The "Birthlink" criterion was introduced in March 2001 and formally announced on 11 July 2001, *Official Report*, columns 516–17W. It was intended to clarify the eligibility criteria for civilian internees and specifically to define the nature of the close link with the United Kingdom at the time of internment required of civilian internees. The criterion applies only to the civilian element of the Scheme; for military internees (prisoners of war) the nature of the close link was defined in terms of membership of UK armed forces at time of internment. The data requested regarding the number of applicants who did not meet the birthlink criterion is being gathered as part of the review I announced on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1119.

Landing Ships Dock Auxiliary Vessels

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has held with *(a)* ship repair yards and *(b)* others on (i) completing and (ii) enhancing the capabilities of the Landing Ships Dock Auxiliary vessels; and what estimate he has made of the cost of (A) completion and (B) enhancement. [40425]

Mr. Ingram: When the Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) ships are accepted off contract from the shipbuilders they will enter their Part II sea trials programme in preparation for formal entry into operational service. In line with normal practice, the Ministry of Defence has invited companies to declare expressions of interest to undertake work during the Part II trials phase to bring the ships to completion for operational service. The value of this work is yet to be determined as much of the activity results from experience in operation in the Part II trials. A number of companies have expressed an interest in undertaking such work. There are currently no plans to enhance the key capabilities of the ships.

Marconi Weapons System

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the document known as the Prosecution Exhibit bundle pages 51 to 59 in the case of R *v.* Michael John Smith held in the Central Criminal Court from September to November 1993, relating to the Marconi Space and Defence Systems Ltd. Demonstrator Programme Requirement Specification Bandpass Filter Assembly component dated 8 January 1982 reference 79481/PBH/BB/SO8 became linked to a weapons system; which weapons system it was linked to; on what date it became obsolete and no longer linked to any weapons system; and if he will make a statement. [39458]

Mr. Ingram: I am currently unable to provide a response to the questions raised as the subject is the matter of an investigation by the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) and it would be inappropriate to provide the information requested while this investigation is ongoing.

Married Quarters

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many married quarters will be upgraded in each of the next five financial years; and what the total cost of this planned programme will be in each year. [23328]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Estates corporate plan 2005–06 contains key targets for upgrading service families accommodation in England, Wales and Scotland. These targets require 600 quarters to be upgraded in 2005–06 and 900 in each of the subsequent three years. Figures for 2009–10 and beyond have not yet been agreed.

Currently, the planned budget for upgrading service families accommodation stands at some £25 million per year, for the years 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2008–09. This figure is not fixed, however, and can change according to future budgetary decisions taken by the Department.

Military Equipment

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1877W, how many complaints about *(a)* body armour, *(b)* weapons and *(c)* machinery have been recorded in the recent campaigns in (i) Iraq and (ii) Afghanistan. [37853]

Mr. Ingram: In respect of body armour, I can confirm that this was included in my earlier reply, 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1877W, as a clothing product. Defect reports on clothing products are held for 12 months. During the past 12 months there have been no such reports emanating from either Iraq or Afghanistan.

"Weapons and machinery" have, for the purposes of this question, been defined as small arms and vehicles. "Complaints" has been defined as those issues giving rise to an equipment failure report (EFR) or serious equipment failure (SEF). An EFR is logged if the user believes that 'an item of equipment or component has failed unreasonably early in its life, or that it exhibits a design, handling or safety problem'. A SEF is defined as 'a failure or suspected failure that results in, or has the potential to result in, personal injury, loss of life or serious damage'. All EFRs and SEFs are reported to the Defence Logistic Organisation for investigation and any necessary action. Available records for EFRs and SEFs on small arms and vehicles emanating from Afghanistan and Iraq/Kuwait are in the following tables:

Iraq and Kuwait—21 March 2003 to 15 December 2005

Equipment type	*Number of equipment failure reports*	*Number of serious equipment failures*
Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked)	141	4
Armoured Fighting Vehicle 430 Series	106	6
Warrior Armoured Personnel Carrier	419	24
Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank	399	7
Challenger Repair and Recovery Vehicle	27	1
Leyland (all variants)	52	9
Bedford (all variants)	87	1
Heavy Equipment Transporters	234	2
Fuel &Water Tankers + Recovery Vehicles	40	4
Pinzgauer	22	0
BV206	23	0
Land Rover (all variants)	967	22
Material Handling Equipment and Earth Moving Equipment	64	5
Rifle 5.56 mm SA80	[1]101	3
Light Support Weapon 5.56mm	[1]47	0
MINIMI Light machine Gun 5.56 mm	0	1
General purpose Machine Gun 7.62 mm	[1]4	1
Under-slung Grenade Launcher	[1]5	1

Afghanistan—1 April 2002 to 15 December 2005

Equipment type	*Number of equipment failure reports*	*Number of serious equipment failures*
Land Rover (all variants)	39	1
Saxon	12	—
JCB (All variants)	7	—
Leyland (all variants)	8	—
Rifle 5.56 mm SA80 A2	[1]4	—
Machine Gun 5.56mm (Minimi)	[1]1	—
Night Vision Goggles	5	—
Under-slung Grenade Launcher	1	—

[1] Information on weapons not available before 1 August 2003

RAF Aircraft

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the RAF's C-130Ks to be replaced. [40549]

Mr. Ingram: The C-130K will be replaced by the A400M, which is planned to enter service in 2011.

Service Quarters

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many single accommodation places there are for each of the services in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* each of the English regions and *(d)* Northern Ireland for (i) officers and (ii) other ranks, broken down by location; how many are occupied; how many are subject to demolition; how many are to be disposed of on the private market in each year since 7 May 1997; what the total sum accrued in each year was at (A) constant and (B) current prices; what the sale price for each was (1) at the time of sale and (2) at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40132]

Mr. Touhig: Some 150,000 single accommodation places, within barrack blocks or messes, are provided for the armed forces, and are located throughout the defence estate world-wide. Records held centrally do not provide current single accommodation occupancy in the detail required and this could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence does not, as a general rule, demolish barrack blocks or messes other than to permit the construction of new accommodation. As such places are almost invariably located within the boundary fence of a military establishment, they remain a part of the parent unit and it is highly unlikely that they would be disposed of separately.

All receipts from the disposal of surplus defence property come to the defence budget.

Southampton Docks

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what criteria his Department used to decide to change its requirement for using Southampton Docks from recreational to operational use for nuclear powered Royal Navy ships; [38997]

(2) if he will invite the Solent Coalition Against Nuclear Ships as an observer to the Nuclear Accident Exercise in Southampton on 22 February 2006; [39106]

(3) what plans he has to send nuclear powered Royal Navy ships to *(a)* Southampton Docks and *(b)* Portsmouth Harbour; and if he will make a statement. [39107]

Mr. Ingram: There has been no decision to change the requirement for Royal Navy nuclear powered vessels to occasionally berth at Southampton. The Z Berth in Southampton docks will, in common with others around the UK, enable our nuclear submarines to visit. Although Z Berths have, in some documentation, been described as 'recreational' berths, there is no change of use or requirement as Z Berths have always been used for operational reasons, such as crew recuperation, replenishment and representational duties.

On 22 February 2006, Southampton City Council will test the Council's 'off-site' emergency plans to deal with the extremely unlikely event of a 'nuclear emergency' from a nuclear powered submarine. The Royal Navy will support the Council and facilitate the opportunity to demonstrate that the Council's plans will dovetail with the Navy's own 'operator's emergency plan'. Responsibility for the production and test of the 'off-site' plan rests with the Southampton City Council. It is not appropriate for me to invite observers from the Solent Coalition Against Nuclear Ships to the exercise.

It is intended that Royal Navy nuclear powered submarines will make occasional visits to both Southampton and Portsmouth.

Surplus Military Equipment Sales

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what restrictions have been placed on the resale of surplus military aircraft disposed of by his Department to private individuals during the past five years; [40225]

(2) what restrictions are placed on the sale of drop tanks with surplus military aircraft. [40347]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently no restrictions placed on the resale of surplus military aircraft to private individuals. The Ministry of Defence ensures that the aircraft is prepared for disposal by reducing its security status to unclassified. There are, however, a number of terms and conditions, which limit the use of any aircraft sold. These include, for example, the responsibility of the purchaser to obtain a Certificate of Airworthiness, if the intention is to fly the aircraft and to apply for an export licence if it is transferred outside the UK.

Drop tanks, fitted to a military aircraft, are considered to be an integral part of the whole aircraft and are subject to the normal terms and conditions that ensure that the MOD takes all reasonable steps to inform purchasers of hazards. Used drop tanks are hazardous because they have contained fuel. As individual items they are disposed of in accordance with current environmental legislation.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether it is his Department's policy to allow the advertising for sale of its surplus military equipment on the internet; [40227]

(2) what surplus military equipment being sold on behalf of his Department during the last five years has been advertised on the internet. [40228]

Mr. Ingram: It is the policy of the Ministry of Defence, subject to certain exclusions, to allow the advertising for sale of its surplus equipment on the internet. Records of the equipment advertised on the internet are not held.

Type 23 Frigates

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters are carried by each of the Type 23 frigates, broken down by type of helicopter. [39176]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is shown as follows.

Ship name	*Helicopter type*	*Number*
HMS Argyll	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Sutherland	Lynx Mk3	1
HMS Montrose	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Saint Albans	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Iron Duke	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Kent	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Portland	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Somerset	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Grafton (non-operational from 31 March 2006)	Lynx Mk8	1
HMS Lancaster	Merlin Mk1	1
HMS Monmouth	Merlin Mk1	1
HMS Westminster	Merlin Mk1	1
HMS Northumberland	Merlin Mk1	1

Hydrocarbon Oils Duty

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on the UK agricultural sector of the proposed EU harmonisation of duty rates on hydrocarbon oils; and if he will make a statement. [38928]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The European Commission has not adopted any new proposals to harmonise the rates of duty for commercial diesel. The Government see no reason for harmonised excise duty rates on hydrocarbon oils and believe that tax policy is the responsibility of individual member states. It is for member states to decide what policies

they should pursue through the use of fiscal instruments and, subject to minimum rates in some areas, what rates of duty they should apply.

The UK has a number of exemptions from the Energy Products Directive which enable duty to be charged at a reduced rate on oils that are put to certain uses, including use in leisure boats for private use. The Government are minded to apply for an extension these derogations and will issue an initial regulatory impact assessment on the effects of ending the derogation. This document will analyse the costs and benefits of the derogation, and be used as the basis for further information gathering and discussions.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Leader of the House how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machine his office owned in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [40101]

Mr. Hoon: In 2003–04 and 2004–05, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons owned three fax machines. All other IT equipment was leased through a service level agreement with the Cabinet Office.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Leader of the House what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixture and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his Office in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40102]

Mr. Hoon: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons comes within the administrative responsibility of the Privy Council Office.

Annual expenditure on fixtures and fittings is not disaggregated by business unit. Information on expenditure on general office expenses and staff is published in the Privy Council Office Resource Accounts for each of the last three years, and these are available in the House of Commons Library and at www.pco.gov.uk.

Plans for 2005–06 direct costs include a 5 per cent. reduction compared to last year's budget.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Leader of the House what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of his Office in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40103]

Mr. Hoon: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons comes within the administrative responsibility of the Privy Council Office (PCO). Information on expenditure on buildings is published in the Privy Council Office Resource Accounts for each of the last three years, and is available in the House of Commons Library and at www.pco.gov.uk.

It does not purchase commercial insurance for the risks it faces as, in general, it is cheaper for Government to cover their own risks. The only exception was the purchase of annual travel insurance, at a cost of £75 in 2005–06.

The PCO's planned expenditure on buildings occupied by the Office for 2005–06 is £342,000, which includes £90,000 for external decoration—a lease obligation. The rental element of this figure is subject to the outcome of ongoing lease negotiations.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Leader of the House how much his office spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40330]

Mr. Hoon: In 2004–05, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons spent £10.53 on bottled water. In addition, £306.45 was spent on the provision of water for water dispensers.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Leader of the House what the total administrative costs were for his office in the last year; and whether these are regarded as identifiable or non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [40052]

Mr. Hoon: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons comes within the administrative responsibility of the Privy Council Office.

Information on administration costs for last year is published in the Privy Council Office's Resource Accounts, which are available in the House of Commons Library and at www.pco.gov.uk.

These costs are regarded as non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Identity Cards

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment the Government have made of whether a new electoral register database *(a)* will be of assistance in and *(b)* may be used to assist the introduction of identity cards. [39492]

Ms Harman: The Government are currently consulting on proposals for national access to electoral register information, in particular the development of a consolidated record of all that information in a centrally-held dataset. This consultation paper on the proposed co-ordinated online record of electors (CORE) identifies a number of ways in which such a consolidated record could be of assistance, in particular in respect of decreasing the administrative burden on existing users of electoral register data and strengthening measures to counter any attempted fraud in relation to electoral registration.

The consultation paper also seeks views on longer-term possibilities opened up by establishing a co-ordinated record of electors. Such possibilities include the potential for comparison of electoral register data with that in any identity card register, so that the integrity of the former can benefit from the high levels of verification proposed for ID cards.

Legal Aid

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much legal aid was given to non-British citizens in each quarter in the last three years. [39465]

Bridget Prentice: The nationality of those seeking legal aid does not form part of the eligibility criteria for receipt of legal aid, and is therefore not recorded by the Legal Services Commission (LSC).

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which she has responsibility in 2004–05 in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London. [35952]

Ms Harman: Total executive NDPB staff numbers by department as at 31 March 2005 are recorded in Table 2 of Public Bodies 2005, a copy of which is in the House Libraries, and which is available online at: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/the future of the civil service/agencies and public bodies/publications/pdf/public-bodies/publicbodies2005.pdf

The number of staff in individual executive agencies as at 1 April 2004, including a regional analysis, is available in civil service statistics 2004 which was published in February 2005, a copy of which is in House Libraries.

It is also available online at:
http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management of the civil service/statistics/contents for civil service statistics 2004 report/number of civil servants/ind ex.asp
Regional NDPB breakdowns are not detailed and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Consultants

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list ongoing projects in her Department for which consultants have been hired. [39911]

Bill Rammell: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* Parliamentary Questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Lords were dealt with by her Department in each year since 1995; in respect of what percentage her Department took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if she will make a statement. [37381]

Bill Rammell: We are unable to provide the requested figures without incurring disproportionate cost.

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS. Reports for earlier years are available in the Library of the House.

The Department's target for correspondence from members of the public is to reply to 95 within 15 working days of receipt. Ministers take responses to Parliamentary Questions very seriously, and endeavour to answer within Parliamentary deadlines where possible.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual expenditure has been on training and development for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39998]

Maria Eagle: Within my Department, the prime responsibility for developing staff lies with line managers who are best placed to assess individual needs. Most learning and development takes place on the job, supplemented by off the job learning as need requires. Records are not held centrally on this.

In addition, staff have access to development provided through the Department's internal learning and development unit.

The annual learning programme budgets for activities provided through the Department's internal learning and development unit since 2002 are as follows:

	£
2002–03	1,500,000
2003–04	2,400,000
2004–05	3,600,000

My Department's expected investment in learning and development for 2005–06 is £4,000,000.

Other activities take place across the Department which incorporate elements of learning and development within them. It is not possible to separate these out or quantify costs.

Records are not held centrally on the annual expenditure on learning and development for non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies, other public bodies in Scotland, Wales, the English regions and Northern Ireland.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 478W, on Departmental Staff, what remuneration is received by the tutor in basic skills from the Learning and Skills Council. [36024]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council is not responsible for the remuneration of the basic skills tutor. Westminster Adult Education Service is responsible for the remuneration of its staff.

Records are not held centrally on the remuneration arrangements of Westminster Adult Education Service.

Ealing

Stephen Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to reduce the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Ealing. [40702]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Development Agency's (LSDA) report into the funding gap between schools sixth forms and further education (FE) colleges for like-for-like 16–19 provision was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of the agenda for change development programme. The report was the first attempt at a comprehensive assessment of all the factors that contribute to the total funding gap and estimated it to be in the region of 13 per cent.

We recognise that closing the funding gap will not be easy but we have taken some important steps towards doing this. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 16 November the progress that we have made and our future plans for addressing the gap.

The LSDA report was based on 2003/04 figures and since then we have increased FE funding rates relative to school sixth forms. In both 2004/05 and 2005/06 LSC funding rates for FE were increased by 5 per cent. compared to 4 per cent. for schools sixth forms. We have committed to matching the schools' Minimum Funding Guarantee for 16–19 FE. We are also addressing a number of technical anomalies between the two funding system through removal of the in-year adjustment and by beginning a phased removal of the Real Terms Guarantee for school sixth forms. We estimate that these measures will together reduce the funding gap to 8 per cent. by 2006/07.

We will follow this with further work and our next steps will be to bring greater consistency to the treatment of student retention and achievement between the school and college sectors from 2008. That should narrow the gap by a further 3 per cent.

Beyond that, we will work to establish a common funding approach across the two sectors through the LSC's agenda for change programme.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people in Tamworth have been granted an education maintenance allowance. [33730]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 20 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people in Tamworth have been granted an education maintenance allowance?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of October 2005, 5,158 young people in the Staffordshire Local Education Authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far.

During the academic year 2004/05, 3,632 young people in the Staffordshire Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people in *(a)* Brent and *(b)* London have been granted an education maintenance allowance. [35585]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people in a) Brent and b) London have been granted an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)?

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of November 2005, 2,570 young people in Brent Local Education Authority area and 55,450 in the London region had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far.

During the academic year 2004/05, 2,744 young people in the Brent Local Education Authority and 50,896 in the London region received one or more EMA payments. During the academic year 2003/04 EMA was piloted in Brent and 1,902 young people received EMA payments.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people in Plymouth have received an education maintenance allowance payment since it was introduced. [34958]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 21 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people in Plymouth have received an Educational Maintenance Allowance payment since it was introduced?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of October 2005, 1,963 young people in the Plymouth Local Education Authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far.

During the academic year 2004/05, 1,425 young people in the Plymouth Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students at each educational institution in Newcastle upon Tyne are in receipt of an education maintenance allowance. [38291]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate Education Maintenance Allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many students are in receipt of an education maintenance allowance at each educational institution in Newcastle upon Tyne."

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received Education Maintenance Allowance is available at Local Education Authority level, but not at constituency level.

Attached is a breakdown by school / college in the Newcastle upon Tyne Local Education Authority of students who are in receipt of EMA at 15 December 2005.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Table showing numbers of EMA recipients in Newcastle upon Tyne local education authority according to the school/college they attend.

School/College	*Numbers in receipt of EMA*
All Saints College	45
Benfield School	54
Central Newcastle High School	17
Dame Allan's Boys' School	23
Gosforth High School	200
Heaton Manor School	117
Kenton School	188
La Sagesse School	10
Newcastle Bridges School	2
Newcastle College	1,846
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Church High School	14
Northern Counties School	8
Royal Grammar School	29
Sacred Heart High School	123
Sage Academy of Performing Arts	5
Sir Charles Parsons School	14
St Cuthbert's High School	67
St Mary's Catholic Comprehensive School	47
Thomas Bewick School	4
Trinity School	1
Walbottle Campus Technology College	87
Walker Technology College	105
West Gate Community College	50
Westfield School	9

Note:
The data is at 15 December 2005 and relates to academic year 2005/06.

Further Education

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her plans for reform following the report by Sir Andrew Foster on the further education sector. [39880]

Bill Rammell: Sir Andrew has produced an excellent report which recognises the current strengths of the FE sector and sets out a compelling set of arguments for reform. There are challenges for all parts of the FE system with a clear and convincing set of priorities which we must address. The report is full of significant material which we need to take time to consider, and we want to do this in discussion with colleges and other stakeholders. In the light of that debate, the Government intend to set out in the spring the next stage of reform and how this will be implemented. The purpose of the Government's response will be to set out a coherent programme of reform which draws together Sir Andrew's report, Agenda for Change and other existing reform strategies to show how this sector can achieve its potential for economic and social impact.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2414W, on further education (funding), what her Department's policy is on whether further education colleges should recruit extra 16 to 19-year-olds above their plans agreed with the relevant local learning and skills council. [40772]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* My Department's policy on provision for young people is outlined in the Learning and Skills Act, 2000 which details our commitment, and the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) duty, to secure the provision of education and training for all those aged 16–19 years. Colleges may enrol students above the numbers they have agreed with the LSC and can do so if they wish, and have the capacity. I would expect colleges to respond positively to learner demand where they are able to do so. I would also expect that any unplanned growth in student numbers will be reflected in the plans colleges agree with local LSCs for the following year. Where individual colleges cannot respond to increased demand local LSCs will ensure there is appropriate alternative provision.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2414W, on further education (funding), whether school sixth forms which recruit more 16 to 19-year-olds than their agreed

plans will receive additional funding to the levels they have agreed with the relevant local learning and skills council. [40785]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* My hon. Friend the Minister of State for Schools announced on 7 December the schools funding settlement for 2006-07 and 2007-08. We intend that school 6th form funding for 2006/07 and 2007/08 should align with these new arrangements. The allocations for school 6th forms for 2006/07 made by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) last month, and based on the September 2005 pupil count, therefore are fixed. For 2006/07 there will be no adjustment made, upwards or downwards, for extra or fewer pupils enrolled in school 6th forms in September 2006. The LSC have special arrangements for new and closing schools and will on an exceptional basis look at school 6th forms where provision is planned to increase significantly. In line with our announcement on multi-year budgets for schools, the LSC has also provided indicative allocations for 2007/08 which will be adjusted on the basis of school enrolment data for September 2006. These arrangements notified to the sector through Priorities for Success—School 6th Form Funding, published on 21 October 2005, will ensure better consistency of approach in funding 16 to 19-year-olds in schools and further education colleges and provide more stability of funding.

GEMS Education

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public monies are received by GEMS Education; and if she will make a statement. [40816]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills has no record of making any payments to GEMS Education.

International Students

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many international students are studying science and technology subjects; and what the equivalent figure was in 1998. [40650]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table. Figures for 2004/05 will be available in mid-January.

Non-UK domiciled enrolments to science and technology subjects[1] at English HE institutions

Academic year	*Enrolments*
1998/99	65,665
2001/02	72,645
2002/03[2]	82,670
2003/04	87,605

[1] 'Science and technology' includes 'Medicine and dentistry', 'Subjects allied to medicine', 'Biological sciences', 'Agriculture & veterinary sciences', 'Physical sciences', 'Mathematical sciences', 'Computer sciences', 'Engineering & technology' and 'Architecture building & planning'.

[2] In 2002/03 JACS replaced HESACODE as the coding frame for subject of study. This along with a change in methodology to apportion students between subjects means that figures for 2002/03 onwards are not directly comparable to earlier years.

Note:
Figures are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Maths GCSE Curriculum

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority will publish the requirements for the new two tier maths GCSE curriculum and examination; and if she will make a statement. [40726]

Jacqui Smith: Ken Boston, chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, wrote to head teachers on 4 January advising them that a standard two-tier GCSE model for mathematics would be introduced for first teaching from September 2006 and the current three-tier model would be withdrawn. He made it clear that the only change would be to the format of assessment and there would be no change to the related key stage 4 programme of study. Awarding bodies are expected to make revised specifications available shortly.

Ofsted Inspections

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of lessons inspected by Ofsted were recorded as setted in *(a)* geography, *(b)* music, *(c)* history, *(d)* religious education, *(e)* English, *(f)* modern foreign languages and *(g)* mathematics in (i) years (A) 7, (B) 8, (C) 9, (D) 10, (E) 11 and (ii) overall (1) in England and (2) in West Sussex local education authority in each year since 1995. [38605]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM chief inspector, Maurice Smith has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Postgraduate Courses

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* international students and *(b)* UK domestic students took up postgraduate courses in each year since 1998; and how many in each category were research students. [40741]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The latest available information is given in the table. Figures for 2004/05 will be available in mid-January.

Entrants to postgraduate courses at English HE Institutions

	UK domiciles		*Non-UK domiciles*	
Academic year	*Entrants*	*Of which research*	*Entrants*	*Of which research*
1998/99	129,175	13,555	38,865	7,875
1999/2000	127,105	13,345	41,810	7,865
2000/01	128,705	13,330	46,130	8,385
2001/02	131,610	13,035	50,505	8,480
2002/03	138,060	12,925	61,895	8,890
2003/04	141,995	12,930	69,105	9,580

Note:
Figures are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Public Service Agreement

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the data required to measure 2004 public service agreement target number 1 are *(a)* available and *(b)* published. [29174]

Beverley Hughes: The PSA 1 target comprises 2 elements. The first element of the target relates to the proportion of children across England achieving a good level of development by 2008 and is derived from a pupil level sample. The second element of the target relates to reduction in the inequalities in achievement between children in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged areas and the rest of England by 2008 and is measured by combining the 10 per cent. pupil level sample with an Index of Deprivation. The target will be considered to be met if both parts are met individually. Both of these elements focus the numbers of children achieving a good level of development. A full technical definition of how good development is defined, and other aspects of the target, is available on the Department's Sure Start website http://www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/?Document=1393.

The current figures for the proportions of children achieving a good level of development as defined by both elements of the PSA1 target have yet to be published.

The final figures for the Foundation Stage Profile for 2005 will form the baseline for the target and will be published in a Statistical First Release (SFR) in February. The SFR will include a table showing these baseline percentages.

The provisional figures on the Foundation Stage Profile were published in Statistical First Release 44/2005 "Foundation Stage Profile 2005: National Results (Provisional)", which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/. These results were derived from the summary data supplied by local authorities.

Schoolchildren (Mental Health)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of mental health problems in children below the age of 11 in mainstream education, with particular reference to *(a)* vulnerable children and *(b)* those with minor learning difficulties. [40616]

Maria Eagle: Two national surveys of children's mental health have been conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the first ("Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Great Britain) in 1999, and the second in 2004. The data is not presented according to the educational establishment which children attend but the 2004 survey report shows that, among five to 10 year-olds as a whole, 10 percent. of boys and 5 percent. of girls had a clinically diagnosable mental health disorder. The survey found that the prevalence of mental disorders is greater among vulnerable groups, such as children and young people from more deprived socio-economic backgrounds. Children with a mental disorder were also found to have higher rates of special educational need and to be further behind in their scholastic development than those without disorders. In the five year period between the surveys, prevalence rates overall were unchanged.

The surveys have not explored the links to minor learning difficulties, though the 1999 survey did touch on the prevalence of mental disorder in relation to associated and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The figures showed that the percentage prevalence rate for mental disorders among those with a specific learning difficulty was 22 percent., compared to 8 percent. among those with no specific learning disorder.

The full reports from both main surveys and related follow-up reports can be accessed via the virtual bookshelf/health and care theme on the ONS website:

www.statistics.gov.uk.

Schools Graded Satisfactory

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking in respect of *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools graded as satisfactory by Ofsted. [40722]

Jacqui Smith: Schools judged to be satisfactory following Ofsted inspection should be striving to improve their performance. We believe that all schools should aspire to be good or outstanding. The inspection report will identify areas for improvement in a satisfactory school and these should be reflected in a revised school development plan.

Under the proposals in the Schools White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools For All', local authorities will be expected to help all schools improve their standards, through the support and challenge of School Improvement Partners, and drawing on the resources of the National Strategies. Local authorities will be expected to intervene decisively in schools that are falling below expectations, including coasting schools whose performance is not as good as parents have a right to expect, by issuing warning notices and taking radical action where necessary. In addition, Ofsted will be consulting on moving to a more proportionate inspection system, under which high-performing schools might receive minimal inspection, while under-performing schools could be monitored more frequently, with a focus on those issues of concern in the school. This would reinforce the drive for improvement in such schools.

Setting

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what measures her Department is taking to ensure that schools set pupils by ability; [40373]

(2) what advice her Department offers teachers on the best methods of setting pupils by ability. [39513]

Jacqui Smith: It is for schools to use their own professional judgment to decide when and how to group pupils and set by ability. We have encouraged schools to use setting since 1997, and putting children in ability groups within a class is now commonplace in primary schools. In secondary schools the majority of lessons in English, maths, science and modern foreign languages are set by ability.

The Department has commissioned research to illustrate effective school practice on setting pupils by ability which will report early this year. This will provide the raw materials for any further advice or guidance on setting.

Through the National Strategies and our Gifted and Talented programme we will continue to offer advice and guidance to schools on classroom practice so that they can make decisions about where and how to use pupil setting as part of their overall commitment to personalising and tailoring learning to meet the needs of all their pupils.

Specialist Schools

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of secondary schools are specialist schools in *(a)* arts, *(b)* business and enterprise, *(c)* engineering, *(d)* humanities, *(e)* language, *(f)* mathematics and computing, *(g)* music, *(h)* science, *(i)* sports and *(j)* technology. [40727]

Jacqui Smith: There are currently 2,375 designated specialist schools covering 10 specialisms across all curriculum subject areas. This represents just over 75 per cent. of all secondary schools. The numbers in each specialism, and the proportion they represent, are as follows:

	Number	*Percentage*
Arts	383	12.3
Business and Enterprise	201	6.5
Engineering	41	1.3
Humanities	60	1.9
Language	213	6.8
Mathematics and Computing	206	6.6
Music	15	0.5
Science	269	8.6
Sports	333	10.7
Technology	572	18.3

Additionally, there are 70 (2.3 per cent.) schools that have chosen a specialism combining two of the subjects and 12 special schools designated in one of the new SEN specialisms.

Student Loans

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in London applied for a student loan in the last five years. [40393]

Bill Rammell: Latest data on the numbers of student applying for support domiciled in London[1] who were eligible for an income-contingent loan for academic years 2000/01 to 2004/05 (provisional) are given in the table.

[1] Includes inner and outer London boroughs.

Academic year	*Students eligible for a loan (000s)*
2004/05[1]	129.9
2003/04	128.3
2002/03	123.0
2001/02	114.3
2000/01	98.2

[1] Provisional.

Source:
Student Loans Company (SLC)

Data specifically on student loan applications are not available, therefore, numbers of applicants eligible for a loan have been provided. Applications for loans will be marginally higher than numbers of applicants eligible for a loan.

Sure Start

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are participating in the Sure Start programme in Beverley and Holderness. [39584]

Beverley Hughes: There is one Sure Start children's centre in Beverley and Holderness. Withernsea Children's Centre has 687 children under five within its catchment area. East Riding of Yorkshire council is planning to develop further centres in this constituency between April 2006 and March 2008. By March 2010 all children under five in the area will be able to access children's centre services as part of the Government's commitment to extend the programme across the whole of England.

University Entrance

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people went to university from secondary schools in *(a)* Minsthorpe, *(b)* Hemsworth, *(c)* Featherstone, *(d)* Kettlethorpe and *(e)* Crofton in each of the last five years. [38137]

Bill Rammell: Information on the number of pupils from individual small towns and villages is not held by the Department. The five areas mentioned all lie within the Hemsworth constituency. The latest available figures on participation by constituency were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in January 2005 in "Young Participation in England", which is available from their website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/ This shows the number of young entrants (aged 18 or 19) participating in higher education for the years 1997 to 2000. The figures for the Hemsworth constituency are shown in the table.

Higher Education entrants and young participation rate (YPR(A)) for Hemsworth constituency

Year cohort	*Entrants*[1]	*Participation rate (YPR(A))*[2] *(%) Hemsworth*	*England*
1997	250	23	29
1998	260	22	29
1999	250	21	29
2000	240	22	30

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
[2] Figures are rounded to the nearest 1 per cent.
Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

Vulnerable Minors

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring her Department undertakes of vulnerable *(a)* children and *(b)* young adults placed by social services departments outside their own local authority area; and if she will make a statement. [39290]

Maria Eagle: Monitoring of vulnerable children or young adults placed outside of their own authority area is not undertaken centrally. For children looked after, including those placed out-of-authority, arrangements for care planning and the review and monitoring of care planning are a matter for the local authority which is responsible for looking after them. This includes a requirement, where a child is placed in another authority's area, to inform the local authority and the primary care trust (PCT) or, if there is no PCT, the health authority for the area in which the child is placed. Where young people are care leavers, the authority responsible for their care has a duty to stay in touch with them and plan for their support, wherever they are living.

The Department's annual volume of statistics for children looked after as at 31 March by local authorities in England includes data on children placed outside their own authority boundary. The latest statistical volume is available at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000569/index.shtml

Work Placements

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will amend the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2005 to allow students undertaking full year unpaid work placements as part of their degree to receive the higher rate of loan from the Student Loan Company. [39305]

Bill Rammell: We have no plans to amend the Regulations. The amount of support for living costs that is available via grants and loans to higher education students is related to the number of weeks of full-time study in the academic year. Students on sandwich course placements are eligible for lower rates of support because they are normally expected to receive a salary from the firm or organisation with whom they have been placed. However, students on certain full-year unpaid placements in the public or voluntary sectors, which are specified in the Regulations, are entitled to receive full-time rates of student support, subject to the standard income assessment process.

TREASURY

Administrative Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40062]

John Healey: The Treasury has responsibility for two advisory non departmental public bodies, the Statistics Commission and the Public Services Productivity Panel.

Information on the Statistics Commission's costs, which are non identifiable, is set out in that body's 2004–05 annual accounts, copies of which are in the Library and accessible via

http://statscom.org.uk/media_pdfs/annuals/Annual_report_2004–05.pdf

The Public Services Productivity Panel does not have any administration costs. Panel members' expenses are met by the Treasury but cannot be disaggregated.

Average Wage

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average weekly wage was for workers in the *(a)* private and *(b)* public sector in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [39793]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average weekly wage was for workers in the *(a)* private and *(b)* public sector in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. (39793)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach a table showing the Average Gross Weekly Earnings for full time employees by private and public sector for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland from 1997 to 2005. Results prior to 1997 are not available.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly(£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work— England

	Public		Private	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
1997	353	377	315	380
1998	367	392	330	404
1999	379	407	341	419
2000	391	422	355	438
2001	407	442	374	466
2002	423	462	387	491
2003	436	483	401	504
2004	456	505	420	523
2004[2]	461	509	412	510
2005	479	535	421	525

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Due to changes in the survey, results from 2004 are discontinuous with previous results. These changes Include Improvements to survey coverage, a change In the definition of gross weekly pay to exclude Irregular bonuses and Improvements to the collect more earnings relating to allowances. 2004 statistics are presented on both basis for comparison purposes.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work—Scotland

	Public		Private	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
1997	336	356	287	337
1998	344	369	298	355
1999	358	385	314	371
2000	369	397	322	384
2001	392	424	336	405
2002	411	440	349	434
2003	415	456	358	444
2004	439	477	369	452
2004[2]	442	481	362	442
2005	464	517	375	459

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Due to changes in the survey, results from 2004 are discontinuous with previous results. These changes include improvements to survey coverage, a change in the definition of gross weekly pay to exclude irregular bonuses and improvements to the collect more earnings relating to allowances. 2004 statistics are presented on both basis for comparison purposes.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work—Wales

	Public		Private	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
1997	326	351	288	330
1998	333	364	299	341
1999	348	382	305	347
2000	359	396	315	361
2001	379	413	320	371
2002	397	434	328	389
2003	405	454	340	403
2004	422	474	367	426
2004[2]	424	477	357	416
2005	449	504	359	423

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Due to changes in the survey, results from 2004 are discontinuous with previous results. These changes include improvements to survey coverage, a change in the definition of gross weekly pay to exclude irregular bonuses and improvements to the collect more earnings relating to allowances. 2004 statistics are presented on both basis for comparison purposes.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work—Northern Ireland

	Public		Private	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
1997	359	379	246	294
1998	380	395	259	304
1999	387	406	270	318
2000	408	420	283	334
2001	408	431	298	353
2002	427	455	314	364
2003	440	474	317	377
2004	470	498	330	394
2004[2]	469	500	329	390
2005	489	522	340	402

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Due to changes in the survey, results from 2004 are discontinuous with previous results. These changes include improvements to survey coverage, a change in the definition of gross weekly pay to exclude irregular bonuses and improvements to the collect more earnings relating to allowances. 2004 statistics are presented on both basis for comparison purposes.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Banking System (China)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the stability of the banking system in China and *(b)* the effect on the UK economy of weaknesses in the system. [40663]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury continually monitors the stability of financial systems around the world and their effects on the UK economy. The outlook for UK economy was set out in the PBR. A recent IMF report provides an authoritative up-to-date assessment of the banking system in China (see the Staff Report for the 2005 Article IV Consultation) and concludes that progress has been made in reform, but that considerable work remains to be done to improve the efficiency of banking intermediation. UK banks are playing a leading role in modernising China's financial sector.

British Overseas Territories

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has made to the elected governing authorities of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar, *(f)* Saint Helena *(g)* Anguilla, *(h)* Montserrat, *(i)* Bermuda, *(j)* the British Virgin Islands, *(k)* the Turks and Caicos Islands and *(l)* the Cayman Islands about their domestic monetary and fiscal policies since 1997. [39215]

John Healey: The Chancellor has made no direct representations to the elected governing authorities of the Crown Dependencies or Overseas Territories about their domestic monetary and fiscal policies since 1997.

However, the UK Government, led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development, has a continuing dialogue with the Overseas Territories on all aspects of domestic policy, including on occasion domestic monetary and fiscal policies.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what powers of the intervention he has over the domestic monetary and fiscal policies of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar, *(f)* Saint Helena *(g)* Anguilla, *(h)* Montserrat, *(i)* Bermuda, *(j)* the British Virgin Islands, *(k)* the Turks and Caicos Islands and *(l)* the Cayman Islands. [39216]

John Healey: Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man (the Crown Dependencies) are self-governing dependencies of the Crown. They are not part of the United Kingdom. Each Crown Dependency has its own legislative assembly, administrative, legal and fiscal system and has domestic competence over its monetary and fiscal policies.

In the case of Gibraltar, domestic monetary and fiscal policy are Defined Domestic Matters under the Gibraltar Constitution. However, as Gibraltar is in the EU as part of the UK member state, they have an obligation to

transpose EU legislation into domestic Gibraltar law, including in financial areas. HM Government liaises with the Government of Gibraltar to assist in undertaking this transposition. But monetary policy remains in the hands of the Government of Gibraltar.

The Falkland Islands and St. Helena have domestic competence over monetary and fiscal policy.

Anguilla, Montserrat, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Cayman Islands either use the US dollar as their currency or have currencies which are linked in value to the US dollar. Fiscal policy is the responsibility of the governing authorities of these territories.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons birth certificates do not have to be provided as part of a claim for child tax credit. [36805]

Dawn Primarolo: Parents are required to supply birth certificates when applying for child benefit.

The tax credit IT system automatically checks whether a child matches with a record in the Child Benefit Office database. Where there is no evidence of child benefit, HM Revenue and Customs will ask the tax credit claimant to supply a birth certificate or medical card to support their claim for child tax credit.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the annual cost of the common agricultural policy arising from *(a)* increased food prices and *(b)* direct costs to the Exchequer under the new financial perspective 2007 to 2013. [39459]

Mr. Des Browne *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The OECD estimates the annual cost of the common agricultural policy to EU consumers arising from increased food prices at around €50 billion each year, of which part will be borne by UK consumers. In addition, taxpayers in the UK and other member states pay the fiscal costs of the CAP. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given to his related question number 39460.

For a more comprehensive assessment of the costs of the CAP, I refer the hon. Member to the paper "A Vision for the Common Agricultural Policy" published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and HM Treasury in December, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the cost of the common agricultural policy to *(a)* the EU and *(b)* the UK under the new financial perspective 2007 to 2013. [39460]

Mr. Des Browne *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The European Council meeting of 15–16 December agreed to set the EU budget for pillar 1 of the common agricultural policy (market-related expenditure and direct payments) for 2007–13 at €293.105 billion in 2004 prices. The rural development budget was set at €69.25 billion, excluding transfers from pillar 1 to this budget.

The UK contributes to the budget as a whole, not to specific policies. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given to the right hon. Member for Wokingham (Mr. Redwood), question number 40045.

A wide-ranging assessment of the economic, financial, social and environmental costs of the CAP is contained in the paper "A Vision for the Common Agricultural Policy" published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and HM Treasury in December, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Contingent Liabilities

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total Government expenditure was on contingent liabilities which became payable in each year since 1992. [39621]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government do not separately record expenditure on items previously recorded as contingent liabilities. The cost of obtaining details of contingent liabilities that became payable in each year since 1992 would therefore exceed the Disproportionate Cost Threshold for answering parliamentary questions and so I am unable to provide the information requested.

Correspondence

Dr. Strang: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many items of departmental correspondence were addressed to people who had *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house in each of the last five years. [41029]

John Healey: The information requested is not held.

Debt Relief

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of corrective actions proposed by the International Monetary Fund for members whose performance is below requirements for the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative; [39758]

(2) what assessment he has made of the International Monetary Fund's plans to implement the G8 debt deal. [39759]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: On the 21 December 2005, the IMF Executive Board confirmed 19 countries as qualifying for the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. Qualifying countries will get irrevocable debt relief with immediate effect, once final administrative matters have been completed. The UK fully supports and welcomes the IMF's implementation plans for debt relief for Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Guyana, Ghana, Honduras, Mali, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Tajikistan, Uganda and Zambia.

The IMF Board also concluded that at this stage, while Mauritania is eligible for debt relief, it will not qualify immediately due to issues regarding macro-economic performance and public expenditure management since it reached completion point in the HIPC initiative in 2002. The IMF will work closely with the authorities in the coming months to help Mauritania qualify for MDRI debt relief. The UK welcomes efforts by the IMF and

Mauritanian authorities to establish a track record, and we hope that Mauritania will qualify for debt relief in the near future.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39987]

John Healey: Pension contributions and other pension costs for past years are disclosed in the annual accounts of each public body, which are available in the Library of the House or from the websites of the respective bodies. Further analysis could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Dormant Bank Accounts

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government will take to encourage people who may have dormant accounts to claim their money before the funds are used by the Government. [37963]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As announced in the pre-Budget report 2005, the Government have been in discussion with the industry about continuing to follow best practice in reuniting assets with their owners.

Duty Free Allowance

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what progress has been made by the European Commission regarding his proposal to increase the duty free allowance to £1,000; and if he will make a statement; [39667]

(2) what recent representations he has made to the European Commission about increasing the duty free allowance to £1,000; and if he will make a statement. [39668]

Dawn Primarolo: The Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote to the European Commission at Budget 2005 proposing that the limit on goods (excluding wine, spirits, tobacco and perfume) brought into the EU without incurring tax or duty on arrival should be increased to £1,000. The Commission has expressed support in principle for an increase in the allowance, and we hope they will soon come forward with draft legislation addressing our request and reducing unnecessary restrictions on travellers bringing goods into the EU for their own use.

ECOFIN Council of Ministers

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer who the most senior UK representative was at each meeting of the EU's ECOFIN Council of Ministers since June 1997. [39899]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Ministerial attendance and the outcome of each ECOFIN have been reported either by written ministerial statement, written answer or, occasionally, by letter to the Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee.

Economic Inactivity (London Boroughs)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the levels of economic inactivity in each London borough. [40681]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity. (40681)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of inactivity for local areas from the National Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. The table, attached, shows the numbers of inactive people of working age, resident in each London Borough, for the 12 months ending March 2005. The table also shows the number of inactive people as a percentage of the total working age population resident in each Borough.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Number of persons of working age resident in each London borough who are economically inactive, and working age inactivity rate, March 2004 to April 2005

London borough	Number of inactive persons (thousand)	Inactivity rate[1] (percentage)
Barking and Dagenham	31	31.2
Barnet	54	25.1
Bexley	25	18.3
Brent	50	29.0
Bromley	30	16.5
Camden	43	30.6
City of London	[2]	[2]
Croydon	40	18.3
Ealing	49	23.8
Enfield	52	29.4
Greenwich	38	27.7
Hackney	52	37.4
Hammersmith and Fulham	30	24.2
Haringey	46	30.8
Harrow	29	21.3
Havering	28	20.8
Hillingdon	32	19.8
Hounslow	34	24.4
Islington	35	28.3
Kensington and Chelsea	40	33.3
Kingston-upon-Thames	22	21.6
Lambeth	45	25.6
Lewisham	36	21.7
Merton	27	20.7
Newham	61	39.3
Redbridge	37	23.8
Richmond-upon-Thames	29	24.3
Southwark	45	27.6
Sutton	20	17.1
Tower Hamlets	51	37.8
Waltham Forest	41	29.5
Wandsworth	40	21.6
Westminster, City of	41	30.1

[1] Rate as a percentage of the resident population of working age (men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59).

[2] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.

Source:
Annual Population Survey

Employees' Earnings

Mr. Moore: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of *(a)* all employees, *(b)* full-time employees and *(c)* part-time employees in (i) Scotland, (ii) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland and (iii) the United Kingdom had hourly

gross earnings excluding overtime below (A) £7.61, (B) £5.72 and (C) £4.85 for the categories: (1) male, (2) female and (3) all workers. [40445]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006: As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many and what proportion of *(a)* all employees, *(b)* full-time employees and *(c)* part-time employees in (i) Scotland, (ii) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland and (iii) the United Kingdom had hourly earnings (gross, excluding overtime) below (A) £7.61, (B) £5.72 and (C) £4.85 for the categories: (1) male, (2) female and (3) all workers. (40445).

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library showing the proportion of all employees, full time employees and part-time employees by local authority by place of work for Scotland and unitary local authority areas for 2005. These statistics are also available on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the distribution of gross earnings was for those earning *(a)* under the point below which 10 per cent. of earners fall and *(b)* the point above which 10 per cent. of earners exceed, for (i) male, (ii) female and (iii) all workers in (A) Scotland and (B) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland. [40446]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the distribution of gross earnings was for those earning *(a)* under the point below which 10 per cent. of earners fall and *(b)* the point above which 10 per cent. of earners exceed, for the categories: (i) male, (ii) female and (iii) all workers in (A) Scotland and (B) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland. (40446)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach a table showing the points above and below which 10% of earners fall for Gross Weekly Earnings for all, male and female workers, by local authority by place of work for Scotland and unitary authorities for 2005. These statistics are also available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for all workers jobs[1] by place of work

2005	*Point below which 10 per cent. of earners fall*	*Point above which 10 per cent. of earners exceed*
		£
Scotland	105	718
Aberdeen City	100	884
Aberdeenshire	85	[2]
Angus	[2]	[2]
Argyll and Bute	105	[2]
Scottish Borders, The	102	[2]
Clackmannanshire	85	[2]
Dumfries and Galloway	83	[2]
Dundee City	122	[2]
East Ayrshire	74	[2]
East Dunbartonshire	101	[2]
East Lothian	[2]	[2]
East Renfrewshire	104	[2]
Edinburgh, City of	126	814
Falkirk	108	[2]
Fife	86	643
Glasgow City	116	744
Highland	100	[2]
Inverclyde	97	[2]
Midlothian	145	[2]
Moray	107	[2]
North Ayrshire	111	[2]
North Lanarkshire	106	715
Orkney Islands	[2]	[2]
Perth and Kinross	95	[2]
Renfrewshire	100	[2]
Shetland Islands	[2]	[2]
South Ayrshire	104	[2]

Gross weekly pay for all workers jobs[1] by place of work

2005	Point below which 10 per cent. of earners fall	£ Point above which 10 per cent. of earners exceed
South Lanarkshire	112	700
Stirling	113	[2]...
West Dunbartonshire	115	[2]...
West Lothian	118	[2]...
Western Isles	[2]...	[2]...

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay period was not affected by absence.
[2] Figures suppressed due to unreliability.

Source:
Annual survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly pay for full-time males jobs[1] by place of work

2005	Point below which 10 per cent. of earners fall	£ Point above which 10 per cent. of earners exceed
Scotland	244	854
Aberdeen City	290	[2]...
Aberdeenshire	248	[2]...
Angus	250	[2]...
Argyll and Bute	[2]...	[2]...
Scottish Borders, The	235	[2]...
Clackmannanshire	[2]...	[2]...
Dumfries and Galloway	228	[2]...
Dundee City	247	[2]...
East Ayrshire	228	[2]...
East Dunbartonshire	[2]...	[2]...
East Lothian	[2]...	[2]...
East Renfrewshire	[2]...	[2]...
Edinburgh, City of	256	949
Falkirk	222	[2]...
Fife	240	[2]...
Glasgow City	239	908
Highland	230	[2]...
Inverclyde	[2]...	[2]...
Midlothian	214	[2]...
Moray	272	[2]...
North Ayrshire	253	[2]...
North Lanarkshire	244	[2]...
Orkney Islands	[2]...	[2]...
Perth and Kinross	239	[2]...
Renfrewshire	263	[2]...
Shetland Islands	[2]...	[2]...
South Ayrshire	217	[2]...
South Lanarkshire	244	[2]...
Stirling	246	[2]...
West Dunbartonshire	[2]...	[2]...
West Lothian	251	[2]...
Western Isles	[2]...	[2]...

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay period was not affected by absence.
[2] Figures suppressed due to unreliability.

Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly pay for full-time females jobs[1] by place of work

2005	Point below which 10 per cent. fall	£ Point above which 10 per cent. of earners of earners exceed
Scotland	212	674
Aberdeen City	225	[2]...
Aberdeenshire	190	[2]...
Angus	[2]...	[2]...
Argyll and Bute	[2]...	[2]...
Scottish Borders, The	197	[2]...
Clackmannanshire	[2]...	[2]...
Dumfries and Galloway	197	[2]...
Dundee City	228	[2]...
East Ayrshire	208	[2]...
East Dunbartonshire	[2]...	[2]...
East Lothian	[2]...	[2]...
East Renfrewshire	[2]...	[2]...
Edinburgh, City of	226	742

Gross weekly pay for full-time females jobs[1] by place of work

2005	Point below which 10 per cent. fall	£ Point above which 10 per cent. of earners of earners exceed
Falkirk	210	[2]
Fife	203	[2]
Glasgow City	225	686
Highland	193	[2]
Inverclyde	220	[2]
Midlothian	[2]	[2]
Moray	[2]	[2]
North Ayrshire	204	[2]
North Lanarkshire	204	[2]
Orkney Islands	[2]	[2]
Perth and Kinross	211	[2]
Renfrewshire	224	[2]
Shetland Islands	[2]	[2]
South Ayrshire	197	[2]
South Lanarkshire	198	[2]
Stirling	[2]	[2]
West Dunbartonshire	[2]	[2]
West Lothian	212	[2]
Western Isles	[2]	[2]

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Figures suppressed due to unreliability.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Ethnic Population

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the UK population is from an ethnic minority. [39791]

John Healey: The information requested is the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what percentage of the UK population is from an ethnic minority. (39791)

The 2001 Census recorded 4.635 million people in the United Kingdom as belonging to an ethnic minority group. They accounted for 7.9 per cent. of the UK population. The ethnic minority population is defined here as all people from a Non-White group and excludes the White Irish and Other White ethnic group categories.

EU Budget

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the changes to the UK's annual net contributions to the EU arising from the European Council's recent budget decisions in terms of *(a)* increased contributions arising from enlargement, *(b)* reduction of the UK rebate and *(c)* other factors; and what assessment he has made of how increased contributions will be funded. [39452]

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the impact on Government borrowing of the revised UK rebate from the EU; [40454]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of the recently agreed deal on the UK's EU rebate on *(a)* Budget proposals and *(b)* Treasury forecasts as set out in the pre-Budget report. [40455]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer my hon. Friend and the hon. Member to the answer given to my right hon. Friend the Member for West Dunbartonshire (Mr. McFall) on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2796W.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department had with other ministerial colleagues before the UK made its proposals for the EU budget settlement. [40044]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury worked closely with the Foreign Office, Cabinet Office, the UK permanent representation in Brussels and other Government Departments on the EU Budget dossier, both during the UK presidency of the EU and beforehand. This included ministerial discussions.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the UK's *(a)* gross contribution, *(b)* net contribution and *(c)* rebate has been in each year since the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community (i) in cash terms and (ii) in inflation-adjusted real terms. [40539]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: UK gross contributions, abatement and net contributions for the period 1973–74 to 2004–05 in both cash terms and at constant 2004–05 prices are set out in the following tables.

UK gross contributions, abatement and net contributions to the EC Budget

	Gross contribution	Abatement	(£ million) Net contribution
1973–74	200	—	96
1974–75	197	—	−35
1975–76	370	—	16
1976–77	544	—	224
1977–78	941	—	559
1978–79	1,323	—	768
1979–80	1,665	—	884
1980–81	1,900	—	233
1981–82	2,330	—	225
1982–83	2,820	—	737

UK gross contributions, abatement and net contributions to the EC Budget

	Gross contribution	Abatement	(£ million) Net contribution
1983–84	3,097	—	961
1984–85	3,614	—	1,133
1985–86	3,745	-823	992
1986–87	5,121	-1,343	1,221
1987–88	4,906	-1,137	1,811
1988–89	5,167	-1,600	1,167
1989–90	5,804	-1,317	2,452
1990–91	6,411	-1,838	2,185
1991–92	6,129	-2,428	943
1992–93	6,970	-1,993	2,168
1993–94	8,407	-2,350	2,192
1994–95	6,892	-1,648	1,641
1995–96	9,211	-1,576	3,852
1996–97	9,278	-2,418	2,293
1997–98	8,603	-1,563	2,567
1998–99	10,507	-2,447	4,111
1999–2000	9,207	-2,206	3,325
2000–01	10,640	-2,223	4,318
2001–02	9,213	-4,427	1,477
2002–03	9,737	-3,233	3,080
2003–04	11,371	-3,874	3,264
2004–05	12,183	-3,722	3,909

Source:
All figures up to 1995–1996 are taken from Departmental Reports of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Departments or, prior to 1992, Government Expenditure Plans. Figures for 1996–97 to 2004–05 taken from annual "European Community Finances" White Papers.

UK gross contributions, abatement and net contributions , to the EC Budget—2004–05 prices

	Gross contribution	Abatement	£ million Net contribution
1973–74	1,540	—	739
1974–75	1,286	—	-229
1975–76	1,939	—	84
1976–77	2,473	—	1,018
1977–78	3,752	—	2,229
1978–79	4,870	—	2,827
1979–80	5,293	—	2,810
1980–81	5,193	—	637
1981–82	5,712	—	552
1982–83	6,456	—	1,687
1983–84	6,774	—	2,102
1984–85	7,525	—	2,359
1985–86	7,361	-1,618	1,950
1986–87	9,755	-2,558	2,326
1987–88	8,987	-2,083	3,317
1988–89	8,929	-2,765	2,017
1989–90	9,304	-2,111	3,931
1990–91	9,369	-2,686	3,193
1991–92	8,551	-3,388	1,316
1992–93	9,428	-2,696	2,932
1993–94	11,180	-3,126	2,915
1994–95	8,921	-2,134	2,124
1995–96	11,548	-1,976	4,829
1996–97	11,356	-2,960	2,807
1997–98	10,192	-1,851	3,042
1998–99	12,072	-2,811	4,723
1999–2000	10,414	-2,495	3,761
2000–01	11,685	-2,441	4,743
2001–02	9,969	-4,790	1,598
2002–03	10,321	-3,427	3,265
2003–04	11,724	-3,995	3,366
2004–05	12,183	-3,722	3,909

Source:
1973–74 to 2004–05 cash figures converted to constant 2004–05 prices.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the Regulation establishing an Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession and *(b)* Economic Policy Committee: working party and reduced compositions have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38775]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Committee for the Implementation of the Regulation establishing an Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession met once during the UK Presidency of the EU. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission. The UK Government was represented by officials from the Department for International Development and the UK Permanent Representation to the European Union, Brussels.

The Economic Policy Committee (EPC) met formally five times during the UK Presidency of the EU. The various working groups and reduced compositions of the EPC met 15 times over the same period. These meetings were chaired by designated members of the EPC. Treasury officials represent the United Kingdom.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on administrative cooperation in the field of indirect taxation, including the Fiscalis programme: anti-fraud (SCAF), *(b)* Committee on administrative cooperation in the field of indirect taxation, including the Fiscalis programme: training (SCAT), *(c)* Committee on administrative cooperation in the field of indirect taxation, including the Fiscalis programme: information technology (SCIT) and *(d)* Committee on excise duties have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38804]

Dawn Primarolo: During the period of the UK's Presidency of the EU from 1 July to 31 December 2005 the Standing Committee on Administrative Co-operation (SCAC) met on 12 July and 9 December, its IT sub-Committee (SCIT) met on 20 July and 25 November, and the Excise Committee on 25 November. There were no meetings of the Fiscalis Committee. A European Commission DG TAXUD official chaired each of the meetings and in accordance with long standing arrangements, UK representation was provided by a designated official from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee-EEC-Slovenia, *(b)* Customs Cooperation Committee (EEC-Turkey), *(c)* Customs Cooperation Committee-EEC-Andorra, *(d)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee-EEC-Romania and *(e)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee-EEC-Russia have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting;

which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39026]

Dawn Primarolo: None of the Committees and Sub-committees concerned met during the UK presidency.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* EEC-European Free Trade Association Joint Committee (and working parties), *(b)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee—EEC-Canada, *(c)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee—EEC-Korea and *(d)* Customs Cooperation Sub-committee—EEC-United States of America have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39028]

Dawn Primarolo: There have been three meetings of the EEC-European Free Trade Association Joint Committee (and working parties) during the UK presidency. The Commission chaired all these meetings and the UK representatives were from HMRC. Customs matters are a reserved matter for HMG and are not within the competence of the devolved governments.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Committee EC-Canada during the UK presidency.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Committee EC-Korea during the UK presidency.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Committee EC-US during the UK presidency.

Examination Markers

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether those who mark examination papers are treated as *(a)* employed and *(b)* self-employed for (i) income tax and (ii) national insurance purposes; [40625]

(2) if he will make a statement on the tax position of people marking examination papers. [40626]

Dawn Primarolo: The treatment of examiners for tax purposes will depend upon the terms of their engagement. But generally examiners including those individuals who mark examination papers are engaged under terms and conditions amounting to contracts of employment.

For national insurance purposes there are special rules that treat examiners as self-employed where they are responsible for the conduct or administration of examinations lading to any certificate, diploma, degree or professional qualification, and the whole of the work is performed under a contract in less than 12 months.

External examiners that are engaged by universities for masters' degrees and doctorates are generally treated as self-employed for both tax and NICs.

Fees relating to examinations other than GCSE, 'A' level and university degrees, for example for professional qualifications, may be chargeable to tax under trading income or as employment income, depending on whether a contract of employment exists.

Exports (Burma)

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which UK companies have exported goods to Burma in each year since 1997 for which records are available. [39761]

Dawn Primarolo: For reasons of confidentiality, the Department does not publish information at the level of detail required by this question.

Film Productions

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Government's tax policy on *(a)* film productions and *(b)* British film productions in the UK. [38914]

Dawn Primarolo: The Chancellor made a number of key announcements regarding the new film tax incentives at the pre-Budget report. Further details of the new tax incentives will be announced in due course.

Fuel Duty

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he has had on the impact of the proposed harmonisation of duty rates on hydrocarbons; and if he will make a statement; [38926]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact on the UK economy of the proposed harmonisation of duty rates on hydrocarbon oils; and if he will make a statement; [38927]

(3) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* costs and *(b)* benefits of (i) the EU proposal to harmonise rates of duty on hydrocarbon oils and (ii) the EU derogation in respect of rebated diesel fuel; and if he will make a statement. [38930]

John Healey: The European Commission has not adopted any new proposals to harmonise the rates of duty for commercial diesel. The Government see no reason for harmonised excise duty rates on hydrocarbon oils and believe that tax policy is the responsibility of individual member states. It is for member states to decide what policies they should pursue through the use of fiscal instruments and, subject to minimum rates in some areas, what rates of duty they should apply.

The UK has a number of exemptions from the Energy Products Directive which enable duty to be charged at a reduced rate on oils that are put to certain uses, including use in leisure boats for private use. The Government are minded to apply for an extension these

derogations and will issue an initial regulatory impact assessment on the effects of ending the derogation. This document will analyse the costs and benefits of the derogation, and be used as the basis for further information gathering and discussions.

GDP Growth Rate

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average GDP growth rate for the United Kingdom has been in each year since 1997–98. [40028]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average GDP growth rate for the United Kingdom has been in each year since 1997–98. (40028)

The information requested is shown in the table below.

Average growth rate of UK gross domestic product chained volume measure, 1997–2004

Calendar year	*Growth rate*
1997	3.2
1998	3.2
1999	3.0
2000	4.0
2001	2.2
2002	2.0
2003	2.5
2004	3.2

Gershon Review

David Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what savings have been made by each Department as a result of recommendations in the Gershon Review. [39963]

Mr. Des Browne: Departments have reported progress towards their efficiency targets, as set out in their Efficiency Technical Notes, in their Autumn Performance Reports.

Government Expenditure and Revenue

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether documents comparable to Government Expenditure and Revenue in Scotland are published for *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Northern Ireland and *(c)* the regions of England. [39620]

Mr. Des Browne: Government Expenditure and Revenue in Scotland is published annually by the Scottish Executive. There are no similar publications for Wales, Northern Ireland or the English Regions.

Her Majesty's Courts Service

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Constitutional Affairs about the pay negotiations with former magistrates court staff transferred to Her Majesty's Courts Service. [39588]

Mr. Des Browne: Responsibility for pay negotiations with former magistrates court staff transferred to Her Majesty Courts Service lies with the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA). Like all civil service departments, DCA is required to clear a pay remit for negotiations with the Treasury based on a number of considerations, including recruitment, retention and affordability.

HM Revenue and Customs Staff

Jenny Willott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many HM Revenue and Customs staff in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* each constituency in Wales are expected to be made redundant under the Government's latest spending review in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [39582]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC has no plans for compulsory redundancies in Wales in 2005–06 and 2006–07.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many HM Revenue and Customs staff in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* each constituency in Wales have been made redundant under the Government's latest spending review; and if he will make a statement. [39583]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs has made no staff compulsorily redundant in Wales since 1 April 2004.

Income Tax/National Insurance

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much in *(a)* income tax and *(b)* national insurance contributions was raised from (i) the top one per cent., (ii) the top five per cent., (iii) the top 10 per cent. and (iv) the bottom 50 per cent. of taxpayers in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available; and how many people in each of these areas paid no income tax in the last year for which figures are available. [39965]

Dawn Primarolo: The information on income tax can be found in the following table.

	Amount of income tax[1] (£ million)				
Government office region	*Lower 50 per cent.*	*Top 10 per cent.*	*Top 5 per cent.*	*Top 1 per cent.*	*Estimated total number of non-taxpayers[2] (million)*
North East	450	1,380	1,020	490	1.4
North West	1,190	4,590	3,490	1,710	3.6
Yorkshire and the Humber	910	3,280	2,510	1,220	2.7
East Midlands	840	3,220	2,450	1,190	2.2
West Midlands	1,000	3,660	2,780	1,370	2.8
East of England	1,250	6,130	4,720	2,400	2.7
London	1,870	12,220	9,950	5,700	4.1
South East	2,000	10,730	8,230	4,130	4.1
South West	1,010	3,910	2,970	1,420	2.5

Government office region	Amount of income tax[1] (£ million) Lower 50 per cent.	Top 10 per cent.	Top 5 per cent.	Top 1 per cent.	Estimated total number of non-taxpayers[2] (million)
Wales	480	1,570	1,160	540	1.6
Scotland	1,010	3,650	2,760	1,330	2.6
Northern Ireland	270	930	710	350	1.0

[1] Based on tax liability before allowing for tax credits.
[2] Total 2003 mid-year population in each region less the number of taxpayers.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 survey of personal incomes (SPI) which is the last year for which figures are available.

Similar information for national insurance contributions is not readily available.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many taxpayers would not pay *(a)* income tax and *(b)* national insurance contributions if the earnings level at which such payments began to be paid were raised in the forthcoming Budget to £10,000 per annum. [37845]

Dawn Primarolo: In 2006–07, an estimated 6.4 million people would be taken out of income tax and 3.9 million would not be required to pay national insurance contributions if all personal allowances (including age related personal allowances) and related thresholds were raised to £10,000.

The provided figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Inheritance Tax

Helen Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the impact on inheritance tax revenue would be of *(a)* not increasing the threshold above the statutory indexation in 2005–06, *(b)* retaining a threshold of £275,000 over three years to 2007–08, *(c)* cutting the threshold to (i) £250,000 and (ii) £200,000 and *(d)* retaining the current threshold and statutory indexation but raising the rate to (A) 50 percent., (B) 60 percent. and (C) 70 percent.. [39526]

Dawn Primarolo: The estimated impact of the options on inheritance tax revenue accruing in years 2006–07 and 2007–08 is shown in the following table. In each case the comparison is with forecast revenues using the zero-rate thresholds already announced by the Chancellor of £285,000 for 2006–07 and £300,000 for 2007–08, and the rate of 40 percent. on value above the zero-rate threshold.

Option	Increase in revenue (£) 2006–07	2007–08
(a) not increasing the threshold above the statutory indexation in 2005–06 (giving a threshold in 2006–07 of £283,000, indexed from the actual threshold of £275,000 in 2005–06).	40 million	n/a
(b) retaining a threshold of £275,000 over three years to 2007–08.	190 million	480 million
(c) cutting the threshold to:		
(i) £250,000	700 million	n/a
(ii) £200,000	2 billion	n/a
(d) retaining the current threshold and statutory indexation but raising the rate to		
(A) 50 percent	1000 million	n/a
(B) 60 percent	1900 million	n/a
(C) 70 percent	2900 million	n/a

Notes:
1. Estimates are based on information held on a sample of taxpaying and non-taxpaying estates relating to deaths in the year 2003–04.
2. Estimates take no account of behavioural changes which may occur when tax structures and rates are changed.
3. Estimates for option *(c)*, which involves large reductions in the threshold, are particularly approximate and have been rounded appropriately.

Inland Revenue (Sheriff Officers)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much expenditure was incurred by the Inland Revenue through using sheriff officers in each of the last eight years; and what proportion of that expenditure arose as a result of incorrect call-outs based on inaccurate information supplied by the Inland Revenue. [39622]

Dawn Primarolo: The expenditure incurred by the former Inland Revenue in respect of sheriff officer fees for the last eight years is not held. We can provide information for the six years to end of October 2004 and this is detailed as follows:

Year to end October	£ million
1999	1.11
2000	1.29
2001	1.33
2002	1.90
2003	1.37
2004	1.14

Information for accounting year 2005 is not yet available.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is not aware of having supplied inaccurate information to any sheriff officer. A sheriff officer would only be instructed to serve

a Sheriff Court writ/summons or carry out diligence for established debt that is overdue and after telephone and/or written application for payment.

Interest Rates

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how often he has received representations from the elected governing authorities of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar and *(f)* Saint Helena about interest rates set by the Bank of England since 1997. [39214]

John Healey: The Chancellor has not received any representations about interest rates from the governing authorities of the Crown Dependencies and UK Overseas Territories listed. Since May 1997 the Bank of England has had operational independence in the setting of interest rates.

Local Authorities (England)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many whole-time equivalent jobs there are in each of England's local authorities, broken down by region. [39860]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about full-time equivalent jobs in England's local authorities. (39860)

I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library showing the number of full-time and part-time employee jobs in each unitary and local authority in England in December 2004; the latest period for which information is available. Part-time jobs are defined as those requiring less than 30 hours per week. Statistics for full-time equivalent jobs are not available.

These estimates are from the Annual Business Inquiry and, as with any sample survey, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Lord Turner's Letter

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 914W, on Lord Turner's letter, what the result of the inquiry headed by Nicholas Macpherson into the leak of his letter to Lord Turner was; and if he will make a statement. [40488]

John Healey: The Treasury does not comment on the progress or outcome of leak inquiries.

Malnutrition

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for how many deaths malnutrition was given as the cause in London in each of the last five years. [40810]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for how many deaths malnutrition was given as the cause in London in each of the last five years (40810)

The latest year for which figures are available in 2004. Figures showing numbers of deaths for London where malnutrition or deprivation of food was mentioned on the death certificate are given in the table below, for deaths registered in each year from 2002 to 2004.

Number of deaths where malnutrition or deprivation of food[1] was mentioned on the death certificate, London,[2] 2000 to 2004[3]

	Deaths
2000	26
2001	23
2002	22
2003	27
2004	17

[1] Cause of death was defined using the codes below from the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the year 2000, and Tenth Revision (ICD-10) from 2001 onwards:
ICD-9260-Kwashiorkor;
261-Nutritional marasmus;
262-Other severe protein-calorie malnutrition;
263-Other and unspecified protein-calorie malnutrition;
994.2-Effects of hunger.
ICD-10 E40-E46-Malnutrition;
T73.0-Effects of hunger.
Deaths were selected using the original cause of death.
[2] Deaths of usual residents of the London Government Office Region.
[3] Deaths registered in each calendar year.

Minimum Wage

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the workforce in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland has been employed at the minimum wage in each year since its introduction. [39794]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about what percentage of the workforce in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland has been employed at the minimum wage in each year since its introduction. (39793)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than the minimum wage for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. Estimates are also produced of the number of jobs paid below successive 10p thresholds for the United Kingdom, including those bands around the minimum wage. These results can be found on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.go.uk/downloads/theme_labour/jobs_below.xls

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/2004_10pbands.xls

Estimates of number and percentage of jobs paid at the minimum wage for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not available.

Yours sincerely

National Insurance

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will estimate the revenue paid in employees' national insurance contributions each year by those who are aged above the state retirement age, broken down by *(a)* male and *(b)* female contributions; [39893]

(2) what the payments *(a)* to and *(b)* from the national insurance fund were in each of the last 30 financial years; and what each payment was as a percentage of national income; [39894]

(3) what the principal differences are in the definition of taxable income and income on which employees' national insurance contributions are paid; and if he will estimate the revenue change to the *(a)* exchequer and *(b)* national insurance fund that would accrue were the national insurance contributions liable base to be aligned with taxable income for income tax purposes. [39895]

Dawn Primarolo: National insurance contributions are paid by employees between the ages of 16 and state retirement age (60 for women and 65 for men) only. Therefore the amount of employees' national insurance contributions paid by those above the state retirement age is zero.

National insurance fund receipts and payments for each financial year can be found in the National Insurance Fund Account (for Great Britain) and the Northern Ireland National Insurance Fund Account published by The National Audit Office, copies of which are in the Commons Library.

To calculate each payment as a percentage of GDP, I refer the hon. Member to the UK Gross Domestic Product figures which can be obtained from the HM Treasury website:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk./economic_data_and_tools/gdp_deflators/data_gdp_fig.cfm

The principal differences between taxable income and the amount on which individuals pay national insurance contributions are:

taxable income has a broader base and is paid by all companies and individuals regardless of age. For individuals, income tax is payable on both earned income from employment, unearned income and pension income. Unearned income includes property income, interest from bank accounts, share dividends and many state benefits. Unearned and pension income is subject to income tax, but not national insurance contributions.

national insurance contributions on earnings are paid by employees and self-employed individuals between the ages of 16 and state retirement age only.

contributions to approved pension schemes benefit from income tax relief but are part of the income subject to national insurance contributions.

The effect of aligning national insurance liability with taxable income would depend on the exact nature of the charge which would apply to income which is currently taxed but not subject to national insurance, and whether contributions to approved pension schemes which benefit from tax relief ceased to be subject to national insurance contributions.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will estimate what the path of employee and employer national insurance contributions would be up until 2050 under the proposals of the Pension Commission for the basic state pension and second state pension; [35715]

(2) when he will answer the question tabled by the hon. Member for Birkenhead on 5 December, reference 35715, on national insurance contributions. [38158]

Dawn Primarolo: Projections of rates of national insurance contributions depend on a number of factors. The Government Actuary's Quinquennial Review of the National Insurance Fund as at April 2000 (Cm6008) sets out possible paths for national insurance contributions for a number of possible policy scenarios, including where the basic state pension is indexed by earnings—one of the Pensions Commission's options for reform.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue the Treasury gained in national insurance contributions from men under 65 years in full-time work who had already acquired a full contribution record for the state retirement pension in each of the last five years. [39533]

Dawn Primarolo: The latest information is in the table.

Estimates on national insurance contributions from males under the age of 65 with a full contribution record

	National Insurance Contributions (£ million)
1999–2000	555
2000–01	564
2001–02	585
2002–03	600
2003–04	718

Source:
DWP Lifetime Labour Market Database, May 2005

The estimates only include the primary national insurance contributions paid by an individual after reaching full entitlement, and exclude the amounts paid by the employer for that individual.

These figures are subject to revision in future years as some employers submit individuals' contributions information late.

Office for National Statistics

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the budget of the Office for National Statistics was in each year since 1992. [39619]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the budget of the Office for National Statistics was in each year from 1992 (39619).

The requested information is shown in the attached table.

Office for National Statistics Spending[1]

Financial year	*Expenditure*[2] *(£ million)*
1992–93	97
1993–94	90
1994–95	93
1995–96	103
1996–97	110
1997–98	95
1998–99	102
1999–2000	110
2000–01	156

Office for National Statistics Spending[1]

Financial year	*Expenditure*[2] *(£ million)*
2001–02	212
2002–03	146
2003–04	151
2004–05	191
2005–06[3]	197

[1] The Office for National Statistics was created as a Government Department and an executive agency on 1 April 1996 by merging the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). The figures for 1992–93 to 1995–96 reflect the combined outturn for CSO and OPCS.
[2] Expenditure figures from 1998–99 are presented on a resource basis. Figures for earlier years are in cash terms. Figures from 1998–99 onwards include additional provision for planning, fieldwork and initial processing of the 2001 Census of Population in England and Wales. Figures from 2003–04 onwards include additional funding for modernisation.
[3] Planned expenditure.

P11D Notices

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value of incorrectly issued P11D notices was in each of the last five years for which information available; and if he will make a statement. [38751]

Dawn Primarolo: In answering this question we have taken the term 'P11D notices' to mean 'P11D *(b)* penalty notices'.

We do not hold information in the form needed to answer the specific question raised.

Pension Provision (Benefits System)

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the evidence of his Department's officials to the Public Accounts Committee on 7 December, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the complexity of the benefits system on pension provision; and if he will make a statement. [38937]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In his statement to the House on 30 November the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions set out five tests on which the Government's response to the Pensions Commission's Second Report will be based. One of those tests is whether proposals simplify the system.

Pensioner Deaths

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for how many deaths of people of retirement age *(a)* cold and *(b)* malnutrition were found to have been causes in each of the last 10 years, broken down by (i) county and (ii) London borough. [40609]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many deaths of people of retirement age *(a)* cold and *(b)* malnutrition were found to have been causes in each of the last 10 years, broken down by (i) county and (ii) London borough. (40609)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. Cold is not recorded as a cause of death in itself, however hypothermia (subnormal body temperature) may be mentioned on the death certificate. Figures provided are for the number of deaths where *(a)* hypothermia and *(b)* malnutrition or deprivation of food was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, for deaths registered in each of the years 1995 to 2004.

As retirement age differs for males and females, tables are provided separately for deaths of women aged 60 and over and men aged 65 and over.

Counties in England and Wales have been subject to administrative changes which affected the structure of many of these areas in the mid-1990s. Figures are therefore provided using current county boundaries which exclude unitary authority areas created from 1995 onwards.

These tables have been placed in the Library of the House of Commons.

Population Projections

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the 2003-based sub-national population projections for England produced by the Office for National Statistics include population increases as a result of Growth Area expansions from the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy. [40426]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the 2003-based subnational population projections. (40426)

The 2003-based subnational population projections are based on assumptions about local fertility, mortality and migration levels derived from the five-year reference period 1999 to 2003. They are demographic trend-based projections and take no account of any future growth or development policies of an area.

The effects of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Spatial strategy will be covered in future sets of projections when they are observed in the mid year estimates and historic migration estimates that are used to set the projection assumptions.

Private Finance Initiative Projects

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much capital expenditure in existing private finance initiative projects will come from public funds. [40763]

John Healey: The private sector contractor funds initial capital expenditure for PFI projects. Payment is made by the public sector over the life of a PFI project for services provided and is dependent on the contractor delivering those services to the quality specified. Capital investment represents one of the activities undertaken by the private sector in order to deliver these services and so is reflected in such payments.

Red Diesel

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many litres of red diesel were distributed in *(a)* Great Britain and *(b)* Northern Ireland in the last five years for which figures are available; and what estimate he has made of the tax revenue foregone on red diesel compared with the standard rate of duty for diesel fuel. [40776]

John Healey: Hydrocarbon oils clearance figures are published by Customs and Excise in the Hydrocarbon Oils Bulletin, a copy of which can be found on the UK Trade Information website www.uktradeinfo.com. However, this data is not disaggregated by geographical region, so the data do not distinguish between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Charging the standard rate of duty for diesel fuel rather than the rebated gas oil rate would imply the following revenue yields. However in practice the actual yield would be significantly lower than this because such an increase in the duty rate would considerably reduce the demand for rebated gas oil.

	£ billion
2000–01	3.1
2001–02	2.9
2002–03	2.8
2003–04	2.6
2004–05	2.7

Road Fuels (Northern Ireland)

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of revenue lost due to the *(a)* cross-border purchasing and *(b)* smuggling of road fuels in Northern Ireland; and what his latest estimates are for the volume of legitimate fuel imports from the Republic of Ireland to (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) Great Britain. [39966]

John Healey: The latest estimates of revenue loss in the hydrocarbon oils sector are published in 'Measuring Indirect Tax Loss-2005', which was published alongside the PBR. All estimates for Northern Ireland relate to total non-UK duty paid consumption rather than the illicit market. This is because it is not yet possible to split revenue losses between those resulting from the illicit market and those from legitimate cross-border shopping

In 2004, road fuel imports from the Republic of Ireland totalled 137,895 tonnes. Of this 135,530 tonnes were imported into Great Britain and 2,365 were imported into Northern Ireland.

Scottish Fiscal Autonomy

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from the Scottish Executive on Scottish fiscal autonomy. [40030]

Mr. Des Browne: No representations have been received by the Treasury from the Scottish Executive on the issue of fiscal autonomy. The funding arrangements for the devolved Administrations are set out in the Statement of Funding Policy published in July 2004.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how the budget of the Scotland Office is determined. [40031]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the funding arrangements for the Scotland Office and Scottish Executive are set out in the Treasury publication "Funding the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly". Details are also provided in the Scotland Office annual report.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how the comparability factors for Scottish expenditure for the purposes of the Barnett formula were determined. [40032]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the comparability factors underlying the Barnett Formula can be found within the Treasury publication "Funding the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly".

Self-invested Personal Pensions

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the number of self-invested personal pensions that made off-plan purchases of residential property prior to 5 December 2005. [40275]

(2) what representations he has received from representatives of the *(a)* financial services and *(b)* property sectors about the availability of transitional relief to self-invested personal pensions (SIPP) where a SIPP had bought a residential property off plan prior to 5 December 2005. [40276]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* No estimate has been made of the number of SIPPs who have purchased off-plan properties prior to 5 December 2005, nor have there been any representations about the availability of transitional relief for those purchasing off-plan properties.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his latest estimate is of the cost of fraud relating to the tax credits e-portal; and if he will make a statement; [35699]

(2) when his Department first became aware of tax credit fraud in relation to the tax credits e-portal; and if he will make a statement; [35700]

(3) on what dates since April 2003 Ministers have been briefed on organised fraud involving the tax credits system; and if he will make a statement; [35697]

(4) when Ministers were first informed of organised tax credit fraud via the e-portal; and if he will make a statement; [37915]

(5) what assessment he has made of the level of fraudulent use of the tax credit portal. [36807]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 December 2005]:* HMRC assesses all tax credits claims for compliance risk whether they are made through the e-portal or on paper. As with any area in which the Government are distributing large amounts of money, there will be some people intent on defrauding the system and HMRC therefore has a number of sophisticated measures to help it detect fraudulent claims.

Over the last 12 months HMRC has detected an increase in the number of organised attacks on the tax credits system, predominantly via the internet. HMRC continued to monitor the situation closely and updated me in June 2005. A decision was taken to suspend the internet service from 2 December following an assessment by HMRC that the nature of the threat had

changed, which in turn changed the balance of judgment between maintaining the service for genuine customers and the need to protect revenues.

HMRC is currently undertaking a programme of work on finalised 2003–04 awards—the first year of working tax credit and child tax credit—to provide more comprehensive information on the level of claimant error and fraud. This is due to be completed in spring 2006.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in each constituency in Northern Ireland have received *(a)* child and *(b)* working tax credits since they were introduced; and how many have received incorrect payments due to computer problems. [15268]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member of Swansea, East (Mrs. James) on 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1430W. Regarding the second part of the question, this information is not available.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the costs have been of specialist advice outside the EDS contract on the capacity, structure and performance of the tax credit computer system since 1 January 2004. [19264]

Dawn Primarolo: The tax credits IT system went live in 2002, under the (then) Inland Revenue's outsourcing contract with EDS. The EDS contract ended on the 30 June 2004, when it was replaced by a new contract with Capgemini. Between 1 January and 30 June 2004, HM Revenue and Customs did not receive any specialist advice outside of the EDS contract on the capacity, structure and performance of the tax credit computer system.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what letters of comfort were sought from EDS in *(a)* January, *(b)* February, *(c)* March and *(d)* April 2003; if he will publish them; and if he will make a statement. [19285]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to the answer I gave the hon. Gentleman on 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 804W.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the robustness of the tax credit computer system; and if he will make a statement. [19408]

Dawn Primarolo: In my statement to the Treasury Sub Committee of 26 October I explained that HMRC is taking forward objectives to create a more flexible IT system that will allow process improvements, such as changes to award notices, to be introduced much more quickly. However, having established the integrity of the IT system and significantly improved its performance, the priority must be to ensure that progress to more flexibility is done in a measured and orderly way.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement about the introduction of interim assessments for tax credits. [19721]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax credits awards are initially based on a family's current circumstances and their income for the previous tax year. If a family's circumstances do not change and there are no significant changes in income during the year, the initial award will run until the end of the tax year. Families are encouraged to report in-year changes of circumstances that can lead either to an increase or decrease in their award. At the end of the year, families are asked by the Tax Credits Office to confirm their details and their actual income for the year just ended.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of complaints about tax credits have been responded to within 15 working days in each of the last 12 months. [20015]

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of complaints from West Lancashire about tax credits have been responded to within 15 working days in each of the last 12 months; and how many cases remain unresolved after *(a)* 12 months and *(b)* 24 months. [27610]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his most recent assessment is of the effectiveness of the computer system used for calculating tax credits. [23211]

Dawn Primarolo: In my Statement to the Treasury Sub Committee of 26 October I explained that HMRC is taking forward objectives to create a more flexible IT system that will allow process improvements, such as changes to award notices, to be introduced much more quickly. However, having established the integrity of the IT system and significantly improved its performance, the priority must be to ensure that progress to more flexibility is done in a measured and orderly way.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the tolerance level over which the recovery of tax credit overpayments is not considered cost-effective; what factors were taken into account in arriving at the current figure; and whether it is being applied to all overpayments. [23573]

Dawn Primarolo: No tolerance level is applied to on-going tax credits awards as the IT system automatically adjusts payments to recover overpayments. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does have tolerances which influence whether or not it collects overpayments from ceased tax credits awards. But HMRC believes that disclosing the level of those tolerances might prejudice its ability to enforce the law and recover monies properly payable in respect of tax credit overpayments.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment has been made of *(a)* the likely effectiveness of manual intervention in a tax credit case where an overpayment has been identified and automatic recovery has begun and *(b)* the likely impact this will have on the tax credit computer system; [24163]

(2) pursuant to the Paymaster General's evidence to the House of Commons Treasury Sub-committee on 26 October, what the evidential basis was for her statement that manual attempts to stop the automatic clawback of tax credit overpayments would be less effective than an automated procedure. [24164]

Dawn Primarolo: In my statement to the Treasury Sub Committee of 26 October I explained that, subject to testing, HMRC would be introducing interim procedures to prevent the automatic recovery of a disputed overpayment until the case had been examined. Final testing was completed successfully in early November and the Chief Secretary informed the House at Treasury Orals on 10 November that the new procedures had been implemented.

The interim procedures rely on a manual intervention to the existing computer system, which was not designed to enable automatic recovery of an overpayment to be suspended. HMRC is working to develop bespoke computer functionality to suspend recovery, but as I explained to the Treasury Sub Committee, having established the integrity of the IT system and significantly improved its performance, the priority must be to ensure that progress to a more flexible IT system is made in a measured and orderly way.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times he has written off an overpayment of tax credits because *(a)* of official error where it was reasonable for the recipient to think the award was correct, *(b)* it would have caused hardship to have recovered all of the overpayment and *(c)* it would have caused hardship to have recovered part of the overpayment, in each month since April 2003. [25242]

Dawn Primarolo: For details of the number of disputed overpayments written off as a result of official error up to and including June 2005, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 282W. Between July and October 2005 (inclusive), HM Revenue and Customs wrote off around 75,000 disputed overpayments.

In 2003–04 no overpayments of tax credits were written off because of hardship. Details for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are not yet available.

HMRC has procedures in place to help claimants who might suffer hardship as a result of an overpayment being recovered. Where there is no award in the current year the customer can pay back the overpayment in 12 monthly instalments if they wish. If they require more than 12 months, income and expenditure details are obtained and consideration is given to payment over an extended period of time. For cases where there is an ongoing award, reduced rates of recovery apply for those claimants on lower incomes.

Where there is an ongoing award reduced rates of recovery apply for those claimants on lower incomes. The maximum amounts by which HMRC would reduce payments to recover overpaid tax credit from the previous year are:

(a) 10 per cent. for claimants receiving the maximum award

(b) 100 per cent. for claimants receiving only the family element of child tax credit, and

(c) 25 per cent. for all other claimants.

As a result of changes announced in the pre-Budget review, from November 2006 these limits will also apply to in-year adjustments to payments.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the value of additional tax credits awarded in cases of hardship following the identification of an overpayment is added to the total overpayment to be recovered; and if he will give an illustration. [25252]

Dawn Primarolo: The circumstances in which HM Revenue and Customs will make additional tax credits payments, and how this affects a claimant's overpayment of tax credits, are explained in HMRC's Code of Practice 26 'What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?'.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the extent to which Northern Ireland claimants of tax credits are experiencing difficulties in accessing the tax credits helpline; what action is being taken to improve access to the helpline; and if he will make a statement. [28406]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no particular difficulties around accessibility to the tax credits helpline for Northern Ireland residents. The helpline is open 362 days a year from 8am to 8pm, closing on only Christmas day, Boxing day and new years day. In November 2005 the Northern Ireland tax credits helpline became part of the virtual network for tax credits calls. This has provided NI residents with access to a greater pool of resources, improving accessibility to the tax credits helpline.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) in how many cases HM Revenue and Customs, and its predecessor, *(a)* imposed a penalty under section 31 of the Tax Credits Act 2002 for making an incorrect statement or declaration or supplying incorrect information or evidence and *(b)* imposed a penalty under section 32(3) of the Tax Credits Act 2002 for failing to notify a specified change of circumstances in (i) 2003–04, (ii) 2004–05 and (iii) 2005–06 to date; and what the average penalty was in each case; [30661]

(2) in how many cases HM Revenue and Customs and its predecessors applied to the Appeals Service under section 32(1) and (2) of, and Schedule 2 to, the Tax Credits Act 2002 for a summons against an individual for failing to provide information or evidence or failing to comply with a requirement regarding a final notice in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06 to date. [30662]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) The following table shows the total number of penalties imposed under sections 31 and 32(3) of the Tax Credits Act 2002 and the average penalty imposed for 2004–05 and 2005–06 to end November. No penalties were charged in 2003–04.

A breakdown between penalties imposed under section 31 and section 32(3) is not available

	Number of cases	*Average penalty per case (£)*
2004–05	1,114	400.04
2005–06 to end November	1,348	363.15

(b) To the end of October HMRC had made 10 applications in 2005–06 for a summons against an individual under section 32(1) and (2) of, and Schedule 2 to, the Tax Credits Act 2002. No such applications were made in 2003–04 or 2004–05.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his policy, when writing-off overpaid tax credits caused by official error, to reimburse all overpayment recovered before the decision to write-off is made; and if he will make a statement. [35725]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 12 December 2005]:* Where a decision is taken to write-off all or part of an overpayment, any previously re-paid amount will be reimbursed either by a one-off payment, or by adjustments to future tax credit payments, or a combination of both.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the form TC647. [36224]

Dawn Primarolo: This has been done.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many cases in Northern Ireland disputed tax credit overpayments have been written off in 2005–06. [36249]

Dawn Primarolo: Between April 2005 and November 2005, HM Revenue and Customs agreed that around 13,700 disputed overpayments of tax credits in Northern Ireland should be written off on the grounds of official error.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tax credit awards are paid into bank accounts not in the name of the tax credit recipient; [36795]

(2) on how many occasions HM Revenue and Customs started paying tax credit awards into a different bank account at the request of the tax credit recipient in each month since April 2003. [36804]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proof of identity is required as part of an application for tax credits. [36802]

Dawn Primarolo: When tax credits claims are processed HM Revenue and Customs carries out a series of verification checks on claimant identity. Should further verification be required; birth certificates, passports and other forms of identification can be requested.

I would also refer the hon. Member to the announcement made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his pre-Budget report on 5 December 2005. The report announced measures to improve tax credits compliance by doubling the checks HMRC carry out on new claims for tax credits before payments are made.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what checks are made by advisers on the tax credit helpline on a caller's identity when a request is made to change a bank account for the payment of tax credits. [36803]

Dawn Primarolo: Prior to accepting a change in bank details, advisers ask a number of security questions about a variety of different items of personal information held by HM Revenue and Customs.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many referrals have been made to the Security Specialist Section of the Tax Credit Office in each month since 2003–04. [38556]

Dawn Primarolo: The Tax Credit Office does not have a Security Specialist Section.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit awards have been paid into overseas bank accounts in each year since 2003. [38697]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* total and *(b)* average income increases resulting in the overpayment of tax credits were in 2003–04. [38934]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2387W.

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what distribution of income increases was assumed in producing the Government's £800 million estimate of the additional final tax credit entitlement resulting from the £2,500 disregard in 2003–04; and what the statistical basis is for this distribution. [38935]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The estimate of £800 million was derived by modelling the annualised level of entitlement at 5 April 2004, both with and without the £2,500 disregard, for a representative sample of tax credit awards current at that date.

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's estimate is of the additional final tax credit entitlement resulting from the change in the income increase disregard from £2,500 to £25,000; and what basic assumptions were made when making the estimate. [38936]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Precise estimates of the change in entitlement resulting from the higher disregard from April 2006 will not be known until 2006–07 awards have been finalised in early 2008.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many full-time tax credit staff were working in *(a)* debt management and banking, *(b)* disputed overpayments, *(c)* bank liaison, *(d)* childcare provider checks, *(e)* complex cases, *(f)* employer liaison, *(g)* international claims, *(h)* persons from abroad, *(i)* post room, *(j)* specialist trace unit, *(k)* claims processing, *(l)* appeals, *(m)* complaints, *(n)* valuables and *(o)* tax credit hotlines in each month since January 2003. [38947]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* financial assistance and *(b)* help in kind his Department has offered to (i) Citizens Advice Bureaux and (ii) other voluntary advice agencies to help their advisers in tax credit cases. [39299]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury does not provide any direct financial or other assistance in kind to Citizens Advice Bureaux or any other voluntary advice agency.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs does provide financial assistance to a range of voluntary organisations including Citizens Advice Bureaux to assist the public on tax credit issues. Planned expenditure for 2005–06 is expected to be approximately £680,000.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average length of time was from receipt of a tax credit claim to payment of the credit to the claimant in Wales in each year since the tax credit system began; and if he will make a statement. [39473]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the format requested. For details of tax credits processing times I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my right hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) and the hon. Member for Guildford (Anne Milton) on 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1058W.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tax credit overpayments have been made in Wales; what proportion of tax credits have been overpaid in Wales; what the total tax credit overpayments in Wales were in each year since the tax credit system began; and if he will make a statement; [39475]

(2) what the average overpayment was for tax credits in Wales in each year since the tax credit system began; and if he will make a statement. [39476]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number and sizes of 2003–04 tax credits awards overpaid and underpaid at 5 April 2004, by region, are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards 2003–04. Supplement on payments in 2003–04. Geographical Analysis." This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families by region with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of fraud were detected in relation to tax credit claims in Tamworth constituency in each of the last five years. [40686]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available by Parliamentary constituency and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many cases of organised fraud within tax credits have been detected in the last year for which figures are available; [19180]

(2) what evidence he has received that tax credits have been targeted by organised criminals; and if he will make a statement; [20442]

(3) how many cases of organised fraud within tax credits have been detected in each year of its operation; [20692]

(5) how many tax credit awards have been terminated on suspicion of organised fraud in each month since April 2003; [25250]

(4) what assessment he has made of whether tax credits have been targeted by organised criminals; and if he will make a statement; [24586]

(6) how many cases of identity theft have been detected in the tax credit system in each month since April 2003. [25243]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC uses a number of sophisticated tools to help detect claims, which are fraudulent or wrong and wherever possible, this compliance activity is aimed at preventing these claims from being paid. HMRC are aware of persistent attempts by organised criminals to obtain tax credits by using stolen or fictitious identities and it monitors payments to detect organised fraud so that any payments can be stopped and followed up with those responsible. Figures relating specifically to such instances are only available from 2004.

In 2004–05 HMRC intervened on 17164 incorrect claims before the tax credit payments were made where fraud or error was suspected. Between April to end of November 2005 HMRC have made 38,924 such interventions, of which HMRC estimate over half have been as a result of organised attacks. From October 2004 to end of November 2005 HMRC also identified and stopped 22,284 tax credit claims in payment, where organised fraud was suspected.

Where fraud is detected HMRC may use its powers to charge a financial penalty or—in the most serious cases—investigate with a view to securing a criminal prosecution under the new criminal offence of tax credit fraud. HMRC prosecuted 153 individuals in 2004–05 and has prosecuted 159 in the current financial year to the end of November. Around 97 other cases are currently awaiting verdict.

Teenage Pregnancies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many under 16-year-olds fell pregnant in *(a)* London and *(b)* each London borough in each year since 1997. [40806]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many under 16 year olds fell pregnant in *(a)* London and *(b)* each London borough in each year since 1997. (40806)

Available figures are estimates of the number of pregnancies that resulted in a live birth, stillbirth or termination.

The most recent complete year for which estimates are available is 2003. Figures for 1997 to 2003 are given in the attached table.

Number of conceptions to girls aged under 16 years by area of usual residence, London, 1997–2003

Area of usual residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
London	1,141	1,152	1,058	1,246	1,252	1,229	1,247
Camden LB	25	24	21	24	22	25	23
Hackney LB and City of London	64	65	45	69	62	56	62
Hammersmith and Fulham LB	26	16	27	21	22	21	25
Haringey LB	50	50	33	60	59	59	46
Islington LB	29	20	34	27	37	30	33
Kensington and Chelsea LB	16	11	18	19	14	13	8
Lambeth LB	81	81	69	78	80	95	100
Lewisham LB	66	63	55	62	61	70	74
Newham LB	55	54	61	69	71	59	45
Southwark LB	59	57	61	63	68	77	83
Tower Hamlets LB	23	49	19	39	42	34	28
Wandsworth LB	46	46	48	44	48	41	39
Westminster City of LB	14	16	20	20	20	17	17
Barking and Dagenham LB	43	25	34	45	51	43	44
Barnet LB	28	20	28	35	34	27	38
Bexley LB	34	37	30	22	34	36	27
Brent LB	32	36	49	55	52	50	54
Bromley LB	30	29	24	35	33	38	39
Croydon LB	64	77	67	78	72	68	57
Ealing LB	28	43	31	41	31	32	29
Enfield LB	47	33	26	48	43	51	58
Greenwich LB	62	52	59	43	51	45	45
Harrow LB	22	19	9	15	24	21	18
Havering LB	22	22	25	31	23	18	29
Hillingdon LB	37	47	27	32	37	39	48
Hounslow LB	30	25	41	34	38	25	34
Kingston upon Thames LB	14	18	14	10	9	8	9
Merton LB	13	26	13	34	20	22	27
RedbridgeLB	23	20	22	26	26	28	25
Richmond upon Thames LB	13	11	7	9	10	9	8
Sutton LB	9	25	13	17	17	23	25
Waltham Forest LB	36	35	28	41	41	49	50

Note:
To preserve confidentiality, counts for City of London have been combined with those for Hackney LB.

Treasury Enterprise Team

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the remit of the Enterprise Team in the Treasury is. [40374]

John Healey: The Enterprise Team's remit is to help to maximise the contribution of business and enterprise to the economic performance of the UK by:

driving progress across government to create the right conditions for firms to start, innovate and grow;

ensuring that government promotes creation of an enterprise society, in which people with the talent and motivation are able to set up, innovate and succeed in business;

harnessing the potential of enterprise to tackle disadvantage and to create new business opportunities;

working to reduce the burden on businesses on burdensome or disproportionate regulations;

shaping industrial policy to create a positive business environment; and

improving and broadening the Treasury's corporate relationships with the community.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what methods the Enterprise Team uses to liaise with businesses, with particular reference to small and medium-sized enterprises. [40377]

John Healey: The Enterprise Team uses a number of methods to liaise with businesses including small and medium-sized enterprises. These range from one-to-one meetings to large conferences and include seminars, round table discussions, telephone conversations, attendance at business association events and meetings, presentations and consultations.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the meetings the Enterprise Team has had with business associations in the last six months. [40383]

John Healey: Members of the Enterprise Team, in common with other Treasury officials, have meetings with a wide range of individuals and organisations as part of the process of policy development and analysis. It would not be practicable to provide details of all such meetings. Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the ministerial code and the civil service code, as appropriate.

Unemployment

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Beverley and Holderness were unemployed for more than two years in each year since 1997. [40040]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Beverley and Holderness. (40040)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. However for the Beverley and Holderness constituency sample numbers are insufficient to provide estimates of numbers of people unemployed for more than two years.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 1, attached, shows the annual average (January to December) number of JSA claimants, who have been claiming for more than two years, in the Beverley and Holderness constituency, for each year from 1997 to the present.

The claimant count data are published on the Office for National Statistics' Nomis website: www.nomisweb.co.uk

Annual average number of people claiming JSA for more than two years in the Beverley and Holderness constituency

Twelve month period ending November:	*Average number of claimants*
1997	180
1998	125
1999	145
2000	130
2001	125
2002	100
2003	70
2004	55
2005	55

Note:
The data are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Beverley and Holderness were economically inactive in each year since 1997. [40041]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity in Beverley and Holderness. (40041)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of economic inactivity from the Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. Table 1, attached below, shows the numbers of inactive people of working age resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency. The table also shows the number of inactive people of working age as a percentage of the total working age population resident in the constituency. The data shown cover the 12 month periods ending in February each year from 1997 to 2004 and in March 2005.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

These data are published on the Office for National Statistics' Nomis(r) website: www.nomisweb.co.uk.

Number of working age economically inactive persons, and working age inactivity rate, resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency

Twelve month period ending February:	*Number of inactive persons (000)*	*Inactivity rate (per cent.)*
1998	13	21.1
1999	12	21.3
2000	11	20.3
2001	13	21.0

Number of working age economically inactive persons, and working age inactivity rate, resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency

Twelve month period ending February:	*Number of inactive persons (000)*	*Inactivity rate (per cent.)*
2002	12	21.0
2003	11	21.2
2004	11	19.9
March 2005	14	23.5

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been raised in vehicle excise duty in each year since 1997, broken down by category of vehicle. [38828]

John Healey: The Department for Transport publish statistics of VED revenues broken down into vehicle category in their annual Transport statistics bulletin. This is available at: www.dft.gov.uk/transstat

NORTHERN IRELAND

Administration Costs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39948]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Core Department functions and the associated administrative costs for 2004–05, carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales were as follows:

(a)

Function	*Total administrative costs 2004–05 (£)*
Central Administration	27,898,559
Ministers	3,080,107
Political Directive	4,848,917
Bloody Sunday (Saville) Inquiry	1,180,000
Dept of the Director of Public Prosecutions	14,542,000
Criminal Justice	10,421,000
Policing and Security	4,634,000

(b) There are no functions of the NIO Core Department carried out in Wales.

Compensation Agency

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost was of compensation payments paid out by the Compensation Agency as a result of terrorist attacks since the beginning of the Troubles, broken down by category. [39652]

Mr. Hain: The Compensation Agency cannot provide information about the cost of compensation stemming specifically from terrorist attacks as there is often no way of ascertaining the motives of a victim's assailants unless a prosecution follows. In many cases where the assailant(s) are unknown, or where no prosecution has

taken place, the Agency could only speculate about the perpetrator's motives and consequently figures provided on that basis would be very unreliable.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40329]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office, excluding its Agencies and NDPBs, spent £29,915 on bottled water in 2004–05.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many overnight stays in Northern Ireland each Minister has made since taking up their post. [37588]

Mr. Hain: The number of overnight stays each Northern Ireland Minister has made between taking office in May 2005 and December 31 2005 is as follows:

Minister	*Overnight*	*Day*
Shaun Woodward	26	67
David Hanson	47	87
Angela Smith	62	88
Jeff Rooker	43	84

In addition to the time spent in Northern Ireland, Ministers undertake NIO business in Parliament and in the Northern Ireland Office at 11 Millbank.

Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he has received written representations from members of the armed forces in support of the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill. [40533]

Mr. Hain: No.

Shoplifting (Prosecutions)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1866–67W, on prosecutions, how many people were prosecuted for shoplifting in each constituency. [39274]

Mr. Hanson: Prosecution data is not readily available broken down by Northern Ireland constituency. The statistics provided in the table are for the years 2000 to 2003 and are based on the PSNI district command unit in which an offender's address falls. Due to the incomparability of 1999 data, (available only by the police division to which an offence was reported) 1999 figures are not included.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule, thus only the most serious offence for which an offender is charged is included. Statistics beyond 2003 will become available in early 2006.

Prosecutions for shoplifting by police district command unit 2000–03

District command unit	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Antrim	33	29	29	15
Ards	18	18	26	18
Armagh	2	8	11	15
Banbridge	5	2	5	12
East Belfast	91	61	44	54
North Belfast	172	109	79	106
South Belfast	56	38	39	45
West Belfast	100	63	67	72
Ballymena	26	33	20	17
Ballymoney	5	5	6	5
Carrickfergus	21	25	19	15
Coleraine	25	20	27	20
Cookstown	1	6	7	8
Craigavon	16	17	29	23
Castlereagh	27	13	8	24
Dungannon and South Tyrone	3	6	5	12
Down	17	10	15	9
Fermanagh	17	9	9	11
Foyle	69	69	59	50
Larne	4	13	10	3
Limavady	11	15	7	4
Lisburn	29	48	43	37
Magherafelt	3	6	5	7
Moyle	5	3	4	1
Newtownabbey	35	19	12	8
North down	24	38	22	26
Newry and Mourne	8	15	26	22
Omagh	7	12	14	11
Strabane	8	7	8	10
Missing	20	13	14	14
Total	838	730	669	674

Notes:

1. Data are based on the police district command unit (DCU) in which an offender's address falls.
2. Police DCUs became operational in April 2001, However, for the purposes of comparability, calendar year 2000 data are also disaggregated by DCU, rather than police division.
3. It is not possible to disaggregate data by DCU for 1999. Missing data relate to those offenders for which DCU information is not available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Community Support Officers

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued to police authorities on meeting the shortfall in central funding for police community support officers in 2006–07. [38193]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We will be providing police authorities with good practice guidance early next year to assist them in developing their strategies for working with partners to obtain matched funding for police community support officer posts.

Experience Corps

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the March 2005 accounts of the Experience Corps to be published. [40238]

Paul Goggins: The Secretary of State for the Home Department has no responsibility for the March 2005 accounts of the Experience Corps. Section 47 of the Charities Act 1993 requires that all registered charities publish annual accounts.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when a Minister in his Department last met representatives of the Experience Corps. [40239]

Paul Goggins: On 8 July 2003 Fiona Mactaggart met Baroness Greengross and Mavis Best of the Experience Corps and Stuart Etherington of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why his Department did not renew its original grant of £20 million to the Experience Corps. [40242]

Paul Goggins: The decision not to renew funding for the Experience Corps beyond March 2004 followed a fully independent assessment of their performance.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funding the Experience Corps is receiving in 2005–06. [40243]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office did not make any funding available to the Experience Corps in the financial year 2005–06.

Illegal Taxis

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for operating an illegal taxi service in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire, *(d)* Greater London and *(e)* England and Wales in each of the last five years. [37552]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is given in the table. It shows the number of defendants prosecuted at the magistrates court for the offence of 'touting for hire car services in a public place' under Section 167 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 for South East Essex petty sessional area (which includes Southend), Essex, Hertfordshire, Greater London and England and Wales 2000–04.

It is not possible to identify those prosecutions in Southend as the data are not collected at this level of detail.

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates courts for operating an illegal taxi service, 2000–04[1]

Offence descriptions: touting for hire car services in a public place
Statute: Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.167

Location	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
South East Essex PSA	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	—	—	1	1	2
Hertfordshire	—	2	1	1	3
Greater London	144	164	222	242	467
England and Wales	156	178	229	256	483

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn 2006.

Independent Monitoring Boards

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of changing the recruitment process for the appointment of independent monitoring board members; and if he will make a statement. [16379]

Fiona Mactaggart: The recruitment process for members of independent monitoring boards is currently under review by the National Council for Independent Monitoring Boards and no decision has been taken on changes which may be made to the process.

Internet (Improper Use)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 5 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2845W, on improper use of the internet, when he expects the full business case for the IMPACT programme to be completed; for what reasons the full business case was not delivered in line with the Home Office progress report on the Bichard Recommendations of 22 December 2004. [32860]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The IMPACT programme has been significantly re-engineered since the first progress report, in recognition of its scale and complexity. As reported in the second progress report, published in November, an outline business case was considered by the Home Office Group Investment Board in September 2005. Following further work to develop the options in consultation with the police service and other stakeholders, a further business case will be considered in March 2006.

Police

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the likely change in police precepts as a result of the Government's commitment to increase the number of police community support officers to 24,000 by 2008; what *(a)* representations on this matter and *(b)* estimates of precepts he has received from (i) police authorities and (ii) local authorities; and if he will place copies in the Library. [37766]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We have received no formal representations from police authorities or local authorities on this issue.

We are providing additional resources of £88 million in 2006–07 and £340 million in 2007–08 through the Neighbourhood Policing Fund to support an increase in the numbers of community support officers to 24,000 by 2008. The Statement made by my right hon. friend the Minister for local government on 5 December clearly set out that we expect to see average council tax increases of less than five percent. in each year in 2006–07 and 2007–08. With judicious financial planning, there is no reason for police authorities to set excessive increases in police precepts on council tax next year.

Probation Officers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation officers broken down by grade, were suspended from duty in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire and *(d)* the Metropolitan Police area of London in each of the last 15 years for which figures are available. [37547]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested, as data for periods over 12 months can be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

As staffing information is held by each probation area it has not been possible to show the figures for Southend separately. The staffing figures are therefore provided for Essex, London, and Hertfordshire probation areas only.

The following figures show the number of probation officers who have been suspended during the last 12 months.

Area	*Grade*	*Outcome of suspension*
Southend Essex	1 x senior probation officers	No case to answer
	3 x probation officers	No case to answer
Hertfordshire	1 x probation officer	Dismissed
Metropolitan police area for London	4 x probation support officers	3 x investigation ongoing 1 x no case to answer
	1 x trainee probation officer	1 x investigation ongoing

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which organisations were *(a)* nominated and *(b)* awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005, broken down by local authority area. [24551]

Paul Goggins: Recipients of The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, given to groups of two or more volunteers, are published (by region) in the *London Gazette* Supplement No.1 on 1 June each year, which is the date of the announcement of this Award from Buckingham Palace. This information can also be found on the website: www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk. It also contains FAQ's on the administration of the Award.

Perhaps the most apposite way to request information on the break down of recipients by local authority would be through regional Government Offices as they are involved in the Award selection process through a local Selection Panel. Their recommendations are sent for final selection to the Award Committee. The Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales should also be able to supply this information.

On the question of nominated groups. 1,391 eligible nominations were received in 2002–03; 667 in 2003–04 and 580 in 2004–05. Details on each nominated group are contained on forms sent to the administrators of this Award by an individual nominator and has always been regarded as personal information and has never been published.

Race Equality Impact Assessments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Race Equality Impact Assessments his Department completed between *(a)* April 2004 and March 2005 and *(b)* April 2005 and November 2005; and how many assessments in each period resulted in a change of policy. [32821]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has conducted 10 race equality impact assessments during the April 2004 to March 2005 period. Five of which resulted in policy changes being made. So far five assessments have been conducted during the April-November 2005 period.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northamptonshire and *(c)* Kettering constituency have appeared on the sex offenders register in each of the last 10 years. [37049]

Fiona Mactaggart: The notification requirements of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 (often known as the sex offenders register) came into force on 1 September 1997. These requirements have been updated and strengthened through the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Until 2001, data on the number of sex offenders were collated on a national basis from the police national computer. However, this arrangement was overtaken following the introduction of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and the requirement on each police and probation area to produce annual reports detailing the work undertaken to safeguard the public and manage dangerous offenders in the community. The MAPPA reports include statistics on the number of offenders who are subject to the notification requirements. The 2001–02 reports state that on 31 March 2002 there were 18,513 registered sex offenders living in the community in England and Wales. The 2002–03 reports state that on 31 March 2003 the number was 21,413. The 2003–04 reports state that on 31 March 2004 the number was 24,572 and the most recent 2004–05 reports state that on 31 March 2005 the number was 28,994. This increase is to be expected before the notification requirement regime, which was introduced in 1997 with a partially retrospective operation, matures and stabilises.

The MAPPA report for Northamptonshire is available from Northamptonshire police, Northamptonshire probation service and also from the National Probation Service website. Statistics are not available for the number of offenders within a constituency.

Terrorist Suspects

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1112W, on terrorist suspects, how many of the 11 suspects charged after being held for 13 to 14 days in 2004 and 2005 were successfully prosecuted, where all proceedings in the case are complete. [38544]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Metropolitan police have advised that only one of the cases recorded as being held for 13 to 14 days has been completed and that the individual was convicted.

Treason

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the last conviction for treason was; and what penalty was imposed. [38150]

Fiona Mactaggart: The last conviction for treason was in 1994, under the Treason Felony Act 1848. The sentence was a community supervision order. The death penalty for treason was replaced by a maximum of life imprisonment in 1998.

Victim Support

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role is played by Victim Support in helping victims of crime in Chorley. [37731]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since 1997 the Home Office Grant-in-Aid to Victim Support has nearly trebled, from £11.7 million to almost £30 million in 2005–06.

The grant-in-aid memorandum sets out the services that Victim Support is expected to deliver to victims and witnesses. However, decisions regarding the management of these services in Chorley are the responsibility of the Victim Support Lancashire Board of Trustees.

Victim Support Lancashire's Chorley branch provides free and confidential support for victims of crime. Victim Support Lancashire also runs the witness service, supporting those attending court, in all Lancashire criminal courts.

Youth Offender Teams

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the performance of youth offender teams against their key indicators was in *(a)* North Wales and *(b)* England and Wales between April 2004 and March 2005. [36884]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table shows performance against the Key Performance Indicators for the four Youth Offending Teams in North Wales (Conwy and Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Mon and Wrexham) and the outturn for England and Wales for the period April 2004 to March 2005.

Youth offending team performance (April 2004 to March 2005)

Key performance indicator	*[1]Target*	*North Wales Yots outturn 2004–05*	*Percentage England and Wales outturn 2004–05*
Prevention[2]		162	24,411
Recidivism[3]		30.9	46.9
Final warnings	80	81.1	85.3
Use of custody			
Use of custodial remands	30	40.8	44.4
Use of custodial disposals	6	5.3	6.2
RJ and victim satisfaction			
Use of restorative processes	75	87.1	81.8
Victim satisfaction	75	98.0	96.8
Parenting			
Parental intervention	10	18.0	11.7
Parental satisfaction	75	99.2	97.6
ASSET			
Community ASSET Start	100	88.5	94.7
Community ASSET End	100	89.1	95.8
Custodial ASSET Start	100	90.1	97.9
Custodial ASSET Middle	100	95.8	98.0
Custodial ASSET End	100	93.1	97.6
Pre sentence reports	90	98.1	88.6
DTO training plans	100	86.1	82.1
Education, Training and Employment	90	80.5	74.2
Accommodation	100	91.4	93.6
CAMHS			
Acute mental health	100	81.3	85.3
Non acute mental health	100	34.2	90.4
Substance Misuse			
Substance misuse assessment (within five days)	100	83.2	73.5
Substance misuse treatment (within 10 days)	100	93.2	92.2

[1] As published in YJB Corporate Plan 2004–05 to 2006–07

[2] Measured as a figure, (the number of young people that area identified and targeted for support based on YISP or other effective arrangements), rather than as a percentage against target of 200 per Yot. There were 155 Yots in England and Wales 2004–05.

[3] Recidivism rate, collected by local Yots, of the 2002 cohort after 24 months.

HEALTH

A&E Departments

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the effect on *(a)* costs and *(b)* risks to patients' health of running split-site accident and emergency departments. [35155]

Mr. Byrne: There are national health service trusts that are responsible for two or more hospitals that each provides accident and emergency services but I am not aware of any single departments working on split sites or of any plans to provide services in this way. No assessment of the costs or risks of a single department being split between two or more sites has therefore being made.

Allergies

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to increase the number of training places for allergy specialists; and if she will make a statement. [19762]

Mr. Byrne: The number of doctors in training in allergy increased from two in 2000 to seven in 2004.

Anorexia

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to develop NHS services for patients with anorexia nervosa. [38238]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We take the issue of eating disorders, especially among young people, very seriously. Anorexia nervosa in particular can have serious consequences for general health, and has high rates of mortality. This is why we asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to publish guidelines on core interventions for these disorders as part of its second programme of work. NICE published clinical guidelines on eating disorders in January 2004.

We envisage that services for people with eating disorders will improve, along with the whole spectrum of mental health services, as a result both of the Government's prioritisation of mental health services through the implementation of the 1999 national service framework for mental health and our increased spending on mental health from £4.07 billion in 1999–2000 to £5.09 billion in 2003–04.

Asylum Seekers

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether primary care trusts have responsibility for monitoring the standard of care provided in detention centres for asylum seekers. [37846]

Caroline Flint: On site services at immigration removal centres are subject to monitoring by Home Office contract monitors and are included in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prison's inspections of individual centres. Operating standards for the centres also exist, including for healthcare, and the centres are required to audit compliance with them and submit their findings to the Director of Detention Services. In addition, initial discussions have taken place with the Healthcare Commission with a view to the possible registration of the private contractors who provide services at removal centres, which would bring them within the Healthcare Commission's oversight and inspection programme. While primary care trusts are not part of the formal monitoring process, they are being encouraged to work together with the removal centres to develop local protocols to improve the interface between healthcare services within the centres and the local national health service.

Blood

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 28 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 566–67W, on blood, what percentage of *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* primary care trusts are (i) partially and (ii) fully compliant with current requirements and best practice. [38007]

Caroline Flint: Hospital blood banks or primary care trusts do not require authorisation but are required under the provisions of the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005 (as amended) to submit a report on or before 31 December 2005 to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) if undertaking activities covered by these regulations. These reports will be assessed by the MHRA for compliance with the regulations and regulatory action will follow where necessary.

Blood establishments do require authorisation. Seven hospital blood banks have thus far been granted blood establishment authorisations under the regulations.

Breast Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects guidelines to be issued by the National Cancer Research Institute on the administration of Herceptin prior to a licence being obtained for its use in early breast cancer and on related issues. [37715]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I understand that the National Cancer Research Institute hopes to be able to issue this guidance imminently.

Cancer Treatment

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to issue appraisals on *(a)* Velcade for multiple myeloma, *(b)* Taxotere for breast cancer, *(c)* Taxol for breast cancer, *(d)* MabThera for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, *(e)* Gemzar for advanced breast cancer and *(f)* Fludara for lymphocytic leukaemia; [39328]

(2) if she will instruct the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to fast-track appraisals for the drugs *(a)* Arimidiex for early stage breast cancer, *(b)* Aromasin for early stage breast cancer, *(c)* Femara for early stage breast cancer, *(d)* Avatsin for colorectal cancer, *(e)* xeloda for colorectal cancer, *(f)* taxotere for prostate cancer, *(g)* aransep for chemotherapy-induced anaemia, *(h)* eprex for chemotherapy-induced anaemia, *(i)* neorocoromon for chemotherapy-induced anaemia, *(j)* eloxititan for colorectal cancer, *(k)* alimta for mesothelioma, *(l)* temodol for high grade gliomas, *(m)* Tarceva for non-small cell lung cancer,

(n) rubetican for pancreatic cancer, *(o)* Campto for adjuvant-advanced colorectal cancer, *(p)* Alimta for non-small cell lung cancer, *(q)* Erbitux for locally advanced recurrent metastatic head and neck cancer, *(r)* atrasentan for prostate cancer and *(s)* Exetrol for hypercholestolaemia. [39329]

Jane Kennedy: Using its single technology appraisal (STA) process, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has already started work on appraising Velcade, Taxotere, Taxol and MabThera. I understand NICE will start work on Gemazar and Fludara early in 2006.

We are currently discussing with NICE a second tranche of topics to go through the STA process.

Capital Schemes

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out the basis on which the NHS capital programme is financed by credit guarantee finance.[35149]

Mr. Byrne: The HM Treasury document, "PFI—Meeting the Investment Challenge" (2000) set out the Government's approach to the private finance initiative (PFI) and the role of private finance in PFI. This included the Government's plans to test the use of alternative finance for certain PFI projects—credit guarantee finance (CGF).

CGF is a loan, guaranteed by banks, monolines or other acceptable finance institutions, from the sponsoring department to a PFI project special purpose vehicle on market terms.

National health service capital spending, including PFI, is shown in figure 4.1 in the 2005 departmental report. 2004–05 total outturn was £4,864 million and 2005–06 plan is £6,087 million. CGF has provided finance for two health PFI schemes—£265 million for Leeds in 2004–05 and Portsmouth, expected to be about £262 million, which will reach financial close in the next few days. The CGF amounts are included in the totals.

Chase Farm Hospital

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the effects of closing down the accident and emergency department at Chase Farm hospital on transport times for *(a)* patients and *(b)* employees who will now go to North Middlesex; [38699]

(2) if she will place in the Library a copy of the research and statistics underlying the proposed closure of the accident and emergency department of Chase Farm hospital; [38700]

(3) what assessment she has made of the likely effects of the proposed closure of the accident and emergency department at Chase Farm hospital on *(a)* the quality and *(b)* accessibility of services for the people using North Middlesex hospital accident and emergency services. [38701]

Jane Kennedy: The department has made no assessment.

The disposition of services at Chase Farm hospital is a local matter. The trust with local primary care trusts has been conducting a local engagement exercise with local stakeholders, in line with national policies on public and patient involvement, to develop proposals for the future. Any proposals for change will be for full public consultation, which will set out the reasons for change and the implications for patients and staff locally.

The role of Government are to set the national agenda. It is down to the strategic health authority, working in partnership with the primary care trusts, and local stakeholders who are best placed to plan and develop services, according to the needs of the local community.

Chemical ITX

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has evaluated on the migration of the chemical ITX from food packaging into food; and if she will make a statement. [38838]

Caroline Flint: The chemical isopropylthioxanthone (ITX) is a component of printing inks used on some Tetrapak food packaging. It has been found at very low levels in some foodstuffs in this type of packaging, including liquid infant formula products. The European Food Safety Agency has assessed the safety of ITX and advised that it does not give cause for health concern at the levels reported. Tetrapak has now stopped using this type of printing for infant formula products and is stopping its use for other food products.

Continuing Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received NHS-funded continuing care in each year since 1997. [39365]

Mr. Byrne: The available data is shown in the table.

Total number of individuals receiving continuing care in each financial year

	Number of individuals
2002–03	17,019
2003–04	19,723
2004–05	20,842

Source:
Continuing care data submitted by primary care trusts at quarter four (31 March) as part of local delivery planning return collection.

Dentistry

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists there are per head of population in *(a)* Torbay and *(b)* England. [38482]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general dental services and personal dental services dentists per 10,000 population in England and Torbay Primary Care Trust as at 30 September 2005 is shown in the table.

	Dentists per 10,000 population
England	4.19
Torbay PCT	5.64

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

The figures are calculated using Office for National Statistics 2003 mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 census.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there are in Hereford constituency; and what percentage of their time each spent treating NHS patients in the last period for which figures are available. [38915]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, there were 69 national health service dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract within Hereford constituency.

A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the primary care trust. The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to private or NHS work by individual dentists.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1795W, on NHS dentistry, when she expects to publish the budget. [39313]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts have already been informed, in confidence, of their dentistry budgets for 2006–07 to allow them to plan their provision for next year. These are still subject to minor adjustments and will be published as part of the normal annual financial information for the national health service in the spring.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* hospital and *(b)* community dentists have been employed in each year from 1979 to 1997, broken down by strategic health authority area. [36895]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The data requested is only available from 1987 and is shown in the tables.

Hospital and community health services (HCHS) : dental staff by sector within each strategic health authority, England at 30 September each year

Number (headcount)

		1987			*1988*		
			Of which:			*Of which:*	
		All dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*	*All dental staff*	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
England		3,711	1,950	1,761	3,652	1,990	1,662
Of which:							
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	108	41	67	112	46	66
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	70	23	47	64	15	49
Essex	Q03	91	44	47	83	41	42
North West London	Q04	120	44	76	107	36	71
North Central London	Q05	115	62	53	115	69	46
North East London	Q06	131	94	37	124	86	38
South East London	Q07	218	156	62	257	197	60
South West London	Q08	93	36	57	89	37	52
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	155	77	78	141	74	67
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	63	17	46	55	21	34
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	72	24	48	68	23	45
West Yorkshire	Q12	189	87	102	162	75	87
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	102	41	61	98	38	60
Greater Manchester	Q14	198	87	111	215	86	129
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	172	70	102	172	74	98
Thames Valley	Q16	92	24	68	86	24	62
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	115	33	82	104	28	76
Kent and Medway	Q18	69	22	47	70	26	44
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	118	42	76	112	42	70
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	173	91	82	176	94	82
South West Peninsula	Q21	62	25	37	68	30	38
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	55	25	30	51	24	27
South Yorkshire	Q23	114	78	36	116	86	30
Trent	Q24	86	28	58	91	34	57
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	67	29	38	66	29	37
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	66	17	49	63	16	47
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	216	110	106	204	110	94
West Midlands South	Q28	90	33	57	87	34	53
Other[1]		491	490	1	496	495	1

Number (headcount)

		1989			1990		
			Of which:			*Of which:*	
		All dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*	*All dental staff*	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
England		3,655	2,010	1,645	3,628	2,051	1,577
Of which:							
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	113	50	63	111	51	60
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	62	20	42	65	20	45
Essex	Q03	72	31	41	72	30	42
North West London	Q04	118	46	72	128	44	84
North Central London	Q05	111	66	45	116	67	49
North East London	Q06	118	82	36	118	85	33
South East London	Q07	272	216	56	243	189	54
South West London	Q08	85	33	52	93	42	51
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	133	72	61	133	77	56
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	55	21	34	52	20	32
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	59	23	36	70	33	37
West Yorkshire	Q12	170	66	104	117	45	72
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	101	36	65	102	38	64
Greater Manchester	Q14	200	84	116	204	92	112
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	156	63	93	154	68	86
Thames Valley	Q16	91	31	60	89	30	59
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	129	36	93	120	37	83
Kent and Medway	Q18	64	21	43	73	29	44
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	114	42	72	112	42	70
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	166	90	76	172	90	82
South West Peninsula	Q21	69	33	36	66	38	28
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	57	31	26	56	33	23
South Yorkshire	Q23	128	98	30	127	95	32
Trent	Q24	94	33	61	91	31	60
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	67	28	39	63	22	41
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	62	17	45	63	21	42
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	207	112	95	196	108	88
West Midlands South	Q28	84	31	53	82	34	48
Other[1]		498	498	0	540	540	0

Number (headcount)

		1991			1992		
			Of which:			*Of which:*	
		All dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*	*All dental staff*	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
England		3,479	2,010	1,469	3,493	2,076	1,417
Of which:							
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	87	44	43	92	50	42
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	58	16	42	65	22	43
Essex	Q03	80	41	39	77	39	38
North West London	Q04	121	43	78	122	44	78
North Central London	Q05	91	45	46	80	33	47
North East London	Q06	129	91	38	127	93	34
South East London	Q07	232	189	43	260	202	58
South West London	Q08	95	53	42	87	45	42
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	133	75	58	130	82	48
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	51	21	30	56	25	31
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	79	36	43	76	39	37
West Yorkshire	Q12	125	53	72	124	55	69
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	102	40	62	111	49	62
Greater Manchester	Q14	193	101	92	188	101	87
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	157	75	82	186	92	94
Thames Valley	Q16	86	27	59	91	34	57
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	109	45	64	113	52	61
Kent and Medway	Q18	65	29	36	56	27	29
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	120	42	78	112	54	58
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	174	94	80	174	107	67
South West Peninsula	Q21	69	42	27	79	51	28

Number (headcount)

		1991			1992		
			Of which:			Of which:	
		All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff	All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	53	33	20	56	38	18
South Yorkshire	Q23	110	80	30	114	82	32
Trent	Q24	87	29	58	87	27	60
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	64	22	42	59	20	39
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	59	20	39	50	25	25
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	158	84	74	169	83	86
West Midlands South	Q28	75	27	48	74	31	43
Other[1]		517	513	4	478	474	4

Number (headcount)

		1993			1994		
			Of which:			Of which:	
		All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff	All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff
England		3,462	2,070	1,392	3,372	2,067	1,305
Of which:							
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	96	58	38	109	69	40
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	69	24	45	66	35	31
Essex	Q03	69	37	32	60	32	28
North West London	Q04	110	40	70	106	32	74
North Central London	Q05	68	31	37	93	50	43
North East London	Q06	100	60	40	78	44	34
South East London	Q07	263	210	53	233	188	45
South West London	Q08	96	55	41	93	53	40
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	152	106	46	157	115	42
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	60	30	30	53	34	19
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	82	47	35	83	50	33
West Yorkshire	Q12	135	67	68	142	77	65
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	110	48	62	112	54	58
Greater Manchester	Q14	186	103	83	209	127	82
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	191	97	94	178	92	86
Thames Valley	Q16	90	36	54	88	52	36
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	108	53	55	112	58	54
Kent and Medway	Q18	69	39	30	64	26	38
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	132	65	67	155	87	68
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	153	90	63	185	122	63
South West Peninsula	Q21	82	53	29	85	56	29
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	60	38	22	49	35	14
South Yorkshire	Q23	122	89	33	125	94	31
Trent	Q24	87	34	53	105	46	59
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	68	30	38	70	40	30
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	81	38	43	63	39	24
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	186	98	88	183	96	87
West Midlands South	Q28	69	29	40	89	44	45
Other[1]		368	365	3	227	220	7

Number (headcount)

		1995			1996		
			Of which:			Of which:	
		All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff	All dental staff	Hospital dental staff	Community health service dental staff
England		3,456	2,139	1,317	3,490	2,113	1,377
Of which:							
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	112	73	39	108	69	39
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	73	35	38	76	37	39
Essex	Q03	69	41	28	79	46	33
North West London	Q04	106	29	77	111	24	87
North Central London	Q05	101	53	48	178	141	37
North East London	Q06	81	46	35	106	57	49

Number (headcount)

		1995			1996		
			Of which:			*Of which:*	
		All dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*	*All dental staff*	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
South East London	Q07	250	211	39	235	198	37
South West London	Q08	86	47	39	90	56	34
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	131	97	34	135	97	38
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	69	37	32	62	31	31
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	86	58	28	80	51	29
West Yorkshire	Q12	129	73	56	155	93	62
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	115	55	60	124	61	63
Greater Manchester	Q14	215	129	86	232	150	82
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	187	99	88	206	103	103
Thames Valley	Q16	106	55	51	114	59	55
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	102	49	53	112	60	52
Kent and Medway	Q18	80	31	49	77	34	43
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	151	90	61	148	85	63
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	182	119	63	176	114	62
South West Peninsula	Q21	99	64	35	104	71	33
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	71	55	16	61	45	16
South Yorkshire	Q23	105	73	32	123	86	37
Trent	Q24	113	56	57	129	65	64
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	74	37	37	76	39	37
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	67	41	26	68	45	23
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	194	132	62	238	153	85
West Midlands South	Q28	90	47	43	87	43	44
Other[1]		212	207	5	0	0	0

Number (headcount)

		1997		
			Of which:	
		All dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
England		3,567	2,188	1,379
Of which:				
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	133	81	52
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	73	37	36
Essex	Q03	79	46	33
North West London	Q04	101	23	78
North Central London	Q05	186	143	43
North East London	Q06	101	53	48
South East London	Q07	207	170	37
South West London	Q08	92	59	33
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	133	97	36
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	85	54	31
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	88	58	30
West Yorkshire	Q12	173	108	65
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	120	56	64
Greater Manchester	Q14	235	152	83
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	209	114	95
Thames Valley	Q16	120	58	62
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	110	60	50
Kent and Medway	Q18	71	30	41
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	162	97	65
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	177	110	67
South West Peninsula	Q21	112	73	39
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	66	52	14
South Yorkshire	Q23	125	90	35
Trent	Q24	133	70	63
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	82	46	36
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	67	45	22
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	241	167	74
West Midlands South	Q28	85	38	47
Other[1]		1	1	0

[1] Other includes regional health authorities, special health authorities and special hospitals. Most regional health authority and special health authority organisations existed prior to the creation of the SHA boundaries and therefore cannot be mapped into a specific SHA. Special hospitals are national centres (e.g. National Blood Authority) and therefore cannot be mapped to a specific SHA.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire and *(c)* Huddersfield. [37108]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of dentists in England, West Yorkshire strategic health authority (SHA) and Huddersfield parliamentary constituency as of 30 September 2005

England	20,890
West Yorkshire SHA	836
Huddersfield Constituency	53

Notes

1. Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the general dental service or personal dental service, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 2 November 2005 for England data, and 19 October 2005 for SHA and constituency data.
2. The definition of dentists includes principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.

Source

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she is taking to ensure adequate provision of NHS dentistry in Beverley and Holderness. [37439]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2004–05, the Department allocated £1.3 million to the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority (SHA) to improve access, choice and quality in national health service dentistry. In 2004–05, the East Yorkshire primary care trust (PCT) and the Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT, received £147,000 and £160,000 respectively.

The SHA advises that these funds were used to assist the development of new dental practices at Bridlington, Driffield, Pocklington and Beverley together with expansion of existing practices at Brough and South Cave. The new practices will allow 17,500 new national health service patient registrations and 2,000 additional NHS patients to access NHS care at the expanded practices.

In addition, a new practice is due to open in early February at Beverley, providing care for 3,000 NHS patients, under a personal dental service (PDS) contract.

There are access centres at Bridlington, Pocklington, Driffield, Goole, Cottingham, Withernsea and also at Hull. The access service provides care for over 40,000 patients annually.

Two Polish dentists have been recruited through the Department's overseas recruitment programme and are now working within a practice in the Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT area.

Both PCTs have been working with dental practices to support them in moving over to the new PDS contract. The number of dental practices which have converted to PDS within each of the PCTs is as follows:

East Yorkshire PCT: six practices, 15 whole-time equivalent (wte) practitioners, 40,602 patients,

Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT: eight practices, 14 wte practitioners, 43,219 patients.

Drug Supplies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost to pharmacists of providing full patient packs if reimbursement is based on the quantity of drugs prescribed; and if she will make a statement. [38845]

Jane Kennedy: No estimates have been made by the Department of dispensing patient packs if reimbursement is based on the quantity of medicine prescribed. Work undertaken by the Prescription Pricing Authority has shown that the quantity prescribed matches that of an available pack size in the majority of cases. For example, sample statistics show that drugs available in a pack size of 28 is prescribed in multiples of 28 nearly 78 per cent. of the time. In these cases the cost to the pharmacist of providing full patient packs is nil.

It is not possible to ascertain whether pharmacists would incur cost by providing patient packs when reimbursement is based on the quantity prescribed as providing a full pack could mean that the amount dispensed is varied both upwards and downwards in comparison to the amount prescribed on different occasions, therefore the times more is dispensed may be balanced by the times less is dispensed.

Furthermore, if pharmacists are not obligated to dispense a quantity other than that which is prescribed, they would retain the option of dispensing exactly as prescribed, thereby incurring no costs or losses.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on the Community action programme on injury prevention, *(b)* Committee for the implementation of the Community action programme for the prevention of AIDS and certain other communicable diseases, *(c)* Committee on the action programme on rare diseases in the framework of the action plan for public health and *(d)* Advisory Committee on cancer prevention have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [38642]

(2) how many meetings of the EU Committee for the implementation of the Community action programme on *(a)* the prevention of drug dependence in the framework of the action plan for public health, *(b)* pollution-related diseases in the framework of the action plan for public health, *(c)* health promotion information, education and training and *(d)* health monitoring in the framework of the action plan for public health have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38643]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Committees no longer sit and did not meet during the United Kingdom presidency of the European Union.

European Medicines Evaluation Agency

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the UK financial contribution to the running of the European Medicines Evaluation Agency was in 2004–05. [19862]

Jane Kennedy: The European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMEA) is funded in part through fees paid by pharmaceutical companies for work undertaken by the EMEA to assess marketing authorisation applications, and in part by community subsidy, to which the United Kingdom pays a financial contribution.

In 2005, the European Union budgetary commitment and payment to the European Medicines Agency, inclusive of orphan drugs, was €29,100,000, of which €3.5 million was provided by the UK.

European Working Time Directive

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff have been recruited by *(a)* Hammersmith and Fulham NHS trust and *(b)* Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust as a result of the European working time directive. [38559]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not held centrally.

Implementation of the working time directive (WTD) is the responsibility of local national health service trusts and strategic health authorities were required to draw up affordable plans to meet WTD 2004.

The Government agreed to implement the European working time directive as United Kingdom legislation to improve the health and safety and working lives of all employees in this country. The vast majority of staff groups have been covered by the 48-hour week since 1998. The Government negotiated an extension to the WTD for doctors in training to enable phased implementation from August 2004.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS foundation trusts have *(a)* closed and *(b)* downgraded their accident and emergency departments since their establishment. [38275]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally. Information relating to the operational management of national health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs) can be obtained via the chairman of each organisation.

The terms of authorisation for NHSFTs requires them to comply with national healthcare targets and standards, which includes a key target that patients should wait no longer than four hours to be treated in accident and emergency. A significant failure to comply with standards and targets may lead to intervention by Monitor, the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of NHSFTs.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the hospital trusts in England that are considering proposals to downgrade their accident and emergency departments to accept planned admissions only. [38276]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not routinely collect operational management information on proposals to close wards or capacity.

National health service bodies are under a duty to consult local authority overview and scrutiny committees on any plans to make substantial changes to NHS services.

Gentamicin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to control gentamicin-resistant staphylococcus aureus. [39366]

Jane Kennedy: Minimising the development and spread of strains such as gentamicin resistant "staphylococcus aureus" requires prudent prescribing of antibiotics as well as strict adherence to infection control measures. This is why prudent prescribing is part of our programme to tackle healthcare associated infections. To support this we have provided £12 million over three years for hospital clinical pharmacists.

Health Bill

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent evaluation her Department has undertaken of public opinion on Part I of the Health Bill; and if she will make a statement. [35967]

Caroline Flint: The most recent data on public attitudes to smoking restrictions is available in the Office for National Statistics publication "Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes 2004," which surveyed opinion on restrictions on smoking in certain places.

Smoking should be restricted in certain places (Table 6.13)	*Percentage agreeing*
at work	88
in restaurants	91
in pubs	65
in indoor shopping centres	87
in indoor sports and leisure centres	93
in indoor areas in railway/bus stations	82
in other public places	93

Suggested restrictions on smoking in pubs 2003–04.

In pubs, would prefer (Table 6.21)	*Percentage agreeing*
no smoking allowed anywhere	31
mainly non-smoking with smoking areas	47
mainly smoking with non-smoking areas	16
smoking allowed throughout	5
don't go to pubs/don't know	2

Part I of the Health Bill recognises these differences in public opinion between general work places, public places and places where meals are consumed, and the different attitude towards pubs.

Health Services

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will meet local hon. Members to discuss proposals for future provision of *(a)* health care services and *(b)* local NHS dentistry provided by (i)

Kettering general hospital and (ii) Northamptonshire Heartlands primary care trust; and when she plans to respond to previous requests to do so; [38107]

(2) if she will visit Kettering constituency to discuss funding for the local general hospital and primary care trust. [38125]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I would be happy to consider meeting with the hon. Member to discuss local health issues and possibility of visiting Kettering.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many job losses she expects as a result of the merger of primary care trusts in West Lancashire; what budget she has allocated for severance payments in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England; and if she will make a statement. [38374]

Mr. Byrne: Ministers have given the go-ahead for all 28 strategic health authorities (SHAs) to begin local consultations on boundary changes to SHAs and primary care trusts. Consultations started on 14 December and will continue for a period of 14 weeks (until 22 March). No decisions on boundary changes will be taken until these local consultations have been completed and their outcomes considered by Secretary of State. Until any boundary changes are agreed, it is not possible to calculate the number of job losses in any particular area.

Strategic health authorities have been asked to minimise the cost of severance and where possible, these should be financed from in-year management cost savings.

Health Spending

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the projected per capita Government spending on health in London is for 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [39135]

Jane Kennedy: The total spend by national health service organisations in London for 2005–06 will be reported in the 2005–06 final accounts, which will be published in autumn 2006.

The forecasts for 2005–06 recently published on the Department publications website are based on un-audited data. The forecasts are available at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

The latest year for which audited financial data is available is 2004–05. The following table shows the spend per head for primary care trusts (PCTs) in London for 2004–05.

2004–05 expenditure per head

PCT	*£*
Barking and Dagenham	1,211
Barnet	1,223
Bexley Care Trust	1,105
Brent Teaching	1,363
Bromley	1,128
Camden	1,635
City and Hackney Teaching	1,481
Croydon	1,135
Ealing	1,281
Enfield	1,160
Greenwich Teaching	1,310
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,337
Haringey Teaching	1,343
Harrow	1,147
Havering	1,167
Hillingdon	1,114
Hounslow	1,320
Islington	1,716
Kensington and Chelsea	1,397
Kingston	1,114
Lambeth	1,664
Lewisham	1,414
Newham	1,348
Redbridge	1,109
Richmond and Twickenham	1,163
Southwark	1,532
Sutton and Merton	1,154
Tower Hamlets	1,517
Waltham Forest	1,235
Wandsworth	1,323
Westminster	1,495

Source:
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules 2004–05
2003 based 2004 Office for National Statistics projections

Hepatitis C

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many hospitals offer treatment for hepatitis C;[38205]

(2) which primary care trusts do not have a hospital in their area which offers treatment for hepatitis C. [38206]

Caroline Flint: This information is not available centrally. In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", decisions about the provision of local services, including for hepatitis C are made by local national health service organisations.

Information at NHS trust level about finished consultant episodes with hepatitis C recorded as a primary diagnosis is usually available. However, this information cannot currently be provided due to disruption to the hospital episodes statistics service following the recent fire at the fuel storage depot in Hemel Hempstead.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the FaCe It campaign on hepatitis C; what the total expenditure on the campaign has been since it was introduced; when funding for the FaCe It campaign will cease; and what steps she intends to take to heighten awareness of hepatitis C following the end of the FaCe It campaign. [39348]

Caroline Flint: Qualitative research of hepatitis C awareness among general practitioners and practice nurses has been carried out this year. This research, which repeats a baseline study carried out in 2001, indicates that awareness of hepatitis C is much improved compared to 2001 and that hepatitis C testing is being offered to those known to be at risk.

The Health Protection Agency has been monitoring the number of reported laboratory diagnoses of hepatitis C, which is a national outcome indicator for implementation of the "Hepatitis C Action Plan for England". There has been a noticeable upward trend in

hepatitis C diagnoses since 2000 from just under 5,000 reports to around 8,000 in 2004. Injecting drug users are the group currently at greatest risk of hepatitis C infection in this country. The unlinked anonymous prevalence monitoring programme's survey of injecting drug users in contact with specialist services[1] showed that 67 per cent. had had a voluntary confidential test for hepatitis C in 2004 compared to 49 per cent. in 2000.

There has also been qualitative research this year into format and design of the hepatitis C "Face Your Past" leaflet, which is being widely distributed as the hepatitis C awareness photography exhibition tours regional cities. This research suggested that the design, content and tone were effective at gaining attention and giving a clear message without causing panic.

Research into public awareness of hepatitis C will be carried out in 2006. This will repeat a survey of awareness among the general public and groups at increased risk of infection in 2003.

Total expenditure on the "FaCe It" campaign to date has been £1.55 million. We will review the position on the future of the campaign at the end of the current financial year.

Note:

[1] For example, needle exchanges or treatment programmes, such as methadone maintenance.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what means the Department uses to raise awareness of HIV testing; and if she will make a statement. [38283]

Caroline Flint: The National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV (2001) included a goal to reduce the prevalence of undiagnosed HIV infection. Action to achieve this includes the following measures:

The Government has set a national standard that all genito urinary medicine (GUM) services should offer an HIV test to clinic attendees on their first screening for sexually transmitted infections. Uptake of voluntary confidential testing (VCT) for HIV at GUM clinics among gay men has increased from 64 per cent. in 2003 to 79 per cent. in 2004. In heterosexuals, VCT uptake increased from 54 per cent. in 2003 to at least 75 per cent. in 2004.

The Department continues to support comprehensive programmes of targeted HIV prevention and health promotion work for gay men and Africans through contracts with the Terrence Higgins Trust and the African HIV Policy Network. The Department has funded the Terrence Higgins Trust to undertake pilots in a number of locations to offer HIV testing in community settings.

Targets to reduce vertical, mother to child, transmission of HIV were announced in 1999. The success of offering and recommending an HIV test to every pregnant woman has resulted in a dramatic fall in the number of women giving birth to HIV positive babies.

Hospital Cleanliness

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many different organisations are able to inspect hospitals for cleanliness. [39341]

Jane Kennedy: A number of statutory organisations may undertake cleanliness inspections across the national health service, which may include every NHS site, a sample of sites or individual named sites as required. They are:

Healthcare Commission
Monitor
National Audit Office
Patient Forums
Environmental Health

Patient environment action teams (PEAT) also carry out annual assessments for the Department.

Medical Staff (West Suffolk)

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in the constituency of West Suffolk in (i) 1997 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available. [38873]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service hospital, public health medicine and community health services: all doctors and nurses in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority area and in each specified organisation as at 30 September[1] for each specified year

	All doctors[2]		Qualified nursing[3]	
	1997	2004	1997	2004
Headcount	3,876	4,983	13,457	18,592
Total specified organisations	154	457	689	1,368
East Anglian Ambulance NHS Trust	0	0	1	4
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	154	264	688	1,013
Suffolk West Primary Care Trust	[4]—	193	[4]—	351

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] Data as at 30 September each year except GP and Practice Nurse data as at 1 October 1997.
[3] Includes GP practice nurses.
[4] Not applicable. PCTs were not established until 2000.
1997 SHA figures are based on the 2002 organisational structure
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census
Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Statistics

Mental Health Bill

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many meetings officials in her Department have held with representatives from black and minority ethnic mental health groups as part of the consultation on the race equality impact assessment of the Mental Health Bill; [33319]

(2) when details of the consultation on the race equality impact assessment of the Mental Health Bill were first posted on the Department's website; and what the deadline is for submissions. [33320]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 1 December 2005]:* We have been undertaking a range of consultation activities as part of the process of Race Equality Impact Assessment on the draft Bill. This has included;

establishing an advisory group of stakeholders and experts in the field, which has provided its own recommendations, based on existing consultation material on the draft Bill, and on the basis of a workshop with stakeholders that was held in July. In addition, the assessment proformas used by the advisory group were made widely available and we received some direct submissions based on these documents;

three regional consultation events held in early November;

interviews and focus groups with detained patients conducted on behalf of the Department by the Mental Health Act Commission in 12 provider units;

written submissions from the Mental Health Act Commission's service user panel;

written consultation with professional groups who will be operating the Bill;

web-based opportunity for people to submit their own comments and views on the issues that have arisen out of earlier consultation. This was posted on the Department's website on 14 November, with a deadline for 25 November.

Officials have been in close consultation with black and minority ethnic stakeholder groups, primarily through the black and minority ethnic (BME) mental health network, throughout the race impact assessment on the draft Bill. For example, we had jointly planned with the BME mental health network a series of consultation events, which were to be held in the spring. Regrettably, these events were cancelled when the general election was called, due to the rules about communication on government policy in the period leading up to a general election.

The responsible Minister has also recently met with the Advisory Group and with the BME mental health network. The network was consulted about the consultation activities listed above and asked for more time for further dialogue to take place. We have agreed to extend the opportunity for dialogue and we are currently discussing with stakeholders what further consultation might be carried out before the Bill is introduced in Parliament.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on psychological therapies in the NHS in 2004–05. [38878]

Ms Rosie Winterton: "The 2004–05 National Survey of Investment in Mental Health Services" reported that in 2004–05, planned spend on psychological therapy services was £141,378,000.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many graduate primary care mental health workers were in post in *(a)* December 2004 and *(b)* December 2005. [38879]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available. However, the most recent data identified 353 graduate workers in September 2004 and 648 in March 2005.

Mesothelioma

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people died from mesothelioma in each of the last five years; how many people she estimates will die from mesothelioma in 2005; what estimate she has made of the number of likely deaths from mesothelioma over the next five years; and if she will make a statement. [39191]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of people who have died from mesothelioma since 2001. Comparable data are not available for years prior to 2001 due to the use of the international classification of diseases ninth revision (ICD-9) between 1979 and 2000, which did not contain a disease category for mesothelioma.

	Number of deaths
2001	1,510
2002	1,499
2003	1,534
2004	1,597

The Department has not made an estimate of the number of likely deaths from mesothelioma over the next five years.

The Department recognises that in the past lung cancer has not received the attention it requires and has set up the lung cancer and mesothelioma advisory group to facilitate collaboration and to promote mutual understanding between the Department, the voluntary sector, patient and professional groups and to advise Ministers, the National Cancer Director and the Department on the development and delivery of high quality services for lung cancer patients. A mesothelioma sub-group has been set up to advise on the provision of high quality services for mesothelioma patients.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on services for sufferers of myalgic encephalomyelitis in Lancashire. [37798]

Mr. Byrne: The Chorley and South Ribble primary care trust is the lead commissioning organisation for a new chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) service for Lancashire and South Cumbria. This has been recently launched and is expected to be fully operational by January 2006.

A specialist multi-disciplinary team, comprising consultant, physiotherapist, nurse and technical instructor, is providing a service for people with CFS or myalgic encephalomyelitis across the geographical area of Lancashire and South Cumbria.

National Service Framework for Long-Term Conditions

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress on adoption by NHS Trusts of the provisions of the national service framework for long-term conditions, with particular reference to neurological disorders. [38854]

Mr. Byrne: There is a 10 year implementation period for the national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions, with pace of delivery determined by local priorities.

Over the course of the three-year planning period 2005–08 health bodies will be expected to demonstrate that they are making progress in planning and developing the levels of service quality described in the NSF. Both the Healthcare Commission and the

Commission for Social Care Inspection may carry out improvement reviews to assess progress, jointly where appropriate.

NHS Central Registration System

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are registered on the NHS central registration system. [38506]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 January 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many people are registered on the NHS central registration system. (38506)

The number of patients on the NHS Central Register who are registered with a GP is 56,358,031.

Yours sincerely

NHS Commissioning

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 971W, on primary care trusts (Oxfordshire), whether all proposals to put NHS commissioning out to private tender require public consultation prior to decision. [38779]

Caroline Flint: There are no proposals to put the delivery of the commissioning function of PCTs in any area out to private tender.

As part of the proposals for primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration, one strategic health authority (SHA) proposed to procure an external management team to run one of their newly proposed PCTs. However, this proposal will not be considered during the forthcoming local consultation as it is for the new PCTs, not the current SHAs, to decide how best to manage their responsibilities after reconfiguration.

If the new PCTs do decide to pursue this option in the future, decisions will of course be subject to public consultation.

NHS Financial Deficits

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what aspects of local health service provision she expects to be affected by attempts to minimise the 2005–06 financial deficit in the *(a)* Northamptonshire Heartlands primary care trust and *(b)* Kettering general hospital NHS trust. [38903]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for the overall financial management of national health service organisations in their localities and to ensure that they can achieve financial balance. It is for primary care trust (PCTs) in partnership with SHAs and local stakeholders to determine how to use the funds allocated to them to plan, develop and modernise health services for their local populations.

NHS Financial Management

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 4WS, on NHS financial management, if she will list the new approaches to healthcare and healthcare services being undertaken by NHS foundation trusts; whether such approaches are also being taken by other trusts; and in what ways the latter are not able to innovate in the same way as foundation trusts. [38309]

Mr. Byrne: While national health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs) are fledgling organisations working in a new environment with new freedoms, case studies being presented by the foundation trust network give details about how NHSFTs are demonstrating innovative thinking and new ways of working while using their capital freedoms to invest in the delivery and expansion of new services and improving accountability to their local populations. While NHS trusts can innovate new approaches to patient care in much the same way as NHSFTs can, we know that freedoms conferred by foundation status are allowing NHSFTs to do this more quickly and efficiently. The report into NHSFTs published by the Healthcare Commission, the statutory name of which is the Commission for Healthcare audit and inspection in the summer also confirmed that NHSFTs were making good progress in developing new services.

NHS Pension Scheme

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether new IT systems will be introduced in the NHS in connection with the new pension scheme regulations to be introduced in 2006. [38046]

Mr. Byrne: Mandatory changes arising from the Finance Act 2004 affect public and private pension schemes. The NHS Pensions Agency is currently undertaking changes to information technology (IT) systems in order to meet the mandatory requirements of the Finance Act by 6 April 2006.

The national health service pension scheme review is being led by the NHS Employers Organisation in partnership with NHS Trade Unions and includes representatives from the NHS Pensions Agency and the Department. NHS Employers will make recommendation to Ministers on the future design of the NHS pension scheme. Preserved rights from the current scheme, and potential pension rights in a new scheme will be addressed as part of that process. The review partners expect to conclude negotiations by June 2006 but the implementation of a new scheme is not expected until 2007 at the earliest.

A full review of the Agency's IT systems is underway. The outcome of negotiations will inform the development of a new IT system or changes to the existing IT system.

NHS Reconfiguration

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been set aside for severance packages consequent on the restructuring of *(a)* Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health

Authority, *(b)* Lancashire and Cumbria Strategic Health Authority and *(c)* all strategic health authorities in England. [37418]

Mr. Byrne: Ministers have given the go-ahead for all 28 strategic health authorities (SHAs) to begin local consultations on boundary changes to SHAs and primary care trusts. Consultations started on 14 December for a period of 14 weeks (until 22 March). No decisions on boundary changes will be taken until these local consultations have been completed and their outcomes considered by Secretary of State. Until any boundary changes are agreed, it is not possible to calculate the cost of any severance packages. There will be no central fund to finance any cost of redundancy and SHAs have been asked to minimise severance costs.

NICE

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria will be used to select technologies for referral to *(a)* the new single technology appraisal system and *(b)* the existing appraisal system within the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [35140]

Jane Kennedy: The first tranche of topics for the single technology appraisal (STA) was arrived at in consultation with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). NICE reviewed the topics on its existing technology appraisal programme, considering when they were licensed, the potential impact on length and quality of life and the demand for guidance. The suitability of future topics for the STA process will be assessed in discussion with NICE. The STA process will only be able to appraise single technologies for single indications.

The existing multiple technology appraisal process will sit alongside the new process and will be available for use where an STA is not appropriate, for example where there is a need to look at two or more technologies together, or where the evidence base is particularly complex.

The Department and NICE are reviewing the process for selecting topics for the Institute's work programme, and a consultation document will be published in due course.

Nurses

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of nurses who left nursing employment in the NHS within six months of qualification in each of the last five years. [38577]

Mr. Byrne: The Higher Education Statistics Agency conducted a survey of students who had successfully completed their course at a publicly-funded higher education institution in England between 1 August 2003 and 31 July 2004 and had a response rate of 79.9 percent., amongst pre-registration nursing students (including midwives). Of the 4,874 nursing students counted in the 2005 survey, 4,274 (87.7 percent.) were employed as a nurse on 15 January 2005. 5.8 percent., were employed elsewhere. 5.2 percent., were not in employment.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will collect figures for the number of nurses who qualify and then find employment within the NHS. [38876]

Mr. Byrne: We already collect information on the number of staff employed in the national health service through the workforce census. We have no plans to collect additional information in the form requested. Following the shifting the balance of power initiative, we have moved to reduce gradually the number of data collections required from the NHS. Since 1997, the qualified nursing workforce has increased by 78,600.

Obesity Care Pathway

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what ways the draft document on the obesity care pathway used in the second round of consultations differed from that in the first round; and what assessment she has made of whether the consultation complied with the Cabinet Office code of practice on consultations. [38004]

Caroline Flint: The Department is developing an obesity care pathway as an interim tool to assist the frontline health professionals in managing overweight and/or obese patients, until the availability of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's definitive guidance in 2007. As part of the process of developing this tool, early drafts were shared with some potential users to ascertain their views on how it might best be applied.

A consultation on the content is currently underway on the obesity care pathway and related documents, and a draft weight loss guide. The consultation ended on 3 January 2006. As required by the Cabinet code on consultation, I have agreed that the consultation period should be time limited, given the interim nature of the tools and the importance of getting them quickly to health professionals.

Osteoporosis

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether sufferers of osteoporosis under the age of 70 will continue to receive *(a)* bisphosphonates, *(b)* ralox and *(c)* strontium ranelate free on the NHS. [38869]

Jane Kennedy: Government policy is to help those who may have difficulty paying prescription charges. The current exemption and charge remission arrangements are intended to ensure that no one need be deterred from obtaining any necessary medication on financial grounds.

Children under 16 and people aged 60 or over who are osteoporosis sufferers are entitled to free national health service prescriptions on the grounds of their age. Entitlement to free prescriptions is based on the principle that those who can afford to contribute should do so, while those who are likely to have difficulty in paying should be protected. However/people who have to pay can seek help under the NHS low income scheme, which provides help with health costs on an income-related basis.

Palliative Care

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government is taking to fulfil the commitment in Building on the Best to offer all adult patients nearing the end of life, regardless of diagnosis, access to high quality palliative care to enable them to choose if they wish to die at home; and what the timescale is for these measures. [35056]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government have invested an additional £12 million over three years (2004 to 2007) to deliver the end of life care programme, providing choice to those who want to die at home. This programme is providing training for staff in acute, community and care home settings so that all patients near the end of life have access to high quality palliative care and are able to choose where they receive care. This involves supporting the roll-out of three key tools, the gold standards framework, the Liverpool care pathway, and the preferred place of care.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to increase funding for palliative care services; and if she will make a statement. [37306]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In our Manifesto, we said we would increase the choice for patients with cancer and double the investment going into palliative care services, giving more people the choice to be treated at home. We have extended this commitment to improve end of life care for children and adults who are suffering from cancer or any life-threatening condition.

The details of delivering our manifesto commitment are being discussed with a range of key stakeholders. Along side this, the views of the public, service users and national health service staff on end of life care was one of the issues covered in the "Your Health, Your Care, Your Say" consultation. We will take account of what people have said in this consultation in the way we discharge our manifesto commitment.

Patient Choice

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1725–26W, on patient choice, what communications have been sent to *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* strategic health authorities to convey Government policy since Sir Nigel Crisp's letter of 28 July on Commissioning a Patient-led NHS. [37771]

Mr. Byrne: There have been two written communications issued to strategic health authority (SHA) chief executives since the publication of Sir Nigel Crisp's letter on 28 July 2005, and we have also provided SHAs with a consultation guidance document. A letter was issued on 26 August 2005, which stated that:

> "We expect discussions on provider functions to follow the restructuring discussion, be led by the new PCTs and to take into account any conclusions from the upcoming White Paper. Any proposals would then require a further specific consultation."

A further letter was issued on 30 November 2005, which stated that:

> "The consultation must cover the reconfiguration of organisational boundaries only. Discussions or decision about provider functions are not a matter for this consultation".

Enclosed with this letter was a consultation guidance document, which stated:

> "In our proposals sent out on 28 July we indicated that we were minded to require PCTs to reduce their service provision functions by the end of 2008. Since that document, we have listened to stakeholders. The policy moving forward, in relation to service provision, is that this will be a matter for PCTs to determine locally. So any move away from direct provision of services will be a decision for the local NHS within the framework set out in the forthcoming White Paper and after local consultation, including professions allied to medicine.
>
> We will support PCTs who want to do that, but we will not instruct PCTs to do it, nor will we impose any timetable. What matters is getting the best services for each community—and that is what the White Paper will focus on."

Prescribing Policy

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her policy is on the prescribing to a patient of a generic alternative to a branded medicine following the expiry of a patent in circumstances where they were initially prescribed a branded medicine and wish to remain on this medication. [39326]

Jane Kennedy: Practitioners are encouraged to prescribe rationally and to make the best possible use of national health service resources. It has long been the Department's policy to encourage practitioners to prescribe drugs by their generic name, where possible, for reasons of good professional practice and because of the opportunities for more effective use of NHS resources.

Prescription Charges

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued on whether patients in hospital should pay prescription charges for their medication. [39357]

Jane Kennedy: Guidance revised and issued in October 2003 entitled, "The Controls Assurance Standards" included a reminder to trusts that arrangements should be in place for the collection of prescription charges as specified by the National Health Service (Charges for drugs and appliances) Regulations 2000.

Regulation 5 (1) says an NHS trust, and NHS foundation trust or a primary care trust which supplies to a patient for the purposes of his treatment, drugs, otherwise than for administration at a hospital, or appliances, shall, subject to limited exemptions make and recover from the patient a charge of £6.50.

The information leaflet HC11, "Help with Health Costs", which is freely available to patients and NHS staff, sets out when and where prescription charges should be made.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will reconsider the pace at which primary care trusts are moved towards their target allocation under the weighted capitation formula. [39353]

Mr. Byrne: Pace of change policy is decided by Ministers for each allocations round. In 2003–04, the most under target primary care trust (PCT) was 22 percent., under target. For the 2006–08 revenue

allocations, it has been decided to move PCTs more quickly towards their fair share of funds, and by 2007–08, no PCT will be more than 3.5 percent., below its fair share.

There are no plans to revisit the 2006–08 revenue allocations or the in pace of change. Pace of change policy for the next allocations round will be considered in light of all the circumstances at the time.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many job losses she expects as a result of the possible merger of primary care trusts in Staffordshire; what budget she has allocated for severance payments; and if she will make a statement. [37829]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ministers have given the go-ahead for all 28 strategic health authorities (SHAs) to begin local consultations on boundary changes to SHAs and PCTs. Consultations started on 14 December and will continue for a period of 14 weeks, until 22 March. No decisions on boundary changes will be taken until these local consultations have been completed and their outcomes considered by Secretary of State. Until any boundary changes are agreed, it is not possible to calculate the number of job losses in any particular area.

There will be no central fund to finance any cost of redundancy. SHAs have been asked to minimise the cost of severance and where possible, these should be financed from in-year management cost savings.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what process will be used for primary care trusts to transfer the services they provide to alternative providers. [19637]

Mr. Byrne: There are no central plans for primary care trusts to transfer services they provide to alternative providers.

Any move away from direct provision of services will be a decision for the national health service locally, within the framework to be set out in the forthcoming White Paper and after local consultation with a range of stakeholders including staff.

Psychiatrist/Psychologist Waiting Times

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* target waiting time was to see a (i) psychiatrist and (ii) psychologist for (A) adults and (B) children in Chorley in each of the last five years. [37800]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Estimated average waiting time from GP written referral to first out-patient appointment, September 2001 to September 2005, provider based

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)
Sum of seven Trusts merged to form Lancashire Care NHS Trust

Quarter	*0 to <4*	*4 to <13*	*13 to <26*	*26 plus*	*Median wait*
September 2001	477	432	78	11	4.5

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Lancashire Care NHS Trust *Quarter September*	*0 to <4*	*4 to <13*	*13 to <17*	*17 to <21*	*21 plus*	*Median wait*
2002	480	332	39	5	5	3.6
2003	470	289	28	19	0	3.4
2004	419	232	25	0	0	3.2
2005	299	156	0	0	0	3.1
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust						
2001	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	41	20	6	2	0	3.4
2004	12	15	24	0	0	12.4
2005	13	9	1	1	0	3.8

n/a = not applicable

Notes:

Lancashire Care NHS Trust was formed in an April 2002 merger of the following organisations:
RMB—Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare NHS Trust (MH services)
RML—Blackpool, Wyre and Fyde Community Health NHS trust (MH services)
REU—Burnley Health Care NHS Trust (mental health services)
RJU—Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust (mental health services)
RME—Communicare NHS Trust (psychology and drugs services)
RMG—Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust
RVT—North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust
Data for specialties:
710—Mental Illness
711—Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
712—Forensic Psychiatry
713—Psychotherapy
715—Old Age Psychiatry

1. Due to small numbers, the calculation of the median wait is prone to fluctuation at PCT and SNA level. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures.
2. Waiting times apply to Consultant-led appointments only. Services in many areas are now run by multidisciplinary teams.

Source:

Department of Health form QM08

Resource Allocation Formula

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will examine the methods used by the resource allocation formula for primary care trusts to assess the health needs of rural areas. [38541]

Mr. Byrne: The weighted-capitation formula is the best available mechanism to determine the health needs of local populations.

The formula is continuously overseen by the advisory committee on resource allocation (ACRA). ACRA is an independent body, made up of national health service managers, academics and general practitioners. ACRA's objective is to ensure equity in resource allocation.

Rurality has been looked at by ACRA on a number of occasions. A wide ranging review of the weighted capitation formula was undertaken by ACRA, prior to the 2003–04 revenue allocations to primary care trusts. As a result of this review, the formula takes account of the effects of access, transport and poverty in calculating health need in rural areas.

ACRA are considering all aspects of weighted capitation formula in advance of next allocations, including health needs in rural areas.

Sure Start Post-natal Visits

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Sure Start post-natal visits by health visitors to new mothers are recommended by her Department. [37986]

Mr. Byrne: The national service framework (NSF) for children, young people and maternity services recommends that a family is visited at home by the health visitor or midwife when a child is around 12 days old, to assess the health of the child and family. It also recommends that a child receives a physical examination when they are between six and eight weeks old. This should concentrate on the child's eyes, heart and hips and is normally carried out by the general practitioner or the health visitor. Where a family requires more support or has complex needs the health visitor should offer further visits.

A health visitor based in a Sure Start children's centre would also have regard to the advice set out in the NSF. They may also have other contacts with families during the post-natal period through the various programmes delivered at the centre.

Terminally Ill Patients

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance her Department has issued to NHS hospitals on the provision of support to terminally ill patients without next of kin at the time of death. [38299]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No guidance has been issued to national health service hospitals on the provision of support specifically for terminally ill patients without next of kin at the time of death. However, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's guidance on supportive and palliative care, issued in 2004, provides recommendations for the provision of optimal care for those who are dying. This guidance also endorses several tools to support the provision of high quality and responsive care for people at the end of life. These tools: the gold standards framework, the Liverpool care pathway, and the preferred place of care, are being rolled out nationally as part of the Government's end of life care programme, which is running for three years from 2004 to 2007.

The Department also issued advice for the NHS, "When a Patient Dies", which sets out the principles and key elements of good bereavement services. This includes advice that all those involved in the death of a patient should work in partnership to ensure a coordinated response that meets individual needs.

UK/EU Health Agencies

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the relationship is between the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, the European Medicines Evaluation Agency and the EU Committee on Medicinal Products for Human Use. [19927]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence provides advice to the national health service in England on the clinical and cost effectiveness of selected new drugs once they are licensed by the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use, a committee of the European Medicines Agency.

Waiting Times

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target waiting times are for *(a)* psychiatry and *(b)* psychology appointments. [37658]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a psychiatry consultant is 17 weeks. From the end of 2005, the target will reduce to 13 weeks.

The Department has not set waiting time targets for services that are not consultant-led such as those delivered by psychologists.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how she will measure performance of the 18-week waiting time target for courses of treatment involving multiple organisations. [37987]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is currently collating the responses of a service-wide listening exercise on proposed principles and definitions to underpin the 18-week patient pathway commitment. The discussion document "Commissioning an 18 week patient pathway proposed principles and definitions" is available at www.18weeks.nhs.uk/documents/Principles_definitions.pdf and has been placed in the Library. Paragraphs 57 to 59 of this document address patient pathways, which involve multiple organisations. Paragraph 77 refers to the need for commissioners to manage the hand-offs between organisations. The outcome of the listening exercise and the final principles and definitions will be published in 2006.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average length of time women wait for their first appointment to test whether they are carrying the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene. [39370]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect routine data on the waiting time for a first appointment with genetics services.

The first appointment with the clinical genetic service will be to assess the individual's risk of carrying a mutation in the BRCA1 or BRCA 2 genes based on a detailed investigation of their family history. A key part of the process is the gathering of accurate information about occurrence and age at onset of any relevant cancers in the family before a meaningful first appointment can take place to assess whether it would be appropriate to offer a genetic test. This can take some time.

The ability to test for breast cancer pre-disposition genes has led to a significant increase in workload for genetic services. We are working with commissioners and providers of genetic services to ensure that patients are being appropriately referred into services and that testing capacity is increased.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adult Education

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what opportunities are made available by his Department in Kettering constituency to retrain, reskill or educate local adult residents for paid employment. [39781]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 10 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what opportunities are made available by his Department in the Kettering constituency to retain, reskill or educate local adult residents for paid employment. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus in Kettering offer training courses which are available to unemployed people in Retail and Customer Service, Fork Lift Licence (counterbalance and ach), and Basic Skills (literacy and numeracy). A Basic Employability course is available and addresses various barriers to employment facing people who have been out of work for some time.

For those eligible for help under the New Deal programmes, assistance is available with jobsearch skills (C.V. writing, application form completion, interview techniques) and courses are also offered with work experience undertaken in the voluntary sector.

In addition, we are working with key local employers from the logistics sector to develop a tailor-made work preparation course for customers unemployed for six months or more. This will focus on the key skills needed to work in this environment.

I hope this is helpful.

Benefit Payments

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women are receiving incapacity benefit payments; and what the figures were in each of the last four years. [39608]

Margaret Hodge: The information is in the table.

The number of female incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants: Great Britain

	Number of claimants
May 2001	1,129,000
May 2002	1,146,800
May 2003	1,161,700
May 2004	1,171,800
May 2005	1,166,000

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disability allowance (SDA), including IB credits only cases.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Child Support

Mark Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people who are paying child support remain on the old computer programme. [23096]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

I asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people who are paying child support remain on the old computer programme.

You can find this information in the CSA Quarterly Statistical Supplement published on the DWP website (www.dwp.gov.uk), a copy of which is also held in the House of Commons library.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the potential impact of fixing maintenance liabilities for periods longer than one week; and if he will make a statement. [37941]

Mr. Plaskitt: Because many clients of the Child Support Agency are in receipt of benefits which are assessed on a weekly basis, it is more practical to calculate liability for child support on a weekly basis.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much information relating to Child Support Agency cases in Kent has been lost due to the new IT system. [28595]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what bonuses were paid to staff managing the EDS contract at the Child Support Agency in each of the last four years; and what bonuses related to performance were paid to these staff in each of the last four years. [30019]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, who will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what bonuses were paid to staff managing the EDS contract at the Child Support Agency in each of the last four years; and what bonuses related to performance were paid to these staff in each of the last four years?

All staff in the Department of Work and Pensions qualify for performance-related pay. The performance-related pay arrangements operate on a sliding scale with over 90% of staff receiving a payment at the end of the performance year. In addition the Department operates a "special bonus" scheme, which rewards staff for exceptional achievements outside the requirements of their key work objectives.

Set out in the table below are the special bonus payments relating to staff involved in managing the EDS Contract. These staff also perform other functions in addition to that role.

These payments arose from when the new Child Support Computer System went live in March 2003.

£

Financial year	*Amount of payment*
2003–04	1,600.00
2004–05	0
2005–06[1]	500.00
Total	2,100.00

[1] To date.

I hope this information is helpful.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what percentage of the Child Support Agency cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme contain anomalies, inaccuracies or incomplete data; [30046]

(2) how many anomalies, inaccuracies and pieces of incomplete data are contained in the Child Support Agency records of the cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme; [30047]

(3) how long he expects the work needed to bring records of Child Support Agency cases up to a standard acceptable for transfer to the new scheme to take; and if he will make a statement; [30048]

(4) what proportion of the anomalies, inaccuracies and incomplete data contained in the Child Support Agency records of the cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme require human intervention; and if he will make a statement. [30049]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions:

What percentage of the Child Support Agency cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme contain anomalies, inaccuracies or incomplete data. [30046]

How many anomalies inaccuracies and pieces of incomplete data are contained in the Child Support Agency records of the cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme. [30047]

How long he expects the work needed to bring records of Child Support Agency cases up to a standard acceptable for transfer to the new scheme to take; and if he will make a statement. [30048]

What proportion of the anomalies inaccuracies and incomplete data contained in the Child Support Agency records of the cases waiting to be transferred from the old to the new scheme require human intervention; and if he will make a statement. [30049]

Whilst the Agency does not have robust numbers for the type of cas[illegible] specified, we do know that a substantial proportion of the old scheme caseload will have corrupted data that needs to be corrected before cases are moved to the new scheme.

Work is being undertaken to identify and resolve the problems caused by issues with the data on old scheme cases as they move to the new system and as relevant cases get transferred to the new scheme. I regret that this work has not yet produced definitive answers to the questions you have asked.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many non-resident parents were paying the flat rate of £5 child support per week in the latest period for which figures are available; and in how many cases these payments are being deducted from social security payments by the Child Support Agency; [30068]

(2) how many and what proportion of non-resident parents have a net income such that they pay child support maintenance *(a)* at the £5 flat rate and *(b)* on the taper for net income between £100 and £200. [37927]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions: how many non-resident parents were paying the flat rate of £5 child support per week in the latest period for which figures are available; and in how many cases these payments are being deducted from social security payments by the Child Support Agency.

You also asked how many and what proportion of non-resident parents have a net income such that they pay child support maintenance *(a)* at the £5 flat rate and *(b)* on the taper for net income between £100 and £200.

Due to the limitations of currently available new scheme management information, it is not possible to provide the number or proportion of non-resident parents with net income between £100 and £200. However, information can be provided about the number of parents paying child support maintenance at the £5 rate through analysis of maintenance calculations. This is presented below.

Under the new scheme, in most circumstances the minimum allowable calculation for a non-resident parent is £5.

However, if the non-resident parent (NRP) or their partner is on Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, where their partner is also an NRP, then the total liability for them both is £5, split equally across both cases.

The NRP can also have a liability of less than £5 a week if they have children with more than one parent with care (PWC), but they do not share care with all of them. For example:

NRP X receives Incapacity Benefit, so is liable to pay the flat rate of £5.

They have two children cared for by PWC A and also one child with PWC B. Care is shared with PWC B only.

The £5 liability is apportioned according to the number of children so 2/3 (£3.33) goes to PWC A and 1/3 (£1.67) to PWC B.

But, because care is shared with PWC B, liability in this case is reduced to nil, meaning the NRP has a total liability of £3.33 in respect of PWC A.

Additionally, if the NRP had a nil assessment under the old scheme, has been reactively converted to the new scheme because of relevant links to a new scheme application, and received a new scheme assessment of £5 then, under phasing rules, the NRP would be liable to pay £2.50 for the first year rising to £5 thereafter.

It is therefore possible to have NRPs who are liable to pay £5 flat-rate, but whose current liability is less than £5. For this reason, the figures quoted in the table below also include those NRPs who are liable to pay the flat rate of maintenance, but whose current liability is less than £5.

Figures relating to the total number and proportion of NRPs assessed to pay maintenance at a level of £5 or less and whether or not this is scheduled to be collected via a deduction from benefit are presented below.

Child support new scheme flat rate maintenance assessment value by method of collection—September 2005

	Number of non-resident parents			
Value of assessment	*Method of collection via deduction from benefit*	*Other method of collection*	*Total*	*Percentage of all non resident parents*
£0.01 to £4.99	4,000	2,000	6,000	2
£5.00	59,000	15,000	74,000	29
Total (£0.01 to £5.00)	63,000	17,000	80,000	31

Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to nearest whole percent. Due to rounding, components may not sum to totals.

I hope you find this helpful.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many requests for information Child Support Agency staff made in each month since 2001 in relation to Scottish claims; and what the average time taken to receive a response was; [31124]

(2) how many requests to HM Revenue and Customs for information regarding the income of non-resident parents for Scottish claims were made by the Child Support Agency in each month over the last three years; and what the average time taken to respond was; [31125]

(3) what estimate he has made of the proportion of time staff working on Scottish claims at the Child Support Agency spent *(a)* assessing levels of maintenance, *(b)* on enforcement activity and *(c)* on compliance activity in (i) 1998 and (ii) the latest period for which figures are available; [31126]

(4) what the average time was in Scotland between receipt of an application by the Child Support Agency and the granting of a warrant from a magistrate in each of the last five years; [31132]

(5) how many compensation payments have been made in Scotland by the Child Support Agency for maladministration since 1 January 1998; and how many of these exceeded *(a)* £1,000, *(b)* £10,000 and *(c)* £50,000; [31135]

(6) how many complaints relating to Scottish claims have been made to the Child Support Agency in each month since January 2003; [31140]

(7) what the latest estimate is of the time taken to take action on a Scottish Child Support Agency claim clerically; [31141]

(8) how many people have *(a)* been sent to prison and *(b)* lost their driving licence for a period of time for refusing to comply with the Child Support Agency in regard to Scottish claims in each quarter since 1995–96; [31143]

(9) how many staff handling Scottish claims *(a)* were employed by the Child Support Agency and *(b)* left the Child Support Agency in each of the last six years; [31146]

(10) what plans he has for Child Support Agency staff numbers handling Scottish claims for the period 2005 to 2008; [31148]

(11) what proportion of Child Support Agency staff handling Scottish claims have been working for the Agency for *(a)* less than one year and *(b)* less than two years; and if he will make a statement. [31149]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information requested is not available for Scotland.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many penalties the Child Support Agency has issued in Scotland for *(a)* failure to provide information and *(b)* providing false information in each of the last eight years. [31128]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many penalties the Child Support Agency has issued in Scotland for *(a)* failure to provide information and *(b)* providing false information in each of the last eight years.

The new criminal sanctions under Scottish law were only introduced from 31 January 2001:

Pursuant to a request for information, making a statement or representation knowing it to be false (section 14A(2)*(a)*); and

Providing or knowingly causing or knowingly allowing to be provided a document or other information which is known to be false in a material particular (section 14A(2)*(b)*).

Failing to comply with a request for information without reasonable excuse (section 14A(3) of the Child Support Act 1991).

A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (i.e. a fine not exceeding £1000)

The information requested is set out in the attached tables. I hope this will be helpful.

Child support agency criminal compliance prosecution cases under Scottish law

	14A(2) cases prosecuted under Scottish law	*Cases convicted*
Section 14A(2)—Providing the agency with false information		
April 2001 to March 2002	0	0
April 2002 to March 2003	0	0
April 2003 to March 2004	0	0
April 2004 to March 2005	1	1
April 2005 to October 2005	0	0
Total	1	1

	14A(3) cases prosecuted under Scottish law	*Cases convicted*
Section 14A(3)—Failure to provide the agency with required information		
April 2001 to March 2002	0	0
April 2002 to March 2003	0	0
April 2003 to March 2004	1	1
April 2004 to March 2005	2	1
April 2005 to October 2005	4	4
Total	7	6

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of parents with care in Scotland on income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance has received Child Support Agency maintenance in each reporting period since 1999–2000. [31139]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of parents with care in Scotland on income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance have received Child Support Agency maintenance in each reporting period since 1999–2000.

It is currently only possible to provide Scotland specific information for cases operating on the old computer system prior to the introduction of the new scheme in March 2003. Available figures are presented in the attached table.

I hope you find this helpful.

Proportion of parents with care in Scotland on Income Support and income based jobseeker's allowance receiving maintenance between February 1999 and February 2003

	Percentage
February 1999	23
May 1999	24
August 1999	24
November 1999	25
February 2000	24
May 2000	24
August 2000	24
November 2000	24
February 2001	23
May 2001	24
August 2001	24
November 2001	23
February 2002	23
May 2002	23
August 2002	23
November 2002	23
February 2003	23

Notes:

1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Robust information covering the period from March 2003 to date is not currently available for new scheme cases, and old scheme cases on the new computer system.
3. The methodology used to produce these statistics is consistent with that used in the measurement of the Department's public service agreement target in this area. Namely, all those cases with a child maintenance calculation or assessment where the parent with care is on income support or income based jobseeker's allowance (including those with a nil liability) who are in receipt of maintenance.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions payments have been made in Scotland under the authority of the *(a)* Chief Executive and *(b)* the Deputy Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency but without their personal written authorisation; how much these payments have amounted to; and for what reasons they were made.[31142]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions payments have been made in Scotland under the authority of the *(a)* Chief Executive or *(b)* the Deputy Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency but without their personal written authorisation; how much these payments have amounted to; and for what reasons they were made.

All payments made by officers of the Child Support Agency are made under the authority of the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for the Agency—this includes all payments made in Scotland. There are delegated authority levels and controls in place throughout the Agency to support these arrangements. In certain exceptional circumstances, the personal written authorisation of the Chief Executive or his Deputy is required before payment of redress can be made.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many and what proportion of applications for child maintenance support from people in Wales were awaiting processing at the end of each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [39468]

(2) what the average time was for processing child maintenance support cases originating in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [39469]

(3) how many and what proportion of applications for child maintenance support from people in Wales took *(a)* under one month, *(b)* between one and three

months, *(c)* between three and six months, *(d)* between six and 12 months and *(e)* over a year to process in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39470]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information can not be provided at the geographical level requested.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many compensation payments to Welsh claimants have been made by the Child Support Agency for maladministration since 1997; what proportion of total claims for child maintenance support this represents; and how many exceeded *(a)* £1,000, *(b)* £10,000, *(c)* £50,000 and *(d)* £90,000; and if he will make a statement. [39471]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available broken down by nationality, including for Welsh claimants.

Child Support Agency

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the target time for the processing of Child Support Agency applications is; [17688]

(2) what percentage of Child Support Agency applications were processed within the target time in the most recent period for which figures are available; [17689]

(3) how many Child Support Agency applications are being processed; [17690]

(4) how many Child Support Agency applications being processed were received *(a)* more than six months ago and *(b)* more than one year ago; and if he will make a statement. [17691]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Child Support Agency currently has no set target for processing applications because of its current and well documented backlog position.

The available information on the volumes and time taken to process outstanding Child Support Agency applications is in the table.

Time taken to process outstanding Child Support Agency applications

	Number of cases[1]
Potential new-scheme applications yet to be cleared	264,000
Of which:	
Received in the last six months	50,000
Received between six months and a year ago	35,000
Received more than a year ago	96,000
Unknown[2]	85,000
Old-scheme cases yet to be cleared[3]	75,000
Total number of cases yet to be cleared	339,000

[1] Numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

[2] There are currently 85,000 potential new-scheme applications that have come through Job Centre Plus, which are yet to be cleared, and for which management information is not currently available.

[3] The new scheme became operational in March 2003. Therefore, all old-scheme cases yet to be cleared were, by definition, received more than a year ago.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) in what proportion of Child Support Agency cases no payments have ever been made in each year since 2000–01; [21434]

(2) what proportion of Child Support Agency applications under the new scheme rules resulted in maintenance payments being made in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [21441]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what proportion of Child Support Agency cases no payments have ever been made in each year since 2000–01.

You also asked what proportion of Child Agency applications under the new scheme rules resulted in maintenance payments being made in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

The information requested is only available for new-scheme cases on a scheme-to-date basis.

At the end of September 2005, of the 202,000 cases where the initial assessment indicated maintenance was due, 72 per cent. had either received one or more payments via the collection service, or a Maintenance Direct arrangement had been put in place. Conversely, 28 per cent. had yet to receive any payment.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency (CSA) cases under the new CSA scheme have been *(a)* received, *(b)* cleared and *(c)* closed without payments being made. [21437]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions;

How many Child Support Agency (CSA) cases under the new CSA scheme have been *(a)* received *(b)* cleared and *(c)* closed without payments being made.

As at the end of September 2005, since the new scheme began the Agency has received 755,000 applications, of which 494,000 (65 per cent.) had been cleared. Of those applications cleared, 219,000 (44 per cent.) had a calculation and payment arrangement in place, of which 202,000 resulted in a positive liability, with the remainder having nil calculations. The remaining 276,000 (56 per cent.) were cleared prior to the point at which maintenance was calculated, and hence before any payment was made. Of this latter group, 236,000 cases were closed and 40,000 identified as either claiming good cause, being subject to a reduced benefit decision or a change of circumstances in relation to an existing case (as opposed to a new calculation).

It should be noted that an application is defined as cleared if the case is closed, a maintenance calculation has been carried out and a payment arrangement between the parent with care (PWC) and the non-resident parent is in place. In addition, an application is also counted as cleared if the PWC is identified as claiming Good Cause, the PWC is subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision or the application is identified as being a change of circumstances on an existing case as opposed to a new application.

The figures included in this response have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many Child Support Agency cases were awaiting a decision in each month between October 2004 and October 2005; [21444]

(2) what the backlog of Child Support Agency cases has been under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system for each month from January 2004 to October 2005; and if he will make a statement; [21581]

(3) what the total backlog of cases awaiting processing is under the new Child Support Agency scheme calculation for each month since June 2003; and if he will make a statement. [21853]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total backlog of cases awaiting processing under the new Child Support Agency scheme calculation for each month since June 2003 is; how many Child Support Agency cases were awaiting a decision in each month between October 2004 and October 2005 and what the backlog of Child Support Agency cases has been under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system for each month from January 2004 to October 2005.

The table below sets out the number of uncleared cases for each month for which information is currently available:

	2005								
	January	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
New Scheme	259,000	264,000	266,000	266,000	265,000	263,000	263,000	264,000	261,000
Old Scheme	103,000	92,000	87,000	86,000	82,000	78,000	76,000	75,000	73,000
Total Agency	362,000	357,000	353,000	352,000	346,000	341,000	340,000	339,000	333,000

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Information for new and old-scheme cases on the new computer system is not currently available between March 2003 and December 2004, therefore volumes for this period cannot be provided.
3. At September, 32,000 old-scheme cases were suspended on the old computer system, principally because the Agency has been unable to trace the non-resident parent. Similar types of cases will also exist for both new and old-scheme cases on the new computer system, the volumes of which cannot currently be quantified.

I hope you find this helpful

Education and Training

Sarah McCarthy-Fry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what measures are in place to enable young people between the ages of 19 and 25 years who are living independently and claiming jobseeker's allowance to participate in further education and training; [33440]

(2) what measures are in place to ensure that young people participating in the new deal are encouraged to take part in education and training, with particular reference to A-level courses. [33442]

Margaret Hodge: Young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) who are interested in further education and training can receive advice and guidance from Jobcentre Plus Advisers on education and training opportunities, including details of educational establishments that provide A Level courses. A condition of claiming JSA is that recipients continue to make themselves available for and actively seek work, so any education or training undertaken must comply with conditions for continuing to receive JSA.

Young people aged 18–24 who have been claiming JSA for six months are required to participate in the mandatory new deal for young people (NDYP) programme. The primary aim of NDYP is to help move people into sustainable work as quickly as possible, however, participants on the programme may access education and training opportunities through the full-time education and training (FTET) option.

FTET courses assist new deal participants in achieving vocational qualifications at or equivalent to S/NVQ level 2. They are not designed to compete with qualification courses run by further education establishments, for example GCSE or A level courses. FTET provision is delivered across a wide range of employment sectors for varying lengths of time and is tailored to the needs of the individual and local employers. People aged 25 and over who have been claiming JSA for 18 out of the last 21 months are required to join the mandatory new deal 25 plus (ND25 plus) programme. The employment and training option (ETO) within new deal 25 plus provides participants with the opportunity to acquire the formal qualifications, generally up to and including S/NVQ Level 3, that may be necessary for them to their particular jobs or occupational sectors. Personal advisers can approve early entry to both NDYP and ND25 plus for some people if this is appropriate to their needs.

Some eligible young people may also participate on other new deal programmes. People on new deal for lone parents (NDLP), which is a voluntary programme, have access to a range of new deal training opportunities, including the NDYP FTET option, or may participate in other approved training. They can have access to this help from the first day of joining the programme. Normally NDLP funding can only be used for education and training courses up to NVQ/SNVQ Level 2 or equivalent. However, where it is clear that a lone parent can achieve an NVQ/SNVQ Level 3 in a year (for example where they have the appropriate qualification levels in the subject) funding could be considered. In all cases Advisers must consider whether the training will lead to sustainable employment.

New deal for disabled people (NDDP), which is also a voluntary programme, is designed to support people in receipt of disability or health-related benefits in finding and sustaining paid employment. Although NDDP Job

Brokers work closely with providers of training, they usually focus on vocational training which would not normally incorporate further education qualifications such as A-level courses.

Finally, young people may also participate on the voluntary new deal for partners programme which offers partners of people claiming certain benefits support in tackling barriers to work. Partners are eligible to join the programme from the first day of the claim and can be referred to the FTET option of NDYP or the ETO Option of ND25 plus, or other suitable training which will improve their job readiness.

People aged 18–24 are also eligible for LSC modern apprenticeship training where the young person is employed, paid a wage and given the training needed to gain a qualification.

Industrial Injuries Scheme

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of industrial injuries benefit there have been in each of the last 10 years; and how much the benefit has cost in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms over the same period. [40471]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the tables.

Industrial injuries disablement benefit assessments in Great Britain

	Number
1995–96	240.7
1996–97	253.7
1997–98	265.2
1998–99	274.2
1999–2000	276.9
2000–01	276.3
2001–02	273.7
2002–03	267,125
2003–04	266,475
2004–05	267,145

Notes:
1. Number of assessments at the end of each statistical year (end of March).
2. A person may be in receipt of more than one assessment (up to the end of 2001–02).
3. Figures from 1995–96 to 2001–02 are based on a 10 per cent. sample, and are in thousands.
4. Figures from 2002–03 are from the Industrial Injuries Computer System, and present a 100 per cent. sample of recipients (not assessments).

Expenditure on industrial injuries benefits in nominal terms

	Industrial disablement benefits	*Industrial death benefit*	*Other industrial injuries benefits*	*Total industrial injuries benefits*
1995–96 outturn	670	58	3	731
1996–97 outturn	685	55	3	743
1997–98 outturn	690	55	2	747
1998–99 outturn	710	49	2	761
1999–2000 outturn	700	52	2	753
2000–01 outturn	708	49	2	759
2001–02 outturn	727	49	2	778
2002–03 outturn	733	48	2	783
2003–04 estimated outturn	737	46	1	783
2004–05 plans	751	43	1	795

Expenditure on industrial injuries benefits in real terms (2005–06 prices)

	Industrial disablement benefits	*Industrial death benefit*	*Other industrial injuries benefits*	*Total industrial injuries benefits*
1995–96 outturn	859	74	4	937
1996–97 outturn	848	69	3	920
1997–98 outturn	830	66	3	898
1998–99 outturn	832	58	2	892
1999–2000 outturn	804	59	2	866
2000–01 outturn	803	56	2	861
2001–02 outturn	806	54	2	862
2002–03 outturn	786	52	2	840
2003–04 estimated outturn	770	48	1	819
2004–05 plans	768	45	1	814

Notes:
1. Figures are given in millions.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Expenditure for 2004–05 reflects the latest benefit-by-benefit estimate of outturn, and not the amounts voted by Parliament.

Jobcentres (Tower Hamlets)

Mr. Galloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) for what reasons his Department has changed the provisions and incentives that are available from the publicly-run job centres in the London borough of Tower Hamlets; [36364]

(2) what changes to staffing at the local jobcentres in the London borough of Tower Hamlets will be made as a result of contracting out work to private contractors. [36365]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 10 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions asking for what reasons his department has reduced the provisions and incentives that are available from the publicly-run jobcentres in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets; and what changes to staffing at the local jobcentres in the London borough of Tower Hamlets will be made as a result of contracting out work to private

contractors. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

As part of a national modernisation programme we are improving services offered to the residents of Tower Hamlets. The City Jobcentre Plus Office opened on 8 November to provide the full range of services to residents and the Poplar Jobcentre Plus office will open in the New Year. In addition the Employment Zones, established in the borough in April 2000, provides specialist provision for unemployed adults aged 25 and over and the Working Neighbourhood pilot is an additional service in recognition of the fact that some residents of Tower Hamlets need extra help to gain employment.

There has been no reduction in staffing levels in Tower Hamlets' Jobcentre Plus offices as a result of the introduction of the Employment Zones or the Working Neighbourhood pilot.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many lone parents *(a)* were referred to and *(b)* accessed training after participating in the new deal for lone parents in each month between January 2004 and October 2005; [35285]

(2) what the average value was of awards made from the Advisers Discretionary Fund to lone parents participating in the new deal for lone parents in each month between January 2004 and October 2005; [35286]

(3) how many lone parents entered employment after participation in the new deal for lone parents in each month between January 2004 and October 2005; and how many Advisers Discretionary Fund Awards were made to lone parents participating in the new deal for lone parents in each month between January 2004 and October 2005. [35287]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answers 6 December 2005]:* New deal for lone parents (NDLP) is a voluntary programme which is available to lone parents who are not working, or working less than 16 hours a week. New deal personal advisers provide offer lone parents advice with job seeking, training, in-work benefits and childcare, and the programme has already been successful in helping more than 410,000 lone parents into work.

The available information on the number of lone parents undertaking training through new deal for lone parents in each month from January 2004 is in the table.

Training participants on new deal for lone parents

Month of first education/training start	*Number of lone parents*
January 2004	460
February 2004	310
March 2004	180
April 2004	480
May 2004	340
June 2004	290
July 2004	370
August 2004	260
September 2004	600
October 2004	450
November 2004	330
December 2004	180
January 2005	330
February 2005	210
March 2005	320
April 2005	380
May 2005	290
June 2005	210
July 2005	230
August 2005	110
Total	6,320

Notes:

1. Information on the number of lone parents referred to training through new deal for lone parents is not available.
2. Latest data is to August 2005.
3. Data is rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Information Directorate, DWP

A total of 180,287 Adviser Discretion Fund awards averaging £99.26 were made to participants on new deal for lone parents between January 2004 and October 2005.

Information broken down by each month is in the table.

Adviser discretion fund awards to participants on new deal for lone parents

January 2004-October 2005	*Number of awards*	*Average value of awards (£)*
January 2004	8,332	109.46
February 2004	7,745	106.99
March 2004	8,829	107.62
April 2004	8,716	106.56
May 2004	8,164	104.72
June 2004	7,705	107.45
July 2004	9,769	104.12
August 2004	7,969	108.99
September 2004	12,479	107.78
October 004	10,901	105.67
November 2004	10,330	104.71
December 2004	7,011	105.59
January 2005	8,010	103.62
February 2005	9,713	99.17
March 2005	9,981	97.39
April 2005	8,541	99.47
May 2005	6,952	85.25
June 2005	6,602	77.51
July 2005	5,011	79.77
August 2005	4,274	75.74
September 2005	7,215	71.23
October 2005	6,038	71.78

Notes:

1. It is possible for participants on new deal for lone parents to receive more than one award from the Adviser Discretion Fund.
2. The amount of Adviser Discretion Fund available to a customer within a 12 month period was reduced from £300 to £100 from 9 May 2005.

Source:

DWP Welfare to Work Change Division.

The available information on the number of lone parents entering work through new deal for lone parents in each month from January 2004 is in the table.

New deal for lone parents

Month	*Number into work*
January 2004	6,840
February 2004	6,200
March 2004	6,810
April 2004	7,830

New deal for lone parents

Month	*Number into work*
May 2004	7,100
June 2004	6,420
July 2004	7,230
August 2004	5,340
September 2004	8,340
October 2004	10,740
November 2004	8,450
December 2004	5,260
January 2005	5,340
February 2005	6,090
March 2005	5,270
April 2005	7,040
May 2005	6,020
Total	116,320

Notes:
1. Figures are for individuals into work.
2. Data is only available to May 2005.
3. All figures are rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people registered for the new deal in Beverley and Holderness in each of the last five years. [39586]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the table.

New deal in Beverley and Holderness

Period	*Individual starts*
April 2000 to March 2001	320
April 2001 to March 2002	350
April 2002 to March 2003	450
April 2003 to March 2004	440
April 2004 to March 2005	560

Notes:
1. Information does not include starts to the new deal for disabled people programme, which is not available at constituency level.
2. Information is not available at constituency level broken down by year for new deal 50 plus prior to January 2004.
3. Information is only available at constituency level for new deal for partners from April 2004.
4. Data is rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Outsourced Programmes

Sir Malcolm Rifkind: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the administration costs are for each outsourced employment programme; and what percentage of total expenditure on the programme this represents in each case. [27867]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the right hon. and learned Member.

Letter from Leslie Strathie, dated 10 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the administration cost for each outsourced employment programme, and what percentage this represents of the total expenditure for each programme. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The available information is set out in the table below.

Administrative expenditure on New Deal and action teams

	Start date of programmes	*Administration expenditure (£ million)*	*Percentage of start date of programmes total expenditure*
New Deal for Young People 25 plus	January 1998/July 1998	878	30
New Deal 50 plus	April 2000	28	10
New Deal for Lone Parents	October 1998	201	73
New Deal for Disabled People	July 2001	51	42
New Deal for Partners	April 1999	32	91
Action Teams	June 2000	59	39

Notes:
1. Figures are from the start of the programme to 2003–04.
2. The administrative expenditure figures include the costs attributable to personnel adviser salaries and staff costs. In 2003–04 approximately 5,500 personnel advisers were employed on New Deal and Action Team activities. Other administrative expenditure includes the cost of developing the programmes and support functions.

I hope this is helpful.

Pensioners

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of *(a)* single men, *(b)* single women and *(c)* couples aged 75 years or over would (i) be floated off pension credit, (ii) remain in receipt of guarantee credit and (iii) become eligible for savings credit were a full basic state pension to be made payable to them in (A) 2005–06, (B) 2010, (C) 2020, (D) 2030, (E) 2040 and (F) 2050. [35373]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table.

Recipients of pension credit aged 75 and over

	Floated off pension credit		*Remain in receipt of guarantee credit*		*Become eligible for savings credit*	
	Numbers (thousands)	*Proportions (percentage)*	*Numbers (thousands)*	*Proportions (percentage)*	*Numbers (thousands)*	*Proportions (percentage)*
Single men						
2005–06	—	—	130	100	10	60
2010	—	—	140	100	10	60
2020	—	—	170	100	10	45
2030	—	—	220	100	—	—
2040	—	—	290	95	—	—

Recipients of pension credit aged 75 and over

	Floated off pension credit		*Remain in receipt of guarantee credit*		*Become eligible for savings credit*	
	Numbers (thousands)	*Proportions (percentage)*	*Numbers (thousands)*	*Proportions (percentage)*	*Numbers (thousands)*	*Proportions (percentage)*
2050	—	—	540	100	—	—
Single women						
2005–06	10	—	780	100	80	55
2010	—	—	790	100	70	50
2020	—	—	840	100	50	40
2030	—	—	1,030	95	40	25
2040	—	—	1,380	95	30	25
2050	10	—	1,990	95	30	20
Couples						
2005–06	80	30	50	35	10	45
2010	60	15	80	55	—	—
2020	70	15	80	50	—	—
2030	80	10	80	45	—	—
2040	100	10	110	50	—	—
2050	60	5	250	50	—	—

Notes:

1. Projections for numbers in all the tables have been rounded to the nearest 10,000 and for proportions to the nearest 5 per cent. They are subject to a wide margin of error and should be used as broad indications only.
2. These estimates are based on a long term version of the Department's Policy Simulation Model, which uses Family Resources Survey data for 2003–04 projected forward into the future to estimate the extent of eligibility for each pensioner household on the survey.
3. A dash in the data represents numbers that are negligible.
4. Couples include those with at least one member aged 75 or over.
5. The proportions floated off pension credit are in relation to those who are projected to be in receipt of pension credit if the change in BSP had not occurred.
6. The proportions that remain in receipt of guarantee credit are in relation to those who are projected to be in receipt of guarantee credit if the change in BSP had not occurred.
7. The proportions that become eligible for savings credit are in relation to those who are projected to be in receipt of guarantee credit only, if the change in BSP had not occurred.

Pensions Commission

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the timetable is for *(a)* responding to the Pensions Commission's report and *(b)* legislating on pensions reform; and if he will make a statement. [40223]

Mr. Timms: The Government plan to publish a White Paper in the spring in response to the Pensions Commission's report. This will set out what legislation will be needed and a planned timetable for reforms.

Pension Credit

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many calls were made by his Department's staff to pensioners in Beverley and Holderness regarding take-up of the pension credit in each of the last 12 months. [40317]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available. The Pension Service does not collate such data at constituency level.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 11 January 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Administrative Savings

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what administrative savings have been made by her Department in each of the last eight years. [34950]

Jim Knight: Information on gross and net controlled administration costs underspends for Whitehall Departments is published in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Papers for the relevant years. These are available in the Library of the House.

DEFRA has also agreed efficiency targets, financial and staff, for the Spending Review 2004 period. These are set out in the Efficiency Technical Note which was published on DEFRA's website on 5 December 2005. It can be found at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/busplan/efficiencynote-0511.pdf.

Apiculture

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect on the UK honey bee population of the reduction in the National Bee Unit's budget. [39411]

Jim Knight: The Department has not reduced its expenditure with the National Bee Unit.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many seasonal bee inspectors she expects to be employed by her Department in *(a)* January 2006 and *(b)* January 2007. [39412]

Jim Knight: Bee inspectors are employed by the National Bee Unit, which is part of the Central Science Laboratory, a Defra agency. The Unit expects to employ 28 seasonal bee inspectors in England in 2006 and 2007, unchanged from the number employed during 2005.

Bottom Ash Incinerator

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the risk assessment carried out by the Environment Agency in relation to the use of Incinerator Bottom Ash in the Tesco construction site at Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire; and if she will make a statement.[38939]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Incinerator bottom ash aggregates were being used as a secondary construction material in the Tesco construction site of Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire under an exemption from waste management licensing. The Environment Agency does not normally carry out a risk assessment itself on exempted activities as they are considered low risk, but does check whether the information provided by the operators of the activity meets the terms and conditions of the exemption.

Jacksons Civil Engineering Ltd. notified the Environment Agency of the use of this material in construction of the Tesco site, Gerrards Cross, as an exempt activity under the Regulations. The notification included a risk assessment provided by the producers of the aggregate. In accordance with Environment Agency policy, this document has been placed on the public register at their Hatfield Office (North East Area Office, Apollo Court, 2 Bishops Square Business Park, St. Albans Road West, Hatfield, Hertfordshire. AL109EX).

Climate Change

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which bodies are funded by her Department which are concerned with climate change; and how much funding these bodies received in 2003–04. [39724]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 10 January 2006]:* The two key bodies funded by Defra to combat climate change are the Energy Saving Trust and the Carbon Trust. Total expenditure in 2003–04 by the Department on the Carbon Trust was £52.4 million and on Energy Saving Trust £29.8 million (including the Community Energy Programme).

The Department also funds a number of research contracts relating to climate change. The total value of these in 2003–04 was £13.5 million. These include around £9.9 million for the Hadley Centre (part of the Meterological Office) and around £0.6 million funding to Oxford University for the UK Climate Impacts Programme.

In addition the Environment Agency contributes to mitigation of greenhouse gases through its regulation of emissions and to society's adaptation to the impacts of climate change, notably by flood risk management. However, it is not possible to assess the proportion of the Agency's £1 billion per annum budget (60 per cent. of which is funded by Grant-in-Aid from Defra) that can specifically be attributed to climate change work.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding the Government spent in 2003–04 on climate change adaption. [39725]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 10 January 2006]:* The Government has no specific overall budget for adaptation to climate change. In many fields, adaptation to climate change is in its early stages and in general would be an incremental element of existing programmes. No detailed assessment has been made of the scale of this additional work.

The Department is currently consulting on the development of the Government's Adaptation Policy Framework, an exercise that includes collation of a database of policies, measures and programmes that are already taking account of adaptation requirements. The results of this consultation exercise will be reported later in 2006.

The answer given on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1275W, detailed the Department's spending in 2003–04 on research into the impacts of climate change and the identification of adaptation and mitigation options.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* salary bill was and *(b)* administrative costs were for her Department in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London in 2004–05. [35878]

Jim Knight: The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. How administration costs are controlled in the devolved Administrations is a matter for them. We do not monitor regional or central London administration costs separately.

The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639) records provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn. The DEFRA departmental report contains the estimated 2004–05 pay bill outturn.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39076]

Jim Knight: The Department does not maintain separate records of its expenditure for advertising. The expenditure for publicity by Defra's Communications Directorate includes marketing, advertising, publications, events, shows and direct mailings and is recorded for the financial years since Defra's creation in June 2001 as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	6.6
2002–03	4.7
2003–04	2.5
2004–05	4.2

This includes communications on a wide range of matters, much of it necessary or beneficial to the public and the wide range of industries in which Defra has an interest, together with local government, voluntary organisations and other bodies.

Individual records of advertising spend for Defra's NDPBs, agencies and financially sponsored organisations are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by her Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39138]

Jim Knight: The following table summarises the Department's rounded expenditure on widescreen televisions across the London headquarters estate since the beginning of the financial year 2001–02.

	Quantity	*Cost (£)*
2001–02	—	—
2002–03	—	—
2003–04	1	1,400
2004–05	7	10,900
2005–06	15	22,520

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many civil servants in her Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40291]

Jim Knight: No specific data is held by the Department on the precise extent of home working by staff. However, the practice appears to be on the increase now that we are promoting smart working and new, flexible, working practices (including home working). Recent staff survey data shows that 83 percent. of staff believe they are encouraged to work flexibly. Whilst these approaches are designed to improve the way we do business and deliver more efficiently, data from the same survey shows that 67 percent. of staff said they were able to achieve the optimum work/life balance.

Digital Mapping

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to date is of the Rural Payments Agency's digital mapping exercise; how many staff have been employed for the exercise; at what cost; what the cost of the digital mapping software was; and what the annual running costs of the digital mapping exercise are. [40395]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Following the launch of the Rural Land Register in September 2004 the level of demand was higher than anticipated and this has affected the running costs for the first year.

The approximate cost of establishing and running the Rural Land Register to date is £16.4 million.

The approximate total number of staff including agency staff employed by the Rural Payments Agency for varying durations has been 865 at an approximate cost of £7.3 million.

The cost of the digital mapping software was £0.4 million.

The estimated annual running costs of the digital mapping exercise is £1.9 million.

Energy Consumption

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will require local authorities to follow the example of Woking borough council in reducing energy consumption. [34481]

Mr. Morley: Placing a requirement to act on local authorities would require the Government to fully fund this as a new burden. The Government cannot commit to beginning a programme of investment that had not been planned for. Neither Government nor local councils have made provision for such a programme.

However many local authorities are already actively reducing energy consumption, both in their own operations and in the communities they serve. Through the beacon council theme on sustainable energy the Government are ensuring that good practice is shared. Woking borough council was granted Beacon Council Status for its work on Sustainable Energy in 2005

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for cereals, *(b)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for dehydrated fodder and *(c)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for sugar have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38784]

Mr. Morley: The Cereals Management Committee normally meets on a weekly basis in Brussels. The dates of meetings held during the UK presidency of the EU and the items discussed can be viewed at the following internet address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/minco/manco/cereals/index.htm.

The Dried Fodder Management Committee met for the last time on 14 July 2005 in Brussels. A summary of the items discussed can be viewed at the following internet address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/minco/manco/feed/index.htm.

In future, dried fodder issues will fall within the remit of the Cereals Management Committee.

The Sugar Management Committee meets on either a fortnightly or weekly basis, depending on the time of year, in Brussels. The dates of meetings held during the UK presidency and the items discussed can be viewed at the following internet address:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/minco/manco/sugar/index.htm

The European Commission provides the Chair for each of these Committees. The UK is represented by officials from Defra and additionally, as necessary, by officials from the Rural Payments Agency and other UK Agriculture Departments.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for oils and fats, *(b)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for natural fibres and *(c)* Management Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for milk and milk products have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [38786]

Jim Knight: The information is as follows:

(a) On 1 November the Management Committee for Fats and Oils became the Olive Oil Management Committee. It meets every month so during the UK presidency there have been six meetings. There was also a meeting when a vote was taken in the margins of another Management Committee. The meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. A Defra official represented the UK at each meeting. Reports of these meetings are copied to devolved administrations for information and comments.

(b) The Management Committee of the common organisation of agricultural markets for natural fibres met three times in the period: 5 September 2005, 17 November 2005, and 29 November 2005. The meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. Defra officials represented the UK at each meeting. Reports of these meetings are copied to members of the devolved administrations for information and comments.

(c) The Milk Management Committee met on 14 and 28 July, 25 August, 15 and 29 September, 13 and 27 October, 10 and 24 November, 15 December. The meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. Defra officials represented the UK at each meeting. Reports of these meetings are copied to members of the devolved administrations for information and comments, and during 2005 officials from the Welsh Assembly Government Environment, Planning and Countryside Department have attended as observers when subjects of particular interest were discussed.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for beef and veal, *(b)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for sheep and goats and *(c)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for pigmeat have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [38788]

Jim Knight: The Beef and Veal Management Committee normally meets on a monthly basis in Brussels and is chaired by European Commission officials. The dates of meetings held during the UK presidency and the items discussed can be viewed at the following internet address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/minco/manco/beef/index.htm

The UK was represented at these meetings by officials from Defra. Officials from the Rural Payments Agency and other UK Agriculture Departments attend as necessary but did not do so during the UK presidency.

The Sheep and Goat Management Committee met twice during the UK presidency (on 16 November and 7 December). Both meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. The UK was represented by Defra officials.

The Pigmeat Management Committee met during the UK presidency of the EU on 13 July, 20 September, 19 October, 16 November and 7 December 2005. Meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. The UK was represented by one official from Defra. The devolved authorities were consulted on agenda items prior to each meeting, and receive reports and papers shortly after each meeting.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU Committee on *(a)* geographical indications and protected designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs, *(b)* certificates of specific character for agricultural products and foodstuffs and *(c)* organic production of agricultural products and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [38822]

Jim Knight: The information is as follows:

(a) The Regulatory Committee on protected geographical indications and protected designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs met twice in the period: 4 October 2005 and 6 December 2005. Both meetings were chaired by an official from the European Commission. Two Defra officials represented the UK at each meeting. Arrangements are in place to consult with the devolved administrations on the business conducted by the Regulatory Committee.

(b) The Regulatory Committee on Certificates of Specific Character met once in the period: on 4 October 2005. The meeting was chaired by an official from the European Commission. Two Defra officials represented the UK. Arrangements are in place to consult with the devolved administrations on the business conducted by the Regulatory Committee.

(c) The Standing Committee on Organic Farming met three times in the period; on 1 July 2005, 26 September 2005 and 30 November/1 December 2005. The Committee is chaired by an official of the European Commission. Officials from Defra represent the UK. Arrangements are in place for consultation with the devolved administrations on the business conducted by the Standing Committee.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for seeds, *(b)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for live plants and floriculture products and *(c)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for bananas have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39012]

Jim Knight: Meetings of the Bananas Management Committee were held on 12 July, 15 November, 29 November and 13 December 2005. All four meetings were held in Brussels, chaired by officials of the European Commission and attended by Defra officials.

There were no meetings of the Management Committees of the common organisation of the markets for seeds or live plants and floriculture products during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government).

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Implementation Committee for spirit drinks, *(b)* Implementation Committee on aromatised wine-based drinks and *(c)* Joint Meetings of Management or regulatory committees in the field of agriculture—promotion of agricultural products have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39014]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Spirit Drinks Implementation Committee met once and the Joint Management Committee for the Promotion of Agricultural Products four times during the UK presidency of the EU. The Aromatised Wine Implementation Committee did not meet at all and has not done so since 2002.

The Spirit Drinks Implementation Committee meeting took place on 27 September 2005. Two DEFRA officials represented the UK. The Joint Management Committee for the Promotion of Agricultural Products meetings took place on 19 July 2005, 28 September 2005, 30 November 2005 and 21 December 2005. A DEFRA official represented the UK at July and September's meetings and a DEFRA official and a Rural Payments Agency official did so at November's meeting. Two Rural Payments Agency officials attended December's meeting. All of these meetings were presided over by European Commission officials.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs B4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the

devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister. A copy is available on the internet at:
www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list her Department's contractual obligations to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research in each of the last 10 years. [39396]

Mr. Morley: Defra has committed funds for Research and Development projects to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research over the 10 year period in question as follows:

	£ million
1996–97	6.875
1997–98	6.082
1998–99	6.318
1999–2000	6.437
2000–01	6.275
2001–02	6.040
2002–03	6.339
2003–04	6.537
2004–05	6.996
2005–06	[1]6.383)

[1] Provisional

Details of the projects funded, including individual project costings and the final reports from completed projects, are available on the Defra website at:

http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project data/Default.asp.

National Flood Forum

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria were taken into account when deciding to discontinue funding of the National Flood Forum; and if she will make a statement. [40753]

Mr. Morley: Defra has policy responsibility for flood risk management in England. The Environment Agency is the principal operating authority with responsibility for flood risk management in England.

I understand the Agency has agreed with the National Flood Forum Board of Directors that their core funding from the Agency will be phased out over a three-year period from December 2004 to ensure the Forum's independence from a single funding source, and allow it to establish a broader funding base. The Agency will continue to provide funding for the Forum on a project by project basis.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to Question 31449, on the EU sugar regime, tabled by the hon. Member for Hendon on 21 November 2005. [40272]

Jim Knight: I replied to the hon. Member on 20 December 2005.

Research and Development Strategy

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Welsh Assembly Government on the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research's role in her Department's research and development strategy. [39337]

Mr. Morley: The Welsh Assembly Government have been consulted in the development of Defra's Evidence and Innovation Strategy; is an assessor on Defra's farming and food Research Priorities Group; and is party to the development of Defra's research funding plans.

Defra procures R and D relevant to agriculture and fisheries at a range of research establishments including the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER). This research is funded to support both Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government policies. The Welsh Assembly Government are a close partner in the formulation of Defra research funding plans at a number of levels ranging from our Department wide Evidence and Innovation Strategies through to statements of policy rationale and scientific objectives for individual R and D programmes.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39086]

Hilary Benn: For details of Contracts awarded to DFID since 1997 to assist with International Development, I refer the hon. Member for Angus to the response I gave to the hon. Member for St. Ives (Andrew George) on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 55W.

The Department for International Development (DFID) is responsible for financial sponsorship of Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC). They do not however, retain a central record of expenditure on external consultants and to obtain this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Guatemala (Violence against Women)

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he has taken to help the Guatemalan authorities reduce the incidence of violence against Guatemalan women. [40820]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development is contributing €1 million through its share of the European Commission's (EC) 2004–07 project to strengthen the ability of the Guatemalan Indigenous Women's Ombudsman (Defensoria de la Mujer Indigena) to address the high levels of exclusion

and violence suffered by poor indigenous rural women. The Ombudsman is part of the Guatemala Presidential Commission of Human Rights.

The UK provides 18 per cent. of the funding of EC programmes to Guatemala.

Pakistan (Earthquake)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what shelters the UK Government is providing for the people of Pakistan following the earthquake there; and what assessment it has made of the adequacy of such shelters for winter temperatures and conditions in the affected region. [40799]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* As a part of DFID's overall response to the Pakistan earthquake, we have provided in-kind assistance in the form of 5,500 winterised tents, as well as plastic sheeting, blankets and ropes which are an integral part of the International Organisation for Migration's (IOM) tent winterisation package. In addition, we are providing financial support as well as staff secondments to the IOM, the lead international agency managing shelter issues, as well as financial support to six non governmental organisations that are implementing shelter programmes. This support is helping relocated North West Frontier and Kashmir populations in camps at lower altitude as well as those villagers living in remote locations above 5,000 feet. It has enabled the construction of temporary "warm rooms" made of galvanised iron sheets to assist those affected by the earthquake to survive the Himalayan winter.

DFID has been working actively with a range of donor partners, the Government of Pakistan, as well as beneficiaries, to gauge the appropriateness of the shelter assistance provided. When it became clear that a high proportion of the shelters distributed (excluding the DFID-provided tents) was not winterised, DFID provided an additional £2,000,000 of in-kind assistance to support the activities of the responding international community. We are currently discussing whether additional financial or in-kind support is required. DFID support through the financing of transport aircraft provided by NATO and in-country helicopter operations includes the delivery of shelter materials for the UN and humanitarian agencies.

The tents provided by DFID are fully certified winterised tents with provision for heating by stove. We are content that the additional in-kind support is of appropriate quality and meets UN and/or International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) standards.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Police Service

8. **Mr. David Anderson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect of the 50/50 ruling on the recruitment of suitably qualified Protestants to the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [40309]

Mr. Woodward: Since 2001, the unprecedented level of interest in joining the PSNI, from across the whole community, has reflected the increasing confidence in policing in Northern Ireland, and has created an inevitable surplus of suitably qualified candidates for a finite number of posts. I am advised that only 541 suitably qualified non-Catholic candidates, from the first eight campaigns, will be rejected as a result of 50/50. This is less than two percent of all non-Catholic applications.

Kneecappings

9. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many kneecappings have been recorded in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [40310]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI does not record offences separately. I can tell you that in the last five years the number of shootings has more than halved, from 186 in 2001 to 85 last year.

Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill

10. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with Sinn Fein on the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill. [40311]

Mr. Hanson: The Secretary of State and Ministers have had discussions with a number of political parties including Sinn Fein.

School Admissions

11. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department has taken to consult parents in Northern Ireland on his plans to change arrangements for academic selection for post-primary education. [40312]

Angela E. Smith: Throughout the review of post-primary education, the Department has consulted with parents in a number of ways, including through public meetings, focus groups, questionnaires including a household response form, meetings with representative groups and through written submissions. All views were considered before decisions were taken on the new post-primary arrangements.

14. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department has taken to consult parents in Northern Ireland on his plans to change arrangements for academic selection for post-primary education. [40315]

Angela E. Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Shipley (Philip Davies).

Giant's Causeway

12. **Jeff Ennis:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress is being made in developing visitor facilities at the Giant's Causeway. [40313]

Angela E. Smith: I can confirm that good progress continues to be made In relation to the provision of new visitor facilities at the Giant's Causeway. The design has been selected following a very successful international architectural competition. In addition, a separate firm of designers has recently been appointed to design and fit out the new facilities.

On-the-run Terrorists

13. **Mr. Leigh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on his plans to deal with on-the-run terrorists returning to Northern Ireland. [40314]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier.

Ambulance Services

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on *(a)* ambulance service cover in Derry city and *(b)* night-time cover in Derry city during the Christmas period. [40752]

Mr. Woodward: Accident and emergency ambulance services in Derry city are commissioned by the western health and social services board from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) on the basis of historical patterns of demand. Levels of cover therefore vary to meet demand but there are usually three to five vehicles on duty during the day and two to three at night crewed by a total complement of 46 operational staff.

During the recent Christmas period, NIAS experienced an unusually high level of staff sickness absence. In addition to six Altnagelvin station staff already absent, a further seven reported sick at short notice. As a result, of 58 planned shifts over the period 24 to 29 December, it was possible to cover only 41. However, full cover was resumed on 30 December 2005 and was maintained over the rest of the period including new year's eve.

Immediate action taken to reduce the impact of the sickness absence included redeploying staff from other stations, offering overtime to ambulance staff throughout Northern Ireland, assigning day shift staff to night-time cover, redeploying rapid response vehicles and introducing additional non-emergency vehicles to minimise the need for emergency crews to undertake non-emergency work.

In the longer term NIAS plans to review its procedures for allocating leave and overtime, and shift rotas to ensure effective staff cover. NIAS will incorporate its findings into a review of its absence management procedures.

While there was considerable additional pressure placed on ambulance personnel in NIAS's western division, I am pleased to say that the ambulance service's response to life threatening calls in the area and, in particular within Derry city itself, remained on a par with its performance across Northern Ireland performance during the period.

Civil Servants

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the basic hourly rate is for Northern Ireland civil service starting grades. [40784]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland civil service general service recruitment grades are administrative assistant, administrative officer, executive officer II and staff officer graduate. New entrants are normally recruited at the minimum of the respective salary scale. The basic hourly rate for the minimum of these grades are as follows:

	£
Administrative assistant	5.132
Administrative officer	5.617
Executive officer II	6.557
Staff officer graduate	9.172

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate his Department has made of public expenditure on housing in *(a)* the public and *(b)* the private sector in the last five years for which figures are available. [40778]

Mr. Hanson: The amounts of public expenditure allocated to housing in the public and private sectors over the last five years is as follows:

£ million

	Public sector funding	*Private sector funding*	*Total*
2000–01	318.748	42.133	360.881
2001–02	330.453	43.104	373.557
2002–03	387.555	43.000	430.555
2003–04	421.196	42.119	463.315
2004–05	408.853	45.742	454.595

Departmental Software

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to what extent open-source software is being used by Government Departments in Northern Ireland; and whether the recommendations of the e-Government policy unit on this are being implemented. [39425]

Angela E. Smith: Open Source is currently being used in two Government Departments in NI for specific projects.

Other Departments are evaluating it and this is underpinned by the NICS ICT strategy which states that the NICS will consider the use of Open Source.

The NICS has adopted the UK Government e-Government Interoperability Framework (eGIF) which mandates open standards and specifications.

Driving Offences (Mobile Phones)

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many successful prosecutions there have been in Northern Ireland for the offence of using a mobile phone while driving since its introduction. [40674]

Mr. Hanson: Until 2004 data relating to offences prosecuted by the police become available early this year information is currently available only for those cases prosecuted by the new Public Prosecution Service. Since the introduction of the offence on 1 February 2004, a total of 18 persons have been found guilty of driving while using a mobile phone. The majority of minor offences dealt with in the magistrates courts are prosecuted by the police and this continues to be the case except in the Belfast Region and Fermanagh and Tyrone which are now covered by the Public Prosecution Service which commenced in June 2005.

Government Estate

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many buildings in Northern Ireland are owned by the Government; what the average spare office capacity in them has been in each of the last 10 years; and what plans he has to lease further space to private firms. [38588]

Angela E. Smith: There are currently 162 Government owned office buildings in Northern Ireland. Records showing the average spare office capacity for each building in each of the last 10 years are not held. However, at 1 December 2005 0.8 per cent. of the 261,000 m^2 of space available was vacant. There are currently no plans to lease space out to private firms.

Ministerial Car Fleet

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what has been the cost of *(a)* ministerial cars and *(b)* drivers in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [39650]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office cannot provide the information requested by the hon. Gentleman as we cannot identify separate costs for Ministers' cars and drivers.

All Ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

In respect of Ministerial cars provided by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA); my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office (Jim Murphy) has asked Roy Burke, Chief Executive of the GCDA, to write to the hon. Member with details of the costs of Ministerial vehicles provided to Departments in 2004–05. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

For information for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04 I refer the hon. Member to the letters from the Chief Executive of the GCDA to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) dated 10 January 2005 and to the then hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs (Howard Flight) dated 13 September 2003. Copies of these letters are available in the Library.

Public Bodies/Agencies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff are employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which he has responsibility. [36006]

Angela E. Smith: As at 31 March 2005 there were 84,353 staff employed by non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office and 19,402.5 staff employed in Executive Agencies attached to Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office.

Public Order

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been *(a)* arrested, *(b)* charged and *(c)* convicted following public order disturbances in North Belfast since 1 January. [7092]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI advise that during the period 1 January to 31 December 2005, there were 93 persons charged with riotous behaviour, riotous assembly and disorderly behaviour in North Belfast DCU.

1. Statistics refer to those brought against a person after the original period of detention (including extensions). Any subsequent changes, additions, deletions to the original charges are not included.

2. Statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.

PSNI do not link charges to specific incidents.

PSNI do not record the number of arrests centrally.

PSNI do not record convictions.

Short Measures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many publicans in Northern Ireland were fined for selling short measures in each of the last 10 years. [38587]

Angela E. Smith: In the last 10 years, three publicans in Northern Ireland were fined for short measure offences: one in 1996 and two in 2005.

Sickness Absence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of absence from work in the Province in the last five years; [24908]

(2) what estimate he made of the cost to public funds of absence from work in the Province due to work-related illness in the last five years. [24924]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not available. However the hon. Lady may wish to refer to the workplace health strategy for Northern Ireland, "Working for Health', published by the Health and Safety Executive in 2003. This estimated Northern Ireland's whole economy bill for work-related ill health at some £330 million per year. A copy of this document will be placed in the Library.

Waiting Lists (Neurology)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* length of the waiting list is and *(b)* average waiting times are to (i) see a neurologist and (ii) receive beta interferon in each of the four health and social services board areas. [40637]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid point waiting time band.

(i) The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment with a neurology consultant at 30 September 2005 and the median waiting time in each health and social services board is shown in the following table.

Health board of residence	Waiting for a first outpatient appointment with a neurology consultant at 30 September 2005 (a) Number waiting	(b) Median waiting time band
Eastern	1,857	3–5 months
Northern	1,288	3–5 months
Southern	865	3–5 months
Western	1,047	6–8 months
NI Total	5,068	3–5 months

Note:
Patients currently suspended from waiting list are excluded from these figures. The NI total of 5,068 patients includes 11 patients whose board of residence was not specified (including private patients and those resident outside of Northern Ireland). The most recent information available from the Department is at 30 September 2005.

Source:
Departmental Information Return CH3 Parts 1 and 2

(ii) The number of patients waiting for beta interferon treatment at 30 November 2005 and the median waiting time in each health and social services board is shown in the following table.

Health board of residence	Waiting for beta interferon treatment at 30 November 2005 (a) Number waiting	(b) Median waiting time band
Eastern	54	6–8 months
Northern	62	6–8 months
Southern	16	6–8 months
Western	20	9–11 months
NI Total	152	6–8 months

Note:
Nine patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.

Source:
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust

TREASURY

EU Agriculture Budget

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the EU budget will be spent on agriculture, including rural development, over the period 2007 to 2013; and what proportion of the EU budget was spent on agriculture, including rural development, in each year since 2000. [40949]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The EU budget agreed by the European Council on 17 December for the period 2007–2013 will be €863 billion (in 2004 prices) on a commitments basis. Forty three percent. of this total is allocated to agriculture, including rural development (Heading 2). The comparable figures for the period 2000–2006 are:

	Proportion of spending on agriculture (Heading 1)
2000	44
2001	46
2002	47
2003	47
2004	43
2005	43
2006	43

EU Finances

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated value will be *(a)* in euros and *(b)* as a proportion of gross national income of each member state's (i) gross contribution to the EU including overseas aid spending, (ii) contribution to the UK abatement, (iii) receipts of EU spending and (iv) net contribution to the EU budget over the period 2007 to 2013. [40950]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for Altrinchham and Sale West on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 290W.

Regional GDP

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government are taking to decrease disparities in regional gross domestic product and gross value added per capita; and which Minister is in charge of those steps. [39623]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government are committed to a public service agreement (PSA) target to: "make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions by 2008, and over the long-term reduce the persistent gap in growth rates between the regions." The Deputy Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry are jointly responsible for this target. The Government are working with the devolved administrations to promote economic growth, full employment and prosperity for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Tax Credits

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average length of a phone call to the tax credit helpline was in the last period for which figures are available; what percentage of calls to the tax credit helpline were answered within *(a)* one minute, *(b)* two minutes, *(c)* five minutes and *(d)* at all; and what the average waiting time was for calls to be answered by a tax credit helpline operator. [9845]

Dawn Primarolo: We do not have available information on the average length of a phone call to the tax credit helpline. Information on percentages of calls answered within specific times other than 20 seconds is not kept.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the cost of the programme to digitise telephone conversations between members of the public and staff of HM Revenue and Customs in relation to queries about tax credits. [21874]

Dawn Primarolo: Total costs incurred to date on the Witness Call Archiving project are around £2 million.

The benefits of the Witness Call Archiving project are that they allow call recordings to be stored in an easily retrievable way that helps with queries, complaints, call monitoring etc. This system allows appropriately authorised users to search and replay calls remotely, this ultimately saves a significant amount of time in the complaints/query process.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many disputed tax credit cases were decided in each month since June 2004; what proportion of disputes have been decided in the disputant's favour; how many tax credit disputes received since April 2003 have yet to be decided; and how many disputes have been raised since June. [29706]

Dawn Primarolo: A monthly breakdown of the number of disputed overpayment decisions is not available for 2004–05.

To ensure they provide the most accurate information available, HM Revenue and Customs has changed its method of counting decisions made in 2005–06 since I answered the hon. Gentleman on 21 July 2005 and 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2033W and 282W. Figures for July 2005 to November 2005, inclusive, are around:

Month (2005)	*Disputed overpayment decisions (households)*
July	30,500
August	42,500
September	52,000
October	45,500
November	22,000

For those cases, HMRC wrote off a disputed overpayment in around 35 per cent. of cases up to 30 November 2005.

At the end of November 2005, around 54,000 disputes were awaiting a decision.

Between 1 June 2005 and 30 November 2005 around 187,000 households disputed a tax credits overpayment.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of fraud have been detected in Northern Ireland in relation to tax credit claims in each of the last five years. [36506]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

VAT

John Hemming: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has plans to charge VAT on domestic flights. [38195]

Dawn Primarolo: VAT is already charged on aircraft fuel supplied for flights within the UK at either the standard rate or reduced rate of 5 percent., depending on the type and quantity of fuel being supplied.

TRANSPORT

Air Quality

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the revised methodology for air quality around airports; and if he will place a copy in the Library. [41045]

Ms Buck: The Department's air quality technical panel process was initiated following commitments in the Air Transport White Paper related to the future development of Heathrow. It is expected to complete its report during February. This activity concerns the approach to modelling of air quality at Heathrow only. The report will be placed in the House Library.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 759W, on automatic number plate recognition, how long information collected by the police will be held as a record on police computer databases before deletion in *(a)* the pilot programme and *(b)* the proposed national scheme. [31501]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

Pursuant to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington on 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 759W, my officials have been working closely with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to ensure that information collected by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technologies and retained by the Police is cognisant of the relevant data protection legislation. The specific ACPO guidance states:

> "a period of two years in a 'live, searchable system' incorporating 'a controlled access environment' after 90 days. This period of retention is to facilitate the searching of that data on a case-by-case basis, should a crime committed during the deployment come to light during that two-year period. It would be expected that after the initial 90 days period, the data will be 'partitioned' for the rest of its retention period. In the period of 91 days to two years, the data will only be accessed for a justified policing need. Access to this data will be 'controlled and documented' to ensure its compliance with the proportionality, justification and use. In exceptional circumstances there may be operational grounds to justify retention of ANPR data beyond the two-year period. Should this occur a record of the grounds should be retained".

This document covers the European Convention for Human Rights. Data Protection, the Regulatory Investigative Powers Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the Police use of ANPR (excluding speed enforcement devices) and is applicable to all police forces in England and Wales.

Bridges

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what estimate he has made of the cost to date of strengthening bridges to accommodate 44 tonne lorries; [40878]

(2) what percentage of the costs of strengthening bridges to accommodate 44 tonne lorries has been borne by *(a)* the Highways Agency, *(b)* local authorities, *(c)* Network Rail, *(d)* Railtrack, *(e)* British Rail and *(f)* other organisations. [41046]

Dr. Ladyman: Since 1 January 1999 the United Kingdom has been required to implement EU Directive 89/460/EC, which allows the use of road vehicles with 11.5 tonne axle loads and plated vehicle weights of 40 tonnes. These vehicles are more demanding in loading terms than a 44 tonne vehicle on six axles. The Directive applies to "principal routes" used in international traffic, and in the UK these have been assumed to be motorways, all purpose trunk roads and the primary route network.

Under The Railway Bridges (Load Bearing Standards) Regulations (England and Wales) Order 1972 (SI 1705/1972) bridges carrying highways over railways are required to take a 24 tonne rigid lorry or a 32 tonne articulated lorry. So any strengthening to take 40 tonne (or 44 tonne) lorries is the sole responsibility of the relevant highway authority.

When the Directive came into force, all bridges on the motorway and trunk road network were able to accommodate 40 tonne vehicles. In the six years from 2001–02 to 2006–07 £205 million has been provided to strengthen bridges on the local authority primary route network to take 40 tonne lorries. In the same period £703 million has been provided to strengthen local authority bridges not on the primary route network, but not all of these bridges are required to take the 40 tonne loading.

Bypasses

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list bypasses built in each of the last five years. [40569]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table lists the Highways Agency trunk road and local authority bypass schemes (at a cost of over £5 million) which have been completed in each of the last five years:

	Scheme
2000	Rainworth Bypass
2001	A174 Skelton and Brotton Bypass
	Burntwood Bypass Phase 1 and 2, Staffordshire
	A151 Weston Bypass
	C541 Addlethorpe Bypass and Bernd Improvement
2002	A143 Broome-Ellingham
	A131 Great Leighs
	A6023 Denaby Main Diversion
	A511 Ashby Bypass
	A27 Polegate Bypass
	A43 Silverstone Bypass
	A6 Clapham Bypass
	A66 Stainburn and Great Clifton Bypass
	Wyre Piddle Bypass, Worcestershire
	A428 Crick Bypass
2003	A350 Semington—Melksham Diversion
	Barnsley Coalfields Link Road (aka Shafton Bypass)
	A6 Great Glen Bypass
	A53 Hodnett Bypass
	5 Nesscliffe Bypass
	500 Basford, Hough and Shavington Bypass
	6 Rothwell—Desborough Bypass
	6 Rushden and Higham Ferrers Bypass
	6 Alvaston Bypass
	650 Bingley Relief Road
	4146 Stoke Hammond and Linslade Bypass (Northern Section)
	South Thames Development Route
	41 Aston Clinton Bypass
	527 Biddulph Inner Bypass
	Ashton-Under-Lyne Northern Bypass (Greater Manchester)
2004	St Clements Way, Thurrock (aka West Thurrock Marshes Relief Road)
	A607 Rearsby Bypass
	Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route
	A63 Selby Bypass
	A10 Wadesmill Colliers End
2005	A167 Chilton Bypass
	A21 Lamberhurst Bypass
	A47 Thorney Bypass
	A142 Fordham Bypass
	Gloucester South West Bypass (Castlemeads section)
	A5 Weeford-Fazeley Improvement
	A158 Coastal Access Improvement Phase 1—Partney Bypass
	A428 West Haddon Bypass
	A57 Cadishead Way (Brinell Drive to City Boundary) (Greater Manchester)

Concessionary Transport

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the percentage of *(a)* elderly and *(b)* disabled people who paid half fare or less on public transport in (i) 2000 and (ii) 2004. [40562]

Ms Buck: Based on data from the National Travel Survey, it is estimated that in 2000 41 per cent. of people of pensionable age in England held a pass for reduced or free travel. In 2004, following the extension of the eligibility of passes to men aged 60 and over in 2003, 51 per cent. of people aged 60 and over in England had a pass for reduced or free travel.

Data on the percentage of disabled people benefiting from reduced or free travel on public transport are not available.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the cost of extending the free fares local bus scheme for over 60s and people with disabilities to a national free fares bus scheme. [40708]

Ms Buck: Initial analysis suggests the cost could be around £100 million a year, but £160 million if peak bus services were included, on top of the additional funding (£350 million for 2006–07) already being provided.

Eurostar

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ask Eurostar to review security arrangements on journeys from Waterloo and Ashford, with particular reference to baggage checks on all passengers. [40361]

Derek Twigg: Eurostar is directed on security matters under the Channel Tunnel (Security) Order 1994. Amongst a number of measures designed to provide a level of security proportional to the threat is the requirement to screen baggage. This is done using X-ray equipment similar to that in use at airports. Security measures are kept under continual review.

Heathrow Airport

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many responses to the first stage of the night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports consultation relating to Heathrow advocated a rise in the number of night flights over and above the existing movement restrictions at Heathrow; how many advocated *(a)* a reduction in the number of and *(b)* a ban on such flights in (i) the immediate short-term and (ii) the long-term; and if he will make a statement. [40913]

Ms Buck: A summary of responses to the stage one paper has been published on the Department's website and includes some of the general comments made by

consultees. The consultation posed nine questions about issues such as the way aircraft are classified for night restrictions purposes and the possible noise abatement objectives for the airports concerned. Consultees were not specifically asked for their views on what the number of night flights at each airport should be, as this matter was to be dealt with in the stage two consultation. Of the approximately 1800 responses to the consultation paper about 400 indicated in commenting that they would like to see an immediate ban or a commitment to working towards a ban on night flights. A large majority of these responses were from the Heathrow area.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many consultation responses relating to Heathrow were received in the *(a)* first and *(b)* second stage of the night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports consultation; and if he will make a statement. [40914]

Ms Buck: There were approximately 1800 responses to stage one of the consultation exercise. The following table shows responses received which commented specifically on the position at Heathrow area:

Category	*Number of responses*
Local authorities	22
Environmental groups	33
Individuals	850
Petitions	500

Responses were also received from airlines, airline organisations and other industry representatives but their responses tended to include all three airports and were not generally Heathrow specific.

Responses from the stage two consultation are still being analysed and a summary, including some numerical analysis will be available, in due course.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many responses to the second stage of the night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports consultation relating to Heathrow *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the proposal in paragraph 7.25 for a rise in the number of night flights over and above the existing movement restrictions at Heathrow; and if he will make a statement. [40915]

Ms Buck: Responses to the stage two consultation paper are being analysed and decisions will be announced in due course. A summary of responses to the consultation along with some numerical analysis will be published with the decision announcement.

Low-speed Zones

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many 20 mph zones have been established in each of the last five years; and what the total cost was in each of those years. [40563]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held by the Department. Local highway authorities are responsible for setting local speed limits, including 20 mph limits where they deem these to be appropriate.

Park and Ride

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many park and ride schemes have been opened since 2000; and how many he expects will open in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [40842]

Ms Buck: The local authority returns provided to the Department indicate that outside London 55 new park and ride schemes have opened in the financial years 2001–02 to 2004–05 (inclusive). 21 were forecast to open in 2005–06. There is not a recent forecast available for 2006–07.

Rail Freight

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding was made available for rail freight in each year since 2000–01. [40566]

Derek Twigg: Direct support for rail freight is provided through three schemes. These are Freight Facilities Grants (FFG), Track Access Grant (TAG) and Company Neutral Revenue Support (CNRS). The amounts spent in the period is as follows (incl. England, Scotland and Wales):

	TAG	*CNRS*	*FFG*
2000–01	13.9	0	[1]22.3
2001–02	19.9	0	41.2
2002–03	21.3	0	30.6
2003–04	17.5	0	19.8
2004–05	1.7	22.0	4.8

[1] 2000–01 includes waterways FFG.

Railways

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average age of trains used on the UK's railways is; and what the average life of a train is. [38459]

Derek Twigg: The average age of the UK passenger fleet as at 1 October 2005 is 13 years. Typically the design life of rolling stock is between 30 and 35 years.

Road Improvements

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list trunk roads widened in each of the last five years. [40570]

Dr. Ladyman: A total of eight trunk roads have been widened, over the last five years, as follows:

Scheme	*Date of completion*
A43 Whitfield Turn—Brackley Hatch Improvement	September 2002
A43 M40—B4031 Dualling	September 2002
A1 Willowburn to Denwick Improvement	March 2003
A11 Roudham Heath—Attleborough Improvement	March 2003
A46 Newark—Lincoln Improvement	July 2003
A1033 Hedon Road Improvement	November 2003
A120 Stansted—Braintree Improvement	July 2004
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 1 Bean—Tollgate	December 2004

In addition three motorways have been widened and these are:

Scheme	Date of completion
A1 (M) Wetherby—Walshford	December 2004
M5 J17–18A Northbound Climbing Lane	October 2005
M25J12–15 Widening	December 2005

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list schemes completed in the Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements. [40576]

Dr. Ladyman: Since 2002, 32 schemes formerly in the Targeted Programme of Improvements have now been completed. These are as follows:

Date of completion	Scheme
June 2002	A27 Polegate Bypass
September 2002	A43 Silverstone Bypass
September 2002	A43 Whitfield Turn-Brackley Hatch Improvement
September 2002	A43 M40-B4031 Dualling
December 2002	A6 Clapham Bypass
December 2002	A66 Stainburn and Great Clifton Bypass
February 2003	A6 Great Glen Bypass
March 2003	A1 Willowburn to Denwick Improvement
March 2003	A5 Nesscliffe Bypass
March 2003	A11 Roudham Heath-Attleborough Improvement
May 2003	A500 Basford, Hough, Shavington Bypass
July 2003	A46 Newark-Lincoln Improvement
August 2003	A6 Rushden and Higham Ferrers Bypass
August 2003	A6 Rothwell-Desborough Bypass
October 2003	A41 Aston Clinton Bypass
November 2003	A1033 Hedon Road Improvement
December 2003	A6 Alvaston
December 2003	A650 Bingley Relief Road
June 2004	A63 Selby Bypass
July 2004	A120 Stansted-Braintree Improvement
September 2004	A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement
October 2004	A10 Wadesmill Colliers End
October 2004	A1 Stannington Junction
December 2004	A2 Bean-Cobham Phase 1 Bean-Tollgate
March 2005	A21 Lamberhurst Bypass
June 2005	A64 Colton Lane GSJ
August 2005	A1(M) Wetherby-Walshford
October 2005	A5 Weeford-Fazeley Improvement
October 2005	M5 Junctions 17–18a Northbound Climbing Lane
November 2005	M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge
December 2005	M25 J12–15 Widening
December 2005	A47 Thorney Bypass

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress the Government have made towards their aim to halt the deterioration in local road conditions by 2004; what schemes it funded to meet that aim; and how much each scheme cost. [40839]

Ms Buck: The National Road Maintenance Condition Survey for 2004 showed that the Government had achieved their aim of halting the deterioration in local roads by that year. Local road condition overall in 2004 was significantly better than in 2000.

To help to achieve this improvement the Government provided £3.264 billion of capital funding and £7.920 billion of revenue funding for local highway maintenance in the four years from 2001–02 to 2004–05. Specific schemes that were funded in that period and their costs are shown as follows:

Authority	Scheme	Cost (£ million)
Birmingham	Highway Maintenance PFI	379.00
Leeds	Street Lighting PFI	94.60
Surrey	Street Lighting PFI	65.60
Newcastle/North Tyneside	Street Lighting PFI	44.40
Manchester	Street Lighting PFI	34.10
Derby City	Street Lighting PFI	32.47
Dorset	Street Lighting PFI	31.60
South Tyneside	Street Lighting PFI	31.50
Barnet	Street Lighting PFI	27.77
Ealing	Street Lighting PFI	25.28
Surrey	Walton Bridge	25.26
Enfield	Street Lighting PFI	23.70
Redcar and Cleveland	Street Lighting PFI	21.10
Leicester City	Upperton Road Viaduct	19.10
Lambeth	Street Lighting PFI	17.22
Wakefield	Street Lighting PFI	16.20
Oldham	Retaining Walls	14.00
Halton	Silver Jubilee Bridge	11.89
Newcastle	Central Motorway East	7.93
Blackburn and Darwen	Freckleton Street Bridge	7.90
Bedfordshire	Arlesey Bridge	7.43
Isle of Wight	Undercliff Drive	5.16
East Riding	A161 Dutch River Crossing, Goole	4.75
Peterborough	A15 Town Rail Bridge	3.64
Thurrock	A1306 Stifford Railway Bridge	3.10
Bolton	A58 Beaumont Road	3.00
Bath and NE Somerset	A367 Churchill Down to Churchill Gyratory	2.23
Sefton	A570 Eastbank Street Bridge, Southport	2.13
North Somerset	A38 Barrow Tanks to Bristol	2.10
Bournemouth	A338 Wessex Way	2.10
Southend on Sea	Hamlet Court Road Bridge Approaches	1.92
Knowsley	A562 Higher Road, Halewood	1.80
Medway Towns	A278 Hoath Way	1.62
Blackburn and Darwen	Waterfall Bridge	1.56
Rutland	A6003 Caldecott to Oakham	1.31
Brighton and Hove	A259 West Street to Royal Albion	1.10
Bury	A665 Bury Old Road, Prestwich	1.06
Torbay	A380 Torbay Ring Road	0.88
Derby City	A52 Ashbourne Road/Friar Gate	0.79
NE Lincolnshire	A16 Victoria Street, Grimsby	0.79
Bracknell Forest	A329 London Road	0.60
Hartlepool	A1049 Railway Bridge to Romaine Park	0.42
Total for specific schemes		980.08

Stratford Stations

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 327W, on Stratford stations, what kind of direct access he expects will be provided between Stratford International and Regional Stations from 2010; and whether any arrangements besides step-free access from Dockland Light Railway trains to street level will be provided for passengers with disabilities travelling to or between Stratford International and Regional Stations during the 2012 Olympic Games. [36908]

Derek Twigg: Subject to the approval of applications which are currently before the Secretary of State, the main form of direct access between the Stratford International and Regional Stations will be the proposed Docklands Light Railway (DLR) link from 2010. Access from DLR trains to platforms will be step free and both Stratford International and Stratford Regional Stations will provide step free access from platform to street for passengers with mobility difficulties.

In addition, the deemed planning permission for the CTRL development at Stratford (granted in 2001 to Union Railways North, a subsidiary of LCR), requires a 'mechanised link1 such as a travelator to be constructed between Stratford Regional and International Stations.

Also, the outline planning consent for the Stratford City development, granted in 2004, requires the developer to make physical provision for the mechanised link, provided that LB Newham agree the procurement date and design of the travelator by January 2006. Discussions on how this requirement might be fulfilled are underway between LCR and London borough of Newham, who as local planning authority are responsible for the enforcement of these conditions.

Transport (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with Gravesham borough council on the Government's plans for concessionary travel for pensioners. [40623]

Ms Buck: None. The statutory entitlement to free off-peak local bus travel in England for people 60 and over and disabled people will come into effect on 1 April 2006. The Department for Transport has issued guidance to local authorities on implementation but it is for individual concessionary travel authorities, to design and operate their local concessionary fares scheme.

Unadopted Roads

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of unadopted roads in England. [39590]

Ms Buck: We have no current estimate of the number of unadopted roads in England as this information is not held centrally.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Administrative Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39813]

Mr. Lammy: My Department's main activity is to set Government policy on a range of cultural and leisure activities. An analysis of administration costs by activity for 2004–05 as published in the Department's Annual Account 2005 (page 87) is shown in the table.

Analysis by activity	*£ million*
Arts and Culture	11
Sport	5
Tourism, Libraries and Communities	6
Creative Industries, Broadcasting and Gambling	9
Central administration	10
Total net administration costs	[1]41

[1] Estimated outturn

My core Department is wholly based in London and, at present, administration costs are not attributed to areas.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total administrative costs for her core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39840]

Mr. Lammy: The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. Control of administration costs in the devolved Administrations is a matter for them.

My Department's net administration costs were £40,452k in 2004–05, and £39,335k in 2003–04. Table 8.19 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) 2005 shows the Department's expenditure on services for 2003–04 (the latest available), including the elements of each that are identifiable and non-identifiable. Expenditure on administration is classified as in the same way as the service it supports. Copies of PESA 2005 are available in the Library of the House.

British Film Industry

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact on the British film industry of the requirements that film production projects applying for the new tax incentives are required to meet. [38518]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The Chancellor made a number of key announcements regarding the new film tax incentives at the pre-Budget report. Further details of the new tax incentives will be announced in due course.

Digital Broadcasting

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the expected average cost per household is of digital switchover. [39783]

James Purnell *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* On 8 November 2005, Ofcom published research by the Generics Group which examined the cost and power consumption implications of digital switchover for UK households. The report estimates that the actual cost to individual households of switchover-driven non-voluntary conversion of sets and VCRs is estimated to range from £26 to £153 depending on the equipment in the home.

Licensing Hours

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pubs and clubs have sought variations in their licensing hours for televised events since the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [40271]

James Purnell: Information on the number of pubs and clubs seeking variations in licensing hours for televised events is not held centrally.

Rural Tourism

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on rural tourism in East Yorkshire. [39504]

James Purnell: Rural tourism is a vital element of the English and British tourism offer, and is supported at national and regional levels. At national level, my Department funds the work of VisitBritain and the England Marketing Advisory Board in promoting rural tourism to both the domestic and international markets. VisitBritain spent £1 million in directly promoting rural areas across England in 2004–05.

The regional development agencies have been responsible for supporting tourism at regional level since 2003. Yorkshire Forward's Economic Strategy for 2003 to 2006 includes tourism initiatives which take account of the region's rural areas. The Agency will be investing £4 million in the promotion of local tourism across the county over 2003 to 2006.

Following publication of the Government's Rural Strategy in 2004, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs requires each English region to set out its priorities in a Regional Rural Delivery Framework, setting out its rural priorities and agreeing how public sector bodies will work together to deliver them.

Television/Radio

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* television broadcast stations, *(b)* generic television repeater broadcast stations, *(c)* am radio broadcast stations, *(d)* am repeater radio broadcast stations, *(e)* fm radio broadcast stations, *(f)* fm repeater radio broadcast stations, *(g)* short wave repeater radio broadcast stations and *(h)* short wave radio broadcast stations are sited in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales, (iii) each of the English regions and (iv) Northern Ireland. [39205]

James Purnell: Details on transmitters, as determined by Ofcom, are listed in the following table.

	England	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*NI*	*Total*
TV[1]	679	216	234	50	1,179
FM radio	877	279	387	70	1,613
AM radio	141	11	16	5	173
SW radio	2	0	0	0	2

[1] Includes restricted service licences and non-co-sited Channel 5 transmitters.

Note:
Figures for England include The Channel Islands and The Isle of Man.

We do not have a breakdown of the above figures for radio transmitters, indicating broadcast sites and repeater broadcast sites. For a breakdown of TV transmission sites across the country, I suggest visiting either the Ofcom website at: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/reception_advice/index.asp.html or the BBC website at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/reception/transmitters/tv_trans/index.shtml

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the average number of television sets per household is. [39788]

James Purnell: According to figures from the research company GfK, there is currently an average of 2.6 TVs per home.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult and Community Learning

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many adult and community learning enrolments there were in each year since 2001. [40440]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* There were 915 thousand learners funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) enrolled on Adult and Community Learning (ACL) courses in 2004/05 in England; the comparable figure for 2003/04 was 923 thousand learners.

Changes to the data collection systems, when this provision was funded through local authorities (then termed local education authorities), mean that figures for earlier years are not comparable.

Education (Milton Keynes)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effects of prioritising 14 to 19 education on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes in North East Milton Keynes. [27206]

Bill Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Mr. Davey) on 11 January.

As the allocation of funding in local arrears relates to the LSC's operational responsibilities, Mark Haysom the LSC's chief Executive has written to the hon. Member with the information requested for Milton Keynes and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 11 January 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, where you asked what assessment she has made of the effects of prioritising 14 to 19 education on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes in North East Milton Keynes.

The Learning and Skills Council provides funding for Prince's Trust activities to Milton Keynes College through two separate methods.

Firstly, Milton Keynes College directly provides Prince's Trust provision and this is funded from the College's mainstream Further Education budget, as provided by the LSC. This funding is used for activities chiefly in Milton Keynes and Aylesbury, although we do not have a breakdown of the information into specific constituencies or wards for Milton Keynes.

Secondly, the Learning and Skills Council in the South East has decided, on a regional basis, to continue to support Prince's Trust activity via a conduit college; in this case, Milton Keynes College. The College occupies an important place in this process and acts as the 'conduit college' to enable other non-FE providers to undertake Prince's Trust activities.

The South East, as an LSC region, has committed to continue to fund Prince's Trust activity within the region for the coming year. This academic year (2005/06) the budget allocated for the South East region is £1.3 million.

Milton Keynes College is the conduit college for Prince's Trust Volunteers funding within the South East region. Funding is channelled through the college out to 12 partner deliverers of Prince's Trust programmes across the 6 South East LSC areas. Target learners are 16–25 and from groups, such as disaffected, care leavers, drug abusers, ex-offenders, etc. They follow the Prince's Trust Team Programme through which they aim to achieve the customised City & Guilds Profile of Achievement. In the period August 01 to Dec 04, 1,687 learners participated in programmes in the southeast. Milton Keynes College record learners as part of the college's Individual Learner Record and Prince's Trust activity is included within the college Final Claim and Audit

For 2004/05 the amount spent on Prince's Trust activities by the team within Milton Keynes College operating within the Milton Keynes area totalled £63,515.70. The amount projected by the College for 2005/06 is £109,112.75.

In 2004/05 the schemes benefited 15 learners under the age of nineteen and 10 learners over the age of nineteen.

In 2005/06, it is anticipated that the schemes will benefit 18 under nineteen-year-olds and .18 learners over the age of nineteen.

From these figures there would not appear to be an adverse impact on the learner numbers for either age group.

I trust this is helpful.

Education Funding

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the percentage change in funding to *(a)* schools, *(b)* further education colleges and *(c)* universities has been since 1997; and what the change in (i) the numbers of students and (ii) academic results was over that period. [39917]

Bill Rammell: School funding (including school sixth forms) has increased by 62 per cent. in real terms from £24.2 billion in 1997–98 to £39.2 billion in 2005–06.

Since 1997 Government funding for further education colleges has increased by around £2.5 billion—equivalent to around 48 per cent. in real terms.

We do not hold detailed figures for universities. However, funding for Higher Education as a whole rose from £7.2 billion in 1997–98 to a planned level of £7.8 billion in 2005–06, a real terms increase of 11 per cent.

The number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) pupils in maintained schools was 7,506,910 in January 2005. This is 67,150 higher than in 1997.

16–18 full time numbers in Further Education have increased by over 59,000 to 557,000 between 1997/98 and 2004/05. Total Higher Education students in England rose from 1,465,800 to 1,755,400.

The number of pupils achieving 5 or more A*—C grades at GCSE and equivalent nationally has risen from 45.1 per cent. in 1997 to 55.7 per cent. (provisional) in 2005. The percentage of 11-year-olds achieving the target level for their age (level 4) has increased from 63 per cent. in 1997 to 79 per cent. in 2005 in English and from 62 per cent. to 79 per cent. in mathematics.

Further Education has seen an increase in average student success rates from 53 per cent. to 72 per cent. between 1997/98 and 2004/05. Over the same period, the proportion of newly qualified graduates who obtained a first or upper second class degree rose from 50 per cent. to 55 per cent.

Higher Education

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students are in higher education in 2005/06. [39607]

Bill Rammell: The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) collects data annually in the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey (HESES) which gives a first indication of student numbers each year. The data for 2005–06 has been collected from institutions by HEFCE but has not been fully validated. We would expect to have the final data, verified by institutions, by end January.

For the academic year 2004/05, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record shows that there were 2,157,155 students enrolled on HE courses at UK HE institutions.[1]

[1] Figures are on a DfES whole year count basis and exclude the University of Buckingham, a private institution who returned data to HESA for the first time in 2004/05.

Higher Education

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many United Kingdom nationals entered higher education at institutions based in England in the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [38002]

Bill Rammell: The available information is given in the table.

Full time undergraduate entrants to English HE institutions who are UK Nationals[1], 2000/01 to 2004/05

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Total entrants	302,655	318,335	335,475	342,230	346,225
Total entrants (of known nationality)	215,210	213,140	301,785	312,895	320,185
Percentage of whose nationality is not known[2]	29	33	10	9	8
Total, of knowns, who are UK nationals	183,130	179,770	248,050	255,625	258,745
Percentage of knowns, who are UK nationals	85	84	82	82	81

[1] Information on nationality is not compulsory on the HESA dataset. Coverage is better for full time students.

[2] Not known includes those recorded as missing or not known.

Note:

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and are on a DfES whole year count basis.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record

Prince's Trust

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment she has made of the effects of prioritising 14 to 19 education on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes in *(a)* Greater Manchester and *(b)* London.; [24574]

(2) what recent representations she has received on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes by Learning and Skills Councils; and if she will make a statement. [24575]

Bill Rammell: We recognise the work of the Prince's Trust, particularly through their team programme, in helping hard to reach young people back into learning. We acknowledge that the Trust have had some difficulties getting funding to support this programme. However, the LSC has indicated that more than £11 million will be available to support the programme in 2005/06. The LSC has set up a taskforce to allow the Prince's Trust to continue to deliver this programme. The taskforce will be looking at how the programme can be nationally accredited as well as the future planning, quality and funding arrangements to ensure sustainability. I have already met with the Prince's Trust to discuss these issues and will be meeting with them and the LSC to discuss progress shortly. We have not had any representations from Learning and Skills Councils regarding this. As the allocation of funding in local areas relates to the LSC's operational responsibilities, Mark Haysom the LSC's Chief Executive has written to the hon. Member with the information requested for Greater Manchester and London. A copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 December 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

Firstly, you asked what representations she has received on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes by Learning and Skills Councils (LSC). The LSC has been working with the Trust for many years, supporting and funding the Team Programme through our local offices and colleges. As you may be aware, the LSC's funding priorities are decided at regional and local level, and the total amount of funding for the Team Programme therefore varies from region to region. The discussions between the LSC and our providers and the Prince's Trust are currently ongoing, with support already identified and finalised for this funding year in the majority of LSC regions. Across the LSC our funding support for this academic year will total approximately £11 million, which I hope demonstrates our ongoing commitment to the Team Programme.

We are working closely with The Prince's Trust to establish the contribution of the programme towards LSC priorities and to identify additional sources of funding, outside of the LSC. We have also created a task force between the LSC and the Prince's Trust who are working together to establish how our joint planning cycles can support this aim. Our shared ambition is for a secure future for the Team Programme that is not dependent on a single LSC funding source.

In your further question to the Secretary of State you asked what assessment she has made of the effects of prioritising 14 to 19 education on the funding of Prince's Trust schemes in Greater Manchester. LSC Funding is currently channelled through a lead college out to other partners delivering Prince's Trust programmes across the LSC areas in the region. Each learner joins the Prince's Trust Team Programme through which they aim to achieve the customised City & Guilds Profile of Achievement.

The LSC in Greater Manchester currently spends approximately £265m on provision for young people, much of which supports learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our commitment to this group of learners remains a key priority for the LSC both locally and nationally. The Prince's Trust provision is one of the many routes we are supporting for young people, and the LSC has to make some difficult funding decisions this year in order to balance a range of priorities for the area. This has therefore affected the level of funding support available to the Prince's Trust provision.

However, the funding earmarked for Prince's Trust in Greater Manchester for this year will total at least £750,000, a considerable investment in the Team Programme. I understand my colleagues in the local office are working with key partners and providers to identify potential further funding to support this provision. We are also working closely with the Prince's Trust locally and nationally to ensure that we plan together effectively to meet our shared priorities.

Trust this is helpful.

University Students

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of students at university in England came from countries outside the European Union in each of the last 10 years. [39782]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table.

Proportion of enrolments at English HE institutions by non-EU overseas domiciles[1]

Academic year	*Percentage*
1995/96	6.1
1996/97	6.0
1997/98	6.3
1998/99	6.2
1999/2000	6.5
2000/01	6.9
2001/02	7.4
2002/03	8.5
2003/04	9.2
2004/05 (including the 10 EU accession countries)	9.6
2004/05 (excluding the 10 EU accession countries)	9.1

[1] For 2003/04 and earlier, the 10 EU accession countries are included as non-EU overseas domiciles. For 2004/05 they are classed as EU domiciles. To allow comparisons, proportions for 2004/05 have been given both including and excluding these students.

Note:
Percentages are based upon figures calculated on a snapshot basis as at the 1 December to maintain a consistent time series across all years.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

DEFENCE

Anthrax Vaccinations

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many anthrax vaccinations are held by his Department; how much those anthrax vaccinations cost; what the stated shelf-life is of such vaccinations; what assessment has been made by his Department of whether the vaccinations remain viable throughout their stated shelf-life; which company provides these vaccinations; and if he will make a statement. [31423]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 24 November 2005]*: The Health Protection Agency (previously titled the Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research), currently manufactures and supplies the Ministry of Defence (MOD) with Anthrax vaccine. Stability trials are the responsibility of the Department of Health (as the licence holder) and the manufacturer. These are performed in compliance with current regulatory requirements. The licensed shelf-life has recently been extended by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency from two to three years. The MOD holds sufficient doses of Anthrax vaccine to meet its projected requirements; the precise numbers held cannot be released as this would be prejudicial to defence activities. The total spend last year was £4.2 million.

Chemical Defence Establishment

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2347W, if on the occasion of their visits in January and March 1992 the Ministry of Defence employees met Walter Basson. [39884]

Mr. Ingram: I presume that as with previous questions my hon. Friend has asked, this question refers to Dr. Walter Basson. During their passage through South Africa in January and March 1992 the Ministry of Defence employees, from what was then the Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down were not knowingly introduced to anyone named Walter Basson.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each arm of the armed forces including support staff and *(c)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which his Department is responsible, statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department are located in (A) Scotland, (B) England, excluding Greater London, (C) Greater London, (D) Wales, (E) Northern Ireland and (F) overseas. [39806]

Mr. Touhig: Available information is given in the following tables:

UK regular service personnel by service and United Kingdom country, London and overseas, at 1 October 2005

Service	Total	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Centrally administered	Overseas	Unknown
Royal navy	32,050	27,380	480	40	2,950	20	230	930	20
Royal marines	7,370	5,960	70	0	1,170	10	20	140	10
Army	108,210	67,140	4,930	1,540	2,770	5,600	1,030	25,190	20
RAF	50,010	37,580	1,530	1,200	6,040	970	180	2,480	40
Total	197,640	138,120	7,010	2,770	12,920	6,590	1,470	28,740	90

Source:
DASA (Tri Service)

Percentage

Service	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Centrally administered	Overseas	Unknown
Royal Navy	85.4	1.5	0.1	9.2	0.1	0.7	2.9	0.1
Royal Marines	80.9	0.9	0.0	15.9	0.1	0.3	1.9	0.1
Army	62.0	4.6	1.4	2.6	5.2	1.0	23.3	0.0
RAF	75.1	3.1	2.4	12.1	1.9	0.4	5.0	0.1
Total	69.9	3.5	1.4	6.5	3.3	0.7	14.5	0.0

Notes:

1. Due to the rounding methods used, figures may not always equal the sum of the parts. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest 20 to prevent systematic bias.

2. The detailed figures above have been compiled from unit statistics related to unit postcodes. For some units postcode information is either unavailable or inappropriate.

3. Figures are for UK regular forces, both trained and untrained, located in the UK and overseas. They therefore exclude Gurkhas, full time reserve service personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists. Location statistics are not available for FTRS, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and Mobilised Reservists.

Source:
DASA (Tri-Service)

Civilian personnel[1] in UK defence agencies and MOD-owned trading funds by country, at 1 October 2005

Number : FTE

	Total	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Overseas	Unknown
Total agencies and trading funds agencies	44,690	34,430	2,520	2,560	3,120	370	1,440	260
Armed forces personnel administration agency	210	170	—	—	30	—	[2]	—
Army training and recruitment agency	3,940	3,670	40	140	60	10	[2]	[2]
British forces post office	300	70	220	—	10	—	[2]	[2]

Civilian personnel[1] in UK defence agencies and MOD-owned trading funds by country, at 1 October 2005

Number : FTE

	Total	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Overseas	Unknown
Defence analytical services agency	200	130	70	—	—	—	—	—
Defence bills agency	570	560	—	—	—	—	—	10
Defence communications service agency	3,590	2,990	320	20	110	10	130	20
Defence estates	2,830	1,960	190	40	210	290	130	10
Defence medical and education training agency	600	500	90	—	—	—	—	[2]
Defence procurement agency	3,960	3,590	90	10	110	10	120	20
Defence storage and distribution agency	4,270	3,370	[2]	210	660	—	10	10
Defence transport and movements agency	340	260	60	—	20	—	[2]	[2]
Defence vetting agency	320	310	[2]	—	—	—	—	—
Disposal services agency	100	40	60	—	[2]	—	—	—
Duke of York's Royal Military School	120	120	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ministry of defence police and guarding agency	7,510	5,300	670	200	1,330	[2]	[2]	[2]
Naval recruiting and training agency	770	650	10	80	10	20	[2]	[2]
Pay and personnel agency	800	800	[2]	—	—	—	[2]	[2]
RAF training group defence agency	2,130	1,960	20	100	50	[2]	[2]	[2]
Service children's education	1,000	10	—	—	—	—	990	[2]
Veterans' agency	790	750	10	10	10	10	[2]	—
Trading funds								
Army base repair organisation	1,600	1,500	—	10	90	—	—	—
Defence aviation repair agency	2,840	830	—	1,710	280	—	—	20
Defence science and technology laboratories	3,220	2,420	640	—	—	—	[2]	150
Meteorological office	1,740	1,520	20	30	120	20	30	[2]
UK hydrographic office	950	950	—	—	[2]	—	—	—
MOD total excluding agencies and trading funds	43,800	29,640	4,520	770	3,900	3,020	1,040	830
Locally engaged civilian staff	15,410	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Royal fleet auxiliary (RFA) staff	2,370	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Civilian level 0 total	106,270	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]

[1] This table uses the revised definition of civilian personnel (see www.dasa.mod.uk).
[2] Denotes less than 5.
[3] Denotes unavailable.

Note:
Data are drawn from personnel records and the Resource Accounting and Budgeting System.

Source:
DASA (Civilian)

Civilian personnel[1] in UK defence agencies and MOD-owned trading funds by country, at 1 October 2005

Percentage

	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Overseas	Unknown
Total agencies and trading funds agencies	84	—	—	15	—	[2]	—
Armed forces personnel administration agency	93	1	3	2	[2]	[2]	[2]
Army training and recruitment agency	24	73	—	3	—	[2]	[2]
British forces post office	65	35	—	—	—	—	—
Defence analytical services agency	98	—	—	—	—	—	2
Defence bills agency	83	9	1	3	0	4	1
Defence communications service agency	69	7	1	7	10	5	0
Defence estates	84	16	—	—	—	—	0
Defence medical and education training agency	91	2	[2]	3	0	3	1
Defence procurement agency	79	[2]	5	16	—	[2]	[2]
Defence storage and distribution agency	77	17	—	6	—	[2]	[2]
Defence transport and movements agency	100	[2]	—	—	—	—	—
Defence vetting agency	35	61	—	4	—	—	—
Disposal services agency	100	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duke of York's Royal Military School	71	9	3	18	[2]	[2]	[2]
Ministry of Defence police and guarding agency	85	1	10	2	2	[2]	[2]
Naval recruiting and training agency	100	[2]	—	—	—	[2]	[2]
Pay and personnel agency	92	1	5	2	0	[2]	[2]
RAF training group defence agency							

Civilian personnel[1] in UK defence agencies and MOD-owned trading funds by country, at 1 October 2005

Percentage

	England (excluding London)	London	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Overseas	Unknown
Service children's education veterans' agency	1	—	—	—	—	99	[2] —
Trading funds							
Army base repair organisation	94	—	1	6	—	—	—
Defence aviation repair agency	29	—	60	10	—	—	1
Defence science and technology laboratories	75	20	—	—	—	[2] —	5
Meteorological office	87	1	2	7	1	2	[2] —
UK hydrographic office	100	—	—	—	—	—	—
MOD total excluding agencies and trading funds	68	11	2	9	7	2	2
Locally engaged civilian staff	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —
Royal fleet auxiliary (RFA) staff	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —
Civilian level 0 total	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —	[3] —

[1] This table uses the revised definition of civilian personnel (see www.dasa.mod.uk).
[2] Denotes less than 5.
[3] Denotes unavailable.
Note:
Data are drawn from personnel records and the Resource Accounting and Budgeting System.
Source:
DASA(Civilian)

Civilian personnel in non departmental public bodies (NDPB) by country, at 1 April 2005

Number: headcount

		England (excluding London)		London					
	Total	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Overseas	Unknown
Total Non Departmental Public Bodies	400	200	50	200	50	—	—	—	—	—
National army museum	90	[1] —	5	80	95	—	—	—	—	—
RAF museum	170	50	29	120	71	—	—	—	—	—
Royal naval museum	30	30	100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Royal navy submarine museum	20	20	100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Royal marines museum	30	30	100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fleet air arm museum	60	60	100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Denotes less than 5
Notes:
1. This table uses data from the Cabinet Office Public Bodies website and includes full and part-time staff.
2. The figures in this table are rounded separately so the rounded totals may not be the sum of the rounded values.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will indicate, including a breakdown for the English regions, and by arm of armed service, how many of those in the armed services *(a)* based and *(b)* stationed in each English region are deployed elsewhere on (i) active duty and (ii) training, broken down by service; and where they are deployed in each case. [39807]

Mr. Ingram: Location statistics may be compiled based on posted location or deployed location. Posted location is where an individual is permanently based. Deployed location is where an individual is physically located at a particular point in time and is typically used for short tours of duty.

Available information on the posted location of service personnel is shown in the table:

UK regular forces posted in United Kingdom, by Government office region: at 1 October 2005

	Service				
England	Royal Navy	Royal Marines	Army	RAF	Total
North East	20	20	740	790	1,560
North West	30	20	1,190	220	1,470
East Midlands	300	—	1,530	7,310	9,140
West Midlands	200	10	3,760	2,460	6,420
Yorkshire and the Humber	20	100	11,350	2,070	13,540
East of England	780	70	8,700	9,220	18,760
London	480	70	4,930	1,530	7,010
South East	12,520	470	23,550	10,100	46,640
South West	13,520	5,270	16,320	5,400	40,510
Wales	40	—	1,540	1,200	2,770
Scotland	2,950	1,170	2,770	6,040	12,920
Northern Ireland	20	10	5,600	970	6,590
Grand total	30,870	7,200	81,990	47,350	167,410

Notes:
1. Due to the rounding methods used, figures may not always equal the sum of the parts. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest 20 to prevent systematic bias.
2. The detailed figures above have been compiled from unit statistics related to unit postcodes. For some units postcode information is either unavailable or inappropriate.
3. Figures are for UK regular forces, both trained and untrained, located in the UK. They therefore exclude Gurkhas, full-time reserve service personnel, the home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists. Location statistics are not available for FTRS, the home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists.
4. Figures do not include 90 personnel who have no location indicator, or 1,470 who are centrally administered.

Source:
DASA (Tri Service)

Deployment information for service personnel posted to specific regions is not held centrally.

The strength by posted location for UK regular armed forces is published quarterly in Tri-Service Publication (TSP) 10, copies of which are held in the House of Commons Library.

Far Eastern Civilian Prisoners of War Compensation Scheme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ensure that the review of the far eastern civilian prisoners of war compensation scheme announced on 12 December considers whether the bloodlink criterion amounts to racial discrimination. [39437]

Mr. Touhig: The "birthlink" criterion is used to determine eligibility for the civilian element of the ex-gratia payment scheme for former far east prisoners of war and civilian internees; it is based on the place of birth (in the UK) of the individual or one of his or her parents or grandparents and not on a specific racial or "bloodlink" criterion. The question of whether use of this criterion resulted in racial discrimination is currently the subject of appeals by both the Secretary of State and the claimant (Mrs. D Elias) against a High Court decision on a case brought by a former civilian internee. The outcome of the legal proceedings will determine whether use of the criterion amounts to racial discrimination. The review that I outlined in my statement on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1119, will examine whether consistent eligibility criteria were used to determine eligibility for civilian internees; it will not address whether the scheme was discriminatory. The Department has accepted, however, that it should have reviewed the operation of the scheme under the terms of section 71 (1) of the Race Relations Act 1976; we are currently considering the appropriate timescale for undertaking this review but do not consider that it could sensibly be completed until the legal proceedings referred to above have been completed.

Helicopters

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* Merlin, *(b)* Lynx and *(c)* Sea King helicopters operated by the Royal Navy are held in attrition reserve; and for what reasons they are held. [39177]

Mr. Ingram: Attrition reserve aircraft are held to allow the required fleet size to be maintained throughout the service-life of the platform. This policy is designed to avoid the prohibitive costs that would be incurred if orders for single aircraft were to be made after the main production run was complete. Once a platform enters Service, fleet sizes may be changed and thus the numbers of aircraft classified as "attrition reserve" may also change.

There are currently five Merlin, one Sea King and no Lynx helicopters held in attrition reserve. In addition to the one Sea King representing attrition reserve, there are 34 aircraft in storage which are provisionally allotted for disposal. Until the disposal point is reached these are also available for recovery if required.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the contract for the F35 joint strike fighter includes all the accompanying software, with particular reference to faults analysis software. [40924]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom is a level 1 partner in the F35 Joint Strike Fighter programme and UK requirements are embedded in the contract. This includes all the software required to operate and maintain the aircraft, perform diagnostics and analyse faults.

Military Establishments (Incidents)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures he has taken to ensure that guidance on police primacy in investigating serious incidents at military establishments is circulated outside the police community. [26304]

Mr. Ingram: Guidance on 'The Reporting and Investigation of Crime and Other Disciplinary Offences in the Ministry of Defence, Armed Forces and Defence Estates in the United Kingdom' is contained within Defence Council Instruction (DCI) General 117/03.

The DCI, which is widely available in the MOD outside the police community, gives comprehensive and clear guidance to Commanding Officers/Heads of Establishment, the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP), the Service Police and others on police primacy and jurisdiction of all offences committed on and off military establishments.

The MDP also has a Protocol with the Home Department Police Forces (HDPF) which covers, among other things, primacy of investigations. This protocol is currently being renegotiated to include the Service Police.

These documents have been supplemented by a further protocol between my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence and the Association of Chief Police Officers, which reinforces the fact that primacy for investigating all deaths (and serious injury likely to prove fatal) of any person occurring on or in military establishments in the UK rest with the Chief Officer of the HDPF under whose jurisdiction the incident occurs.

Guidance has also been drafted which provides advice to non-police Service personnel regarding the action to be taken on discovering a serious incident. This guidance provides specific advice regarding crime-scene preservation and the reporting of incidents to the relevant police agencies that have primacy for dealing with the matter. This advice is currently in the final stages of the staffing process and will be disseminated widely in the very near future.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent in each year from 1 May 1997 on ministerial travel, broken down by *(a)* provision and running costs of vehicular transport, *(b)* first class travel by rail, *(c)* standard class travel by rail, *(d)* first class travel by air, *(e)* club or equivalent class travel by air and *(f)* economy class travel by air. [27662]

Mr. Touhig: All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Within the Ministry of Defence, the ministerial car for the Secretary of State is provided by the Government Car and Despatch Service and all other ministerial cars are provided internally.

For Ministerial cars provided by the Government Car and Despatch Service, my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) has asked Roy Burke, Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) to write to the hon. Member with details of the costs of ministerial vehicles provided to Departments in 2004–05. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

For information for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04, I refer the hon. Member to the letters from the chief executive of the GCDA to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) of 10 January 2005 and to the then hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs (Howard Flight) of 13 September 2003. Copies of these letters are available in the Library of the House.

For ministerial cars provided internally by the Ministry of Defence, the aggregate direct costs for each year since 1997 are as follows:

	£
1997–98	135,000
1998–99	138,000
1999–2000	138,000
2000–01	138,000
2001–02	144,000
2002–03	146,000
2003–04	142,000
2004–05	142,000

It should be noted that the costs relate to the total expenditure incurred for each vehicle and include some costs incurred while supporting departmental staff other than Ministers. It is not practicable to break out the details, and they could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

For overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas, costing £500 or more during each financial year, undertaken by Cabinet Ministers. The Government have also published annually the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Library of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995–96 to 2004–05. Information for 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

Information about other ministerial travel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Troop Deployments

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK troops he expects to be based in Northern Ireland at the end of 2006. [40316]

Mr. Ingram: As at the 30 November 2005 there were some 9,500 armed forces personnel (Navy, Army and RAF) stationed in Northern Ireland. I expect this number to reduce during 2006 as the armed forces move towards the permanent military garrison of no more than 5,000 by 1 August 2007, envisaged in the revised Annex to the Joint Declaration published by the Government last year. A structured plan for the reduction will be published by 31 March 2006.

RAF Aircraft

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the original in-service date was of *(a)* the Eurofighter Typhoon, *(b)* the Joint Strike Fighter and *(c)* the Nimrod MRA4; and what the current estimated in-service date is. [40403]

Mr. Ingram: The original estimated in-service date and the current estimated in-service date (MPR 2005) are:

	Original estimated in-service date	*Current estimated in-service date*
Nimrod MRA4	December 2000	The in-service date for this project will not be set until the Main Gate approval for Production.
Eurofighter Typhoon	December 1998	June 2003 (achieved)
Joint Strike Fighter	December 20 12 (planning assumption only)	The in-service date for this project will not be set until the Main Gate approval for Production.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the original cost was of the *(a)* Nimrod MRA4, *(b)* Eurofighter Typhoon and *(c)* Joint Strike Fighter; and what the current estimated cost is in each case. [40404]

Mr. Ingram: The original cost and the current estimated cost (MPR 2005) are:

£ billion

	Original cost	*Current estimated cost*
Nimrod MRA4	2.8	3.8
Eurofighter Typhoon	16.7	—
Joint Strike Fighter (demonstration phase only)	2.2	1.9

The current estimated cost of Typhoon is not included as it is commercially sensitive.

Service Quarters

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many married quarters are available to each of the armed forces in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* each of the English regions and *(d)* Northern Ireland, broken down by location; how many are occupied by families; how many are subject to demolition; how many are to be disposed of on the private market; how many have been disposed of on the private market in each year since 7 May 1997; what the sale price for each was (i) at the time of sale and (ii) at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (A) retained by his Department and (B) claimed by the Treasury. [40131]

Mr. Touhig: As at December 2005 the number of available service families accommodation (SFA) in Great Britain was some 52,000. These are allocated on a tri-service basis and not by single service arrangements. The following self explanatory table provides as much of the information requested as is available.

The majority of the SFA in England and Wales was sold to Annington Homes Ltd. (AHL) under the terms of the November 1996 sale agreement and are leased back from AHL, for use by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Properties owned by AHL, for which the Department has no long-term service requirement, are released to AHL who then make a commercial judgment (in which the Department has no involvement) as to the disposal route. Housing stock for Scotland and Northern Ireland remains in MOD ownership.

The number of SFA disposed of on the private market in each year since 7 May 1997 is not held centrally and to collate such detail would incur disproportionate cost. The sale price for individual houses, or groups of houses remains commercially confidential.

Since May 1997, around 13,000 properties have been released back to AHL. A profit share agreement is currently in place as part of the AHL sale agreement, which allows Government participation in any profit AHL may make over certain agreed levels. Since 1996, £126 million has been paid to HM Treasury under this arrangement.

In terms of the disposal of properties remaining in MOD ownership this often forms part of larger disposals and it is thus not possible to identify separately the sums received for individual properties.

Areas of service housing

	Counties covered	*Available stock*	*Number occupied by service families*	*Properties identified for possible demolition*	*Being considered for future disposal on the open market*	*For return, or possible future return to Anningtons*
Scotland	All of Scotland	3,795	2,859	0	282	[1]
West (includes Wales)	Glos, Midlands, West of England, and Wales	4,073	3,105	0	11	300
Anglia	Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs, Beds.	5,703	4,510	1	0	788
Central	Bucks, Berks, Oxon, and parts of Wilts	5,635	4,703	0	26	59
London	Within the M25, including part of Berks and part of Surrey	3,659	2,838	0	5	223
North	Lincs, Yorks, East and NW of England	7,159	5,773	8	25	161
South	Hants, Surrey, Wilts, and parts of Berks	9,545	7,851	0	0	58
South East	Sussex, Kent, parts of Hants and Dorset	4,417	3,536	0	56	129
South West	Devon, Cornwall, Dorset including parts of Wilts	5,121	4,493	0	0	82
Northern Ireland[2]	Numerous sites	2,828	2,108	0	383	0

[1] Not applicable in Scotland.
[2] 90 houses at Ballykelly have recently been disposed of by auction.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Car and Despatch Agency

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the running costs of the Government Car and Despatch Agency were in each of the past five years. [39655]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its chief executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Press Complaints Commission

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the occasions since 1997 when the Government has referred a matter to the Press Complaints Commission. [40434]

Mr. Jim Murphy: This is a matter for individual departments. The information requested is not held centrally.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

African Union Summit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the African Union (AU) regarding cancellation of the extraordinary summit of the AU scheduled for January 2006 in Khartoum. [40419]

Ian Pearson: My noble Lord the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, is in regular contact with the African Union (AU) about a wide range of issues, and most recently met with senior AU officials during a visit to Addis Ababa on 17 December. It is for the AU to decide whether and where to hold its Assemblies of Heads of State and Government, the next ordinary session of which is scheduled for Khartoum, in late January.

British Overseas Territories

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the elected governing authorities of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar, *(f)* Saint Helena *(g)* Anguilla, *(h)* Montserrat, *(i)* Bermuda, *(j)* the British Virgin Islands, *(k)* the Turks and Caicos Islands and *(l)* the Cayman Islands about their domestic monetary and fiscal policies since 1997. [39221]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man, are dependencies of the Crown. The Department for Constitutional Affairs is the formal point of communication between the UK and the Island Authorities. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made no representations to the Government of Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man about their domestic monetary and fiscal policies since 1997.

Under their respective constitutions, the United Kingdom has for the most part devolved responsibility for domestic monetary and fiscal policies to the Overseas Territories (OT) Governments of Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Saint Helena, Anguilla, Montserrat, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the Cayman Islands. Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers and officials are in frequent and regular dialogue with OT Government Ministers and officials on a broad range of issues, including matters related to monetary and fiscal policy. However, in the case of Gibraltar, some parts of the EC Treaty apply to Gibraltar by virtue of Article 299(4) of that Treaty, and therefore the Government of Gibraltar (GoG) has an obligation to transpose EU legislation in domestic law including in financial areas, where appropriate. The Government liases with GoG to help them undertake this transposition. But policy remains in the hands of GoG.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what powers of representation in international bodies he has in relation to the domestic monetary and fiscal policies of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar, *(f)* Saint Helena *(g)* Anguilla, *(h)* Montserrat, *(i)* Bermuda, *(j)* the British Virgin Islands, *(k)* the Turks and Caicos Islands and *(l)* the Cayman Islands. [39222]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Under their respective constitutions, the Governments of the Crown Dependencies (CDs) have competence for domestic monetary and fiscal policies, as do, for the most part, the Governments of the Overseas Territories (OTs). However, the UK is responsible for the international relations of the CDs and the OTs. As far as possible, we encourage OT and CD Governments to participate as part of the UK delegation at relevant international meetings. Where appropriate, OTs and CDs may attend international meetings in their own right. The OTs and CDs are not members of the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as they are not independent countries, and so do not attend World Bank or IMF meetings. In the case of Gibraltar, which is a part of the European Community, it is the responsibility of the UK to represent Gibraltar's interests there.

Departmental Advice

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent advice he has received from Mockbul Ali, departmental Islamic issues adviser, on *(a)* the Muslim Brotherhood and *(b)* Jamaal-e-Islami; and if he will make a statement. [39637]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Islamic issues adviser is a position based in the FCO's Engaging with the Islamic World Group and contributes to the work of that group accordingly. With respect to advice given by the group, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs (Paul Goggins) on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2654W.

Egypt

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the government of Egypt on the use of torture of prisoners. [40555]

Dr. Howells: We regularly discuss human rights issues with the Egyptian government, most recently on 22 December. The last time the issue of torture was specifically raised was in April 2005.

Eritrea

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government have made direct representation to the Eritrean President, Isaias Afewerki, concerning the the decision to expel UN peacekeepers. [40647]

Ian Pearson: We have not talked to the President of Eritrea directly. However, my noble Friend the Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, summoned the Eritrean ambassador on 9 December to make clear the EU's concern about Eritrea's decision to expel monitors of certain nationalities serving with the UN Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea. We also supported a UN Security Council Presidential Statement, which declared that the Eritrean action was unacceptable and demanded its immediate and unequivocal reversal without preconditions. To date, the President of Eritrea, Isaias Afewerki, has declined to meet representatives of the international community including the UK to discuss this issue.

Ethiopia

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will condemn the ongoing human rights violations in Ethiopia; if he will take and take *(a)* economic and *(b)* diplomatic action to press the Government of Ethiopia to (i) release immediately opposition party leaders, supporters and journalists, (ii) cease the killing, arrest and intimidation of political opponents, (iii) accept an independent investigation into the June and November killings of civilians and (iv) start immediately the political process to resolve the issues regarding the May election. [39241]

Ian Pearson: We continue to monitor the human rights situation and have expressed our concerns to the Ethiopian Government. We condemned the tragic loss of life of both civilians and members of the security forces in the civil unrest of June and November. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, raised our concerns about the current political crisis and the aftermath of the elections with Prime Minister Meles, during his visit to Ethiopia on 17 December.

We continue to work with the Government of Ethiopia and other stakeholders for progress on human rights and governance issues. Along with our EU and US partners, we have called for the release of all political detainees, including opposition leaders and for those individuals not charged under due process to be released immediately. We have also called for full access to those detained for their families, legal counsel and representatives of the International Community of the Red Cross or other appropriate representatives of the international community.

Prime Minister Meles has, through Parliament, established a Commission of Inquiry into the unrest. We continue to urge the Government of Ethiopia to engage in dialogue with opposition political parties and other stakeholders to resolve the crisis that followed the May 15 election.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received regarding *(a)* violence and *(b)* mass detentions in Ethiopia. [40587]

Ian Pearson: Since 1 November to date, our records show that we have received 10 written Parliamentary Questions, and 41 letters from Members of Parliament, including those from Members of the European Parliament, and 12 letters and seven emails from members of the public.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Joint Committee (EC-Laos), *(b)* MED Committee (Financial and technical cooperation between the Community and Mediterranean non-member countries) and *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-Paraguay) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39045]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Two meetings of the MED Committee have taken place during the UK presidency, on 13 July and 14 September 2005. As EU presidency the UK presided over the meeting. The UK was represented by officials from the Department for International Development. The EC Paraguay Joint Committee met on 14 November 2005. The UK presidency was represented by the local Italian presidency. There have been no meetings of the EC Laos Joint Committee.

The Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government), a copy of which is available at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

Far-Filastin Jail (Damascus)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the evidence of the alleged use of torture in the Far-Filastin jail in Damascus; when this assessment was last revised; and if he will make a statement. [34344]

Dr. Howells: We have not made an assessment of the evidence of the alleged use of torture in the Far Filastin prison.

We have a number of serious concerns about Syria's human rights record, in particular the continued practices of torture, arbitrary arrests, unfair trials and the detention of political prisoners which run contrary to international human rights norms. We regularly raise our concerns about Syria's human rights record, both bilaterally and through the European Union.

Guatemala

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his Guatemalan counterpart about the status and treatment of Guatemalan women. [40819]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not recently discussed the status and treatment of Guatemalan women with his Guatemalan counter-part. However, the UK holds regular discussions on human rights, including women's rights and violence against women, with the Guatemalan authorities.

On 7 October 2005, officials from the British embassy in Guatemala met a representative from the human rights prosecutor's office of the Guatemalan public prosecutor's office to discuss, in particular, the recent rise in violent acts against women in Guatemala. A representative from Guatemala's network for the prevention of violence against women was also present.

Interest Rates

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how often he has received representations from the elected governing authorities of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar and *(f)* Saint Helena about interest rates set by the Bank of England since 1997. [39220]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man, are dependencies of the Crown. The Department for Constitutional Affairs is the formal point of communication between the UK and the island authorities. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has received no representations from the Government of Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man about interest rates set by the Bank of England since 1997.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), as appropriate in conjunction with the Department for International Development (DfID), takes lead responsibility for the Government on issues pertaining to the UK Overseas Territories (OTs). FCO, and where appropriate DfID, Ministers and officials are in frequent and regular dialogue with OT Government Ministers and officials on a broad range of issues. We have no records of my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary receiving representations from the Government of the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, or Saint Helena about interest rates set by the Bank of England since May 1997.

Iran

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of statements by the President of Iran denying the Holocaust. [40552]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has condemned unreservedly the comments in which President Ahmadinejad denied the existence of the Holocaust. He has called the President's remarks wholly unacceptable, and said they have no place in civilised debate. President Ahmadinejad's remarks were also condemned by the United Nations Security Council and by European Union Heads of Government, with our full support.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals the Government have put to the International Atomic Energy Agency concerning Iran's nuclear power programme; and if he will make a statement. [40378]

Dr. Howells: The E3/EU and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) want Iran to take steps that will build international confidence that its nuclear programme is for solely peaceful purposes and to address in full the requests of the IAEA Board of Governors. The IAEA has not been a party to discussions between the E3/EU and Iran, which are political rather than technical in nature, but are kept fully informed of developments and proposals. We welcome the IAEA's work in monitoring Iran's implementation of its Safeguards Agreement.

Israel's Security Wall

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on Israel's security wall; and what assessment he has made of the effect the wall will have on *(a)* communities living near the wall and *(b)* the future for peace between Palestine and Israel. [39876]

Dr. Howells: We remain very concerned with the current routing of the barrier on occupied land, which is contrary to international law and we have communicated our concerns clearly to the Israelis. We recognise Israel's right to self defence against terrorism and a barrier is a reasonable way to do this, as long as it is on or behind the Green Line and has a minimal effect on the communities living in close proximity to it.

We believe that the full implementation of the Roadmap by both Parties is the best way to achieve peace in the region.

Mohammed Haydar Zammar

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations *(a)* he, *(b)* his Department and *(c)* other members and representatives of the UK Government have received during the UK's presidency of the EU about the (i) whereabouts and (ii) (A) the grounds for detention of and (B) conditions of detention of Mohammed Haydar Zammar; and if he will make a statement; [34345]

Syria

(2) what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* his Department and *(c)* other Members and representatives of the UK Government have had during the UK's presidency of the EU with (i) Members and representatives of the Government of Syria and (ii) Members and representatives of the Administration of the US about

the (A) whereabouts and (B) (1) grounds for detention and (2) conditions of the detention of Mohammed Haydar Zammar; and if he will make a statement. [34346]

Dr. Howells: No representations have been received or discussions had by the Government or by officials during the UK's presidency of the European Union in relation to the case of Mohammed Haydar Zammer.

Small Arms

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the UK Government are taking to control the *(a)* proliferation and *(b)* misuse of small arms around the world. [40231]

Dr. Howells: The UK is one of the most active participants in international efforts to combat the global proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). We have allocated £13.25 million to a UK SALW strategy over the period 2004–07. We are also one of the largest donors supporting the UN effort to combat the proliferation of SALW. UK funding assists UN agencies, regional organisations, governments and non-governmental organisations. Since 2004 we have supported work on strengthening controls on trade in SALW; collecting, managing and destroying weapons and ammunition; reducing demand; implementing existing regional agreements; devising national action plans and helping build the capacity of local civil society.

South Africa (Biological Materials)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the extent to which all the materials detailed in the biological materials inventory assembled by South Africa's Project Coast have been *(a)* recovered and secured by the South African Government and *(b)* destroyed in accordance with international treaty obligations; and if he will make a statement. [40632]

Dr. Howells: We have no reason to doubt that relevant biological materials assembled by South Africa's Project Coast programme have been secured, recovered and destroyed as appropriate.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan concerning its continuing detention of individuals arrested in the aftermath of the death of Dr. John Garang. [39627]

Ian Pearson: We have held several discussions with the Government of Sudan about the detention of individuals arrested in the civil disturbances that followed the death of First Vice President Dr. John Garang in a helicopter accident on 30 July. The UK and international partners held detailed discussions with the Sudanese Advisory Council for Human Rights on 1 December 2005 on this issue. We have consistently made clear that charges must be brought against anyone in detention swiftly, and that all detainees in Sudan be given prompt access to legal assistance. During this meeting the Advisory Council for Human Rights agreed to examine a number of individual cases, including those raised in the Khartoum Monitor on 30 November.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan concerning its reform of its judiciary and legal systems. [39628]

Ian Pearson: The UK makes regular representations to the Government of Sudan on the need to ensure its judicial process is fair and transparent. We also regularly raise our concerns on a number of individual cases with the Government. We are pleased that, under the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the parties have committed themselves to a comprehensive review of the Sudanese judicial system, and to guaranteeing free and fair trials for all and complying fully with international human rights treaties. The UK plans to play a leading role in supporting reform of the Sudanese justice sector. As part of our £7.2 million programme in this area, we are working to provide assistance to the National Judicial Service Commission, which is tasked with monitoring this process. We are also funding programmes through the UN Development Programme and the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture to support legal aid training and to raise awareness of human rights standards.

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the African Union force in Darfur. [40788]

Ian Pearson: The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) has established an increasingly effective presence in Darfur, and, in his most recent report on Darfur, the UN Secretary-General praises their 'commendable efforts'. AMIS now numbers some 6,885 personnel, including 1,300 African Union (AU) police officers. The UK and other international partners recently participated in a joint assessment mission with the AU to examine the effectiveness of the mission. The recommendations and conclusions of this report are due to be discussed by the AU at their Political and Security Council meeting on 12 January. We have made clear that we stand ready to help the AU implement the recommendations of this report and improve the effectiveness of the mission, most recently at the EU/AU Troika in Bamako on 2 December 2005, when the issue was raised by my noble Friend, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, the Minister for Africa.

The UK has committed £19 million funding this financial year to AMIS. This brings our total contribution to AMIS, since its inception, to almost £32 million. This money is to provide equipment, including a further 460 vehicles in addition to the original 450, as well as military and civilian policing advice, expertise and training. Some of our contribution will also fund airlift of troops into Darfur, and further troop rotation this year.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the prospect of progress being made at the Abuja peace talks. [39695]

Ian Pearson: The Darfur peace talks continue in Abuja, Nigeria, between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement. The Parties are now discussing all three key issues—Power Sharing, Wealth Sharing and Security Arrangements—concurrently. Rather faster progress has been made on wealth sharing than the other two strands. The UK provides two security experts, and a negotiations expert to assist the African Union (AU) mediation. We are urging the parties to make more rapid headway and stand ready to provide further experts to assist the AU mediators. We welcome the Chairman's announcement that the talks will now sit in permanent session. We remain firmly committed to the Abuja process, and plan to maintain a UK presence throughout the talks, in support of the mediation and the parties.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what factors underlay the decision not to add to the United Nations sanctions list members of the Sudan *(a)* government, *(b)* military and *(c)* Janjaweed who are suspected of war crimes; [39710]

(2) what discussions he has had with his counterparts at the UN about implementing sanctions against those suspected to be guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur; [39711]

(3) what discussions he has had with members of the UN Security Council on the implementation of the recommendations of the Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts in Darfur; [40491]

(4) when he expects sanctions and penalties to be imposed by the UN Sanctions Committee upon those individuals listed by the Panel of Experts on Darfur; and what assessment he has made of the reasons they have not yet been imposed. [40504]

Ian Pearson: The Panel of Experts established under UN Security Council Resolution 1591 presented their report and recommendations to the Sanctions Committee on 23 December. Discussions on the Panel's recommendations, and the possible imposition of sanctions on individuals, will take place in the Sanctions Committee in the coming days. We are pressing for swift action on the Panel's recommendations. We are determined to make full use of the existing sanctions, and continue to press for the arms embargo on Darfur to be extended to the whole country.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what financial and technical resources have been provided by his Department to the African Union force in Darfur to strengthen its capacity to protect civilians. [40414]

Ian Pearson: The UK has committed £19 million funding this financial year to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). This brings our total contribution to AMIS, since its inception, to almost £32 million. This money is to provide equipment, including the purchase of a further 460 vehicles in addition to our original 450, as well as military and civilian policing advice, expertise and training. Some of our contribution will also fund airlift of troops into Darfur, and further troop rotation this year. These contributions will assist the African Union in carrying out their mandate, including contributing to a more secure environment. However the primary responsibility for the protection of its own citizens lies with the Government of Sudan.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the African Union on the *(a)* enforcement of its mandate to protect civilians in Darfur and *(b)* the protection of mass graves and other forensic evidence to support the work of the International Criminal Court. [40417]

Ian Pearson: The UK and other international partners recently participated in a joint assessment mission with the African Union (AU). This concluded that the AU Mission in Sudan's (AMIS) current mandate is adequate but is not clearly understood by commanders at all levels. We will continue to press the AU to interpret its mandate flexibly and robustly in order provide the necessary degree of protection to civilians within its capabilities.

We have regularly raised this issue of mass graves and other forensic evidence directly with the AU. We understand they are continuing their investigations into the alleged discoveries of mass graves. We also continue to urge the AU to work with and support the International Criminal Court.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the African Union (AU) regarding the rules of engagement in Darfur in relation to the use of deadly force by AU troops. [40421]

Ian Pearson: The UK and other international partners recently participated in a joint assessment mission with the African Union. Their report concluded that the present draft Rules of Engagement are effective although they have not yet been formally approved for use.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the UN Security Council regarding the renewal of the mandate of the Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts in Darfur. [40492]

Ian Pearson: The United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted Resolution 1651 on 21 December which extends the mandate of the UN Panel of Experts on Darfur until 29 March 2006.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will discuss with members of the UN Security Council bringing forward a resolution calling for the Government of Sudan to *(a)* suspend from duty, investigate and prosecute Government officials suspected of human rights abuses in Darfur, *(b)* co-operate fully with the International Criminal Court Prosecutor and *(c)* stop obstructing the African Union mission. [40493]

Ian Pearson: The UN Security Council has already called for the investigation and prosecution of anyone responsible for human rights abuses and on the Government of Sudan to provide full co-operation with the African Union mission in Sudan under resolutions 1556, 1564, 1574, 1591 and 1593. Resolution 1593, which referred the situation in Darfur to the

International Criminal Court (ICC), demands that the Government of Sudan co-operate fully with the ICC investigation.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan regarding the investigation and prosecution of *(a)* government officials, *(b)* military commanders, *(c)* militia personnel, *(d)* soldiers, *(e)* police officers, *(f)* intelligence officers and *(g)* members of the Popular Defence Forces implicated in serious violations of human rights in Darfur. [40495]

Ian Pearson: The Government of Sudan is fully aware of our view that they must fully investigate human rights abuses throughout Sudan and bring the perpetrators to justice regardless of their position. We continue to raise this matter with them on a regular basis.

The UK sponsored United Nations Security Council Resolution 1593 which referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC has begun its independent investigation and will issue indictments in due course.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been made by his Department to the *(a)* Sudan Liberation Army and *(b)* Justice and Equality Movement on (i) respect for human rights, (ii) civilian freedom of movement and (iii) respect for humanitarian workers in Darfur. [40499]

Ian Pearson: We have made consistently clear to all parties to the conflict in Darfur, including the Sudan Liberation Army and Justice and Equality Movement, that we expect them to abide by their obligations to uphold human rights, provide freedom of movement for civilians and facilitate the work of humanitarian workers, in accordance with their obligations under UN Security Council Resolutions 1556, 1564, 1574 and 1591 as well as the Abuja Humanitarian and Security Protocols.

The parties are currently discussing general principles for security arrangements, which include the need to cease all attacks and facilitate the work of the humanitarian community. The UK observer in Abuja regularly raises these issues directly with the parties and presses them to make swift progress

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the Government of Sudan, *(b)* the Sudan Liberation Army and *(c)* the Justice and Equality Movement regarding the recruitment and use of child soldiers in Darfur. [40500]

Ian Pearson: We have regularly made clear to the Government of Sudan that we expect it to uphold the commitments it has made under International Human Rights law, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. The UK led an EU demarche to the Government of Sudan on Children in Armed Conflict in July 2005.

We have also made clear to the Sudan Liberation Army and Justice and Equality Movement that the recruitment and use of child soldiers is wholly unacceptable and is in contravention of their obligations under the Abuja Security Protocol, signed on 8 November 2004, which commits both movements and the Government of Sudan to refrain from recruiting children as soldiers or combatants, and to abide by the CRC, the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the African Union regarding strengthening the deployment of *(a)* military troops and *(b)* civilian police in Darfur. [40501]

Ian Pearson: The UK took part in an international assessment mission for the African Union Mission in Darfur in December. This has reported back to the African Union (AU) that the current size of the mission is adequate for its assigned tasks. It is for the AU to take any final decisions on force size. But we continue to offer the AU support in reinforcing the effectiveness of its mission.

Syria

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the United Kingdom's relations with Syria. [33594]

Dr. Howells: The Government have concerns about Syrian support for the insurgency in Iraq, its continued interference in Lebanon and its support for Palestinian rejectionist groups and Hizballah, which are having a destabilising effect on regional stability. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary most recently raised some of our concerns with Syrian Foreign Minister Shara'a during the Euro-Med Summit in Barcelona. We want a better relationship with Syria, but Syria needs to change its behaviour and play a constructive role in the region and on the world stage.

UK Embassies/Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether any *(a)* embassies and *(b)* consulates are combined with two or more countries to provide a service for British citizens. [39865]

Dr. Howells: While we share office accommodation with other countries, in no single post do we provide a combined service for British citizens.

UN Convention Against Torture

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what definition the Government use of *(a)* mental and *(b)* physical severe pain or suffering as set out in Article 1 of the UN Convention Against Torture. [37965]

Mr. Straw: The international community, including the UK, has resisted formal definition of what constitutes severe physical or mental pain or suffering, as used in the UN Convention Against Torture's definition of torture. Whether any particular treatment would cause an individual severe mental or physical pain or suffering depends on the specific circumstances

of a case. A definition could not be exhaustive, leaving the possibility for argument that some types of clearly torturous behaviour were not in fact forbidden as torture. Section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 provides that a public official commits torture if he intentionally inflicts severe pain or suffering on another in the performance of his duties, and does not define "severe pain or suffering".

As the UN Human Rights Committee noted in 1992, with regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: "The Covenant does not contain any definition of the concepts covered by article 7 [prohibiting torture, or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment], nor does the Committee consider it necessary to draw up a list of prohibited acts to establish sharp distinctions between different kinds of punishment or treatment; the distinctions depend on the nature, purpose and severity of the treatment applied."

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Channel Islands

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she plans to visit the Channel Islands to discuss *(a)* electoral and *(b)* legal reform. [40519]

Bridget Prentice: The Department of Constitutional Affairs is responsible for the UK's relationship with the Channel Islands and DCA Ministers visit the Islands from time to time to discuss a wide range of topics. There are no Ministerial visits planned for the immediate future.

Channel Islands are not part of the United Kingdom. They have their own legislative assemblies, administrative, fiscal and legal systems and their own courts of law. Responsibility for electoral or legal reform is a domestic matter for them.

Solicitors (Complaints Procedures)

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of complaints procedures in relation to solicitors for *(a)* those with literacy problems and *(b)* other vulnerable groups. [40696]

Bridget Prentice: I am satisfied that the Law Society and the Office of the Legal Services Ombudsman (OLSO) have mechanisms in place to identify and assist customers with literacy problems, and other vulnerable groups, who wish to complain about their solicitor.

The Law Society can provide literature in different languages and in different formats, including in Braille and large print and on audiotape, and it can arrange translations and organise sign language interpreters. It can also appoint a Local Conciliation Officer where a customer requires assistance to formulate responses and encourage greater telephone communication if written communication is difficult.

The OLSO can produce information in large print and on different coloured paper and offers a translation service. It provides a tape recorder service, has a Hearing Loop installed and the facility to use BT Type Talk. In addition, its Support Staff, who receive incoming calls, have received Mental Health Awareness training.

Solicitors (New Regulatory Body)

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what locations she is considering for the new independent regulatory body for solicitors [40693]

Bridget Prentice: The Government published a White Paper on 17 October 2005 setting out proposals for the future of Legal Services in England and Wales.

The Government will bring forward legislation to establish a new oversight regulator, the Legal Services Board (LSB). The location of the Legal Services Board will be determined taking into account a number of factors, including putting the needs of consumers first.

HOME DEPARTMENT

2012 Olympics

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what organisational structures are being established in order to ensure the security of the London 2012 Olympics. [37795]

Paul Goggins: The security proposals were a strong feature of the London bid. The planning, preparatory and operational arrangements will be delivered through a multi agency structure that will ensure maximum priority is accorded to all aspects of security and public safety. These arrangements will be overseen by a Cabinet-style committee chaired by the Home Secretary.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to encourage the take-up of individual support orders for young people subject to anti-social behaviour orders. [37758]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Promoting individual support orders (ISOs) and increasing their up-take forms part of our overall drive to reduce antisocial behaviour. The Home Affairs Committee's report on antisocial behaviour acknowledged the usefulness of ISOs in tackling antisocial behaviour and recommended additional Government funding to increase take-up. On 29 June the Government announced that they will make an extra £0.5 million available this financial year for ISOs. This money is ring-fenced and given to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to allocate to youth offending teams (YOTs). The YJB are also promoting their take up with the YOTs.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and

(2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40139]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39149]

Mr. Charles Clarke: No widescreen televisions were purchased in the five years leading up to the move to the new Home Office HQ at 2 Marsham street.

Leading up to the move to 2 Marsham street in February 2005 a business case was put forward to the Director General, Resources and Performance for a series of widescreen televisions in the new building. This was signed off.

The aim was to deliver a Home Office in-house television channel to replace posters/promotional materials etc. The business case requested 78 widescreen TVs to be ceiling and wall mounted within 2 Marsham street. No widescreen TVs were requested for other London buildings as the technology was not in place within other buildings to run this channel.

The cost was £330,000. This budget was signed off on the clear proviso that all posters (we had over 100 poster sites in the London based Home Office buildings) were to discontinue and no more centrally produced promotional materials were to be published.

By discontinuing posters/materials etc. we are making net savings of £139,000 (2005–06), £144,000 (2006–07), £149,000 (2007–08) and £154,000 (2008–09). The cost of procuring and delivering the widescreen TV channel would therefore be covered and breaking even by 2008.

Departmental Property

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40075]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This information is not held centrally and could be prepared only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to relocate staff in his Department and related agencies into London and the South East. [31743]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There are no plans to relocate staff into London and the South East.

Economic Crime Units

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the economic crime unit of the Metropolitan police and the city of London police are to merge; and what their relationship is with the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [37429]

Paul Goggins: The Attorney General commissioned a national review of fraud, reporting in spring 2006. Until the findings of the review are known, it would not be appropriate to comment on potential options for change. The Serious Organised Crime Agency will commence operations in April 2006 and until then work is in hand to develop effective relationships between the agency and all police forces nationwide.

Emergency Vehicles (Speeding)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice is given to police forces regarding prosecution of drivers of emergency vehicles breaking the speed limit. [40278]

Paul Goggins: This is an operational matter for the police. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) wrote to all forces in summer 2004 with a protocol for dealing with emergency service vehicles detected by camera when being driven in excess of the speed limit. This provided that as a rule no further action would be taken where vehicles were clearly displaying their emergency blue lights. General guidance is also given in the revised version of their Code of Practice for Operational Use of Road Policing Enforcement Technology, issued in November 2004. The code is available on the ACPO website at www.acpo.police.uk.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer questions *(a)* 26311, *(b)* 26309 and *(c)* 26310 tabled by the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon on 3 November. [33014]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The answers to parliamentary questions number 26309, *Official Report*, column 39W and 26310, *Official Report*, columns 39–40W, were published on 28 November 2005. The answer to parliamentary question number 26311, *Official Report*, column 2225W, was published on 15 December 2005.

People Trafficking

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide funding for the POPPY project beyond March; and whether his Department is planning to expand support and rehabilitation provision for the victims of trafficking. [40655]

Paul Goggins: Home Office funding for the POPPY scheme since March 2003 stands at around £1.5 million. The grant funding agreement with Eaves Housing for Women, the current service provider, was due to end in September 2005 but was extended to the end of March this year to enable completion of work on the formal evaluation of the scheme and consideration of the

evaluation findings, we propose to increase the geographical coverage of support services for victims and introduce support at varying levels of intensity according to individual need. We are currently running a competitive exercise to test the extent to which the current Home Office grant to Eaves Housing represents value for money, and to select a provider for support services to this group of victims from April 2006 until March 2008. Eaves Housing is amongst the organisations invited to submit a bid for Home Office funding for services for this group. The selection exercise commenced on 20 December and will conclude in mid-late February 2006 with the award of a two year grant funding agreement. Further information about the UK strategy on human trafficking, including plans for support for victims of trafficking are contained in the document "Tackling Human Trafficking—Consultation on Proposals for the UK Action Plan". The consultation document can be found on the Home Office website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/haveyoursay/curren-consultations.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the effect of the closure of the safe house for trafficked 16 and 17 year-olds which was trialled in Sussex in April 2004; and what plans he has to provide support services to child victims of trafficking. [40656]

Paul Goggins: The provision of "safe houses" for victims of trafficking is a long-standing concern of voluntary organisations and practitioners working in this field. A safe house for minors was set up by West Sussex social services in 1995 following a number of disappearances of West African girls in local authority care. Voluntary organisations welcomed the provision but unfortunately 50 percent. of the girls went missing, with fears that the safe house had been infiltrated by traffickers. West Sussex social services department took the decision to close the house and provide foster placements instead. A further safe house was set up by Integrated Care in West Sussex, but was closed shortly after it opened in early June 2005 following a lack of referrals by local authorities. It is recognised that child victims of trafficking will be in need of welfare services and protection under the provisions of Child Care Legislation.

Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need or at risk of harm by providing a range and level of service appropriate to each child's needs. Government funding is allocated to local authorities with Children's Services responsibilities on the basis of the needs of their populations. A supplement is paid to children's services authorities which accommodate unaccompanied asylum seeking children, some of whom may have been victims of trafficking. Home Office officials are giving further consideration to ways in which the options available to safeguard and support child victims of trafficking might be extended. This includes re-examining the potential value of providing dedicated and secure accommodation and specialist professional foster care placements.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money seized as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 was invested in *(a)* Hillingdon and *(b)* Greater London in each year of its operation; and if he will make a statement. [39456]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available in the form requested. Receipts from recovered criminal assets are allocated to a range of initiatives. The Recovered Assets Incentive Fund was set up in 2003–04 to incentivise asset recovery by asset recovery agencies. £15.5 million a year for three years was allocated to the Fund. From the Fund, four new multi-agency Regional Asset Recovery Teas (RARTs) were set up to disrupt criminal groups, confiscate more criminal assets and to tackle money laundering. The London Regional Asset Recovery Team was allocated £4.3 million over three years

£7 million a year for three years have been made available separately for investment in community based projects in England and Wales.

In addition a new police incentivisation scheme introduced in 2004–05 has enabled police forces in England and Wales, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to receive a share of the criminal assets they recover locally. Under the scheme the Metropolitan Police Service received over £4 million this financial year based on its performance in 2004–05.

From 2006–07 a new incentive scheme will operate under which all agencies involved in asset recovery will get back 50 per cent. of the assets they recover.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the share of income from the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 that is allocated to the police force that recovered it; and if he will make a statement. [40827]

Paul Goggins: As agreed with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), under the police incentivisation scheme the police service receive one-third of the total assets recovered over and above £40 million in 2004–05, increasing to one half in 2005–06. The Government are spending more than the first £40 million to support existing spending commitments in the asset recovery field. It was also agreed with ACPO that incentive payments would be based on each force's annual performance in the recovery of criminal assets. There are no plans to change this agreement. However, the Home Secretary announced last November that Home Office funding of £2.6 million per year for financial investigators in police forces, which was due to end in March, would be extended for a further year. From 2006–07 a new incentive scheme will operate under which all agencies involved in asset recovery, including the police service, will get back 50 per cent. of what they recover. There are at present no plans to increase this share.

Rates

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid in rates to each relevant local authority in relation to his central headquarters function in 2004–05. [39174]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department paid £5.6 million to city of Westminster in respect of its central London headquarters function during financial year 2004–05. This may be adjusted downwards on completion of current negotiations to settle the rateable value of 2 Marsham street.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case; [15193]

(2) what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations have been established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [15194]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The majority of my Department's services are arranged nationally. However, in bringing increased local focus to delivering public priorities, since 1997, my Department has established the following regional bodies: 354 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships in Wales. 49 Drug Action Teams in England were first established in 1995, but realigned with local authority boundaries in April 2002 The bodies in the following table have been closed or reclassified since 1997:

	Name	*Date closed*
1.	Holocaust Memorial Day Project Delivery Co-ordination Group. Replaced by the "Holocaust Memorial Day Trust" which is an independent charity under the Charity Commission.	2005
2.	Task Force on Child Protection on the Internet (reclassified an informal expert stakeholder group)	Reclassified 2005
3.	Vehicle Crime Reduction Action Team	Reclassified 2005
4.	Community Builders Group	Renamed 2004
5.	Criminal Records Bureau—Consultative Panel (formerly Customer Forum)	2004
6.	Firearms Consultative Committee	2004
7.	Police Complaints Authority	2004
8.	Advisory Board of Restricted Patients	2003
9.	Community Capacity Building Group	2003
10.	Fundamental Review of the Coroners System	2003
11.	Group on Developing Capacity in the Voluntary and Community Sector	2003
12.	Ministerial Advisory Group on Retail Crime	2003
13.	Retail Crime Reduction Action Team (RCRAT)	2003
14.	Working Group on Police Performance and Best Value	2003
15	Criminal Records Bureau—Ministerial Advisory Board	2002
16.	Property Crime Reduction Action Team	2002
17.	Working Group on Resourcing Community Capacity	2002
18.	Home Secretary's Mobile Phone Theft Group	2001
19.	National Crime Reduction Task Force	2001
20.	Working Group on Misuse of Public Office	2001
21.	Active Community Unit Research Forum	2000
22.	Interception of Communications Tribunal	2000
23.	Intelligence Services Tribunal	2000
24.	Security Service Tribunal (Items no. 22–24 were replaced by the Investigatory Powers Tribunal under S65 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000)	2000
25.	Metropolitan Police Committee	2000
26.	Review of the Law Relating to Involuntary Manslaughter	2000
27.	The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board	2000
28.	Review of the Law Relating to Criminal Memoirs	1998
29.	Misuse of Drugs Advisory Body	1998
30.	Misuse of Drugs Professional Panel	1998
31.	Misuse of Drugs Tribunal	1998

Rental Costs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid in rent for properties used for his central headquarters function in 2004–05. [39115]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department paid £15.9 million in rent in respect of property used for its central London headquarters function during financial year 2004–05.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the nature of changes to the oath of allegiance to follow the establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [39799]

Paul Goggins: There will be no changes to the oath of allegiance following the establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency.

Special Advisers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the special advisers in post in his Department, broken down by pay band; and what the total budgeted cost to his Department of special advisers is for 2005–06. [29408]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet Office on 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1258W.

Information relating to costs for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the current financial year.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special advisers have been employed by the Home Office in each year since 1997; and what the average salary has been for specialist advisers in each year. [31738]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Numbers of special advisers employed by the Home Office since 1997 are listed as follows:

	Number
1997–98	2
1998–99	2
1999–2000	2
2000–01	4
2001–02	4
2002–03	4
2003–04	4
2004–05	3
Currently	3

Special advisers are paid according to the relevant Cabinet Office pay scales.

Sports Grounds (Arrests)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests there were at *(a)* cricket grounds, *(b)* football grounds, *(c)* Rugby Union grounds, *(d)* Rugby League grounds, *(e)* horse racing tracks and *(f)* motor racing tracks in the last 12 months. [40389]

Paul Goggins: During the 2004–05 football season there were 3,628 football-related arrests, an 11 per cent. decrease on the previous season's total. Arrest data are not collated centrally for the other sporting events.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were convicted of motoring offences in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex and (iii) England and Wales in 2004, broken down by offence. [39717]

Paul Goggins: The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the table and give the number of males and females found guilty of motoring offences by offence class in South East Essex petty sessional area (Southend), Essex police force area and England and Wales 2004.

Number of offenders found guilty of motoring offences by gender and offence class at all courts in South East Essex petty sessional area, Essex police force area and England and Wales, 2004[1]

Offence class	*South East Essex PSA*[2]		*Essex*		*England and Wales*	
	Males	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
Dangerous driving	11	2	98	6	5,169	191
Driving etc. after consuming alcohol or taking drugs	474	78	2,266	332	76,428	10,168
Careless driving	116	30	712	124	17,845	3,201
Accident offences	77	23	247	56	5,246	911
Driving Licence related offences	250	21	1,013	91	52,550	4,087
Vehicle Insurance Offences	766	95	3,161	451	195,155	22,932
Vehicle Registration and Excise Licence offences	141	25	634	137	17,708	4,495
Work record or employment offences	2	—	96	4	2,267	37
Operator's Licence offences	1	—	23	1	510	21
Vehicle Test offences	63	16	276	52	12,988	1,495
Fraud, forgery, etc. associated with vehicle or driver records	15	1	69	6	2,406	232
Vehicle, or part, in dangerous or defective condition	27	4	89	13	7,061	573
Speed limit offences	935	231	6,399	1,786	118,920	27,212
Motorway offence (other than speeding)	—	—	44	6	1,253	171
Neglect of traffic directions	260	96	981	414	18,838	3,964
Neglect of pedestrian rights	5	2	38	8	1,916	369
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	23	7	61	26	7,638	2,144
Lighting offences	14	2	38	4	2,178	215
Noise offences	—	1	2	1	379	24
Load offences	7	—	98	—	4,686	132
Offences peculiar to motor cycles	2	—	6	—	297	9
Miscellaneous offences (including trailer offences)	216	63	742	248	61,295	13,063
Total	3,404	697	17,093	3,766	612,731	95,647

[1] These data are based on the principal offence basis.
[2] Includes Crown court where Southend was the committing court

Websites

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visits to the website www.thinkuknow.co.uk there were in each month since its inception; and if he will make a statement. [32787]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number of visits follows. The data system 'Sitestat' has only been used since April 2003, so only data from that date are available.

Total visits

Date	*Visits*
February 2003	3
March 2003	2
April 2003	10,122
May 2003	21,073
June 2003	24,923
July 2003	5,637
August 2003	6,351
September 2003	18,675
October 2003	20,481
November 2003	22,501
December 2003	21,310
January 2004	55,743
February 2004	71,223
March 2004	87,126
April 2004	43,535
May 2004	31,933
June 2004	31,537
July 2004	28,645
August 2004	25,256
September 2004	11,364
October 2004	35,618
November 2004	48,802
December 2004	38,885
January 2005	53,089
February 2005	15,771
March 2005	450
April 2005	367
May 2005	359
June 2005	307
July 2005	300
August 2005	298
September 2005	371
October 2005	402
November 2005	253
December 2005	55
Total	732,767

Total visits

Total visits

Date	*Visits*
Maximum March 2004	87,126
Average	15,266
Total unique visitors	515,234

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Brownfield Land

Greg Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what records his Department keeps of the amount of development on different categories of brownfield land; [40528]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of trends in the loss of privately-owned green space as a result of new residential development. [40531]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) records amounts of land use change in its Land Use Change Statistics. The most recent results were published on the ODPM website in November, as 'Land Use Change in England to 2004: Additional Tables'.

Land Use Change Statistics show the amount of land being developed according to its previous use, including previously-developed (brownfield) uses. Information on the ownership of the land is not, however, recorded so that there is no information on any loss of privately owned green space.

Council Tax Revaluation

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether council-appointed inspectors visiting private properties take photographs of the interiors for council tax revaluation purposes. [40731]

Mr. Woolas: Councils do not appoint inspectors to visit properties for council tax revaluation purposes—that is a function undertaken by Valuation Office Agency staff, and I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1071W. It would be extremely rare that photographs are taken inside a person's home and this would only be done with the occupier's permission.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Pope: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage change was in central Government funding to Rossendale borough council in each of the last five years. [40034]

Mr. Woolas: The percentage change in central Government funding to Rossendale borough council in each of the last five years for which data are available is shown in the following table.

	Change in all central Government funding on previous year (percentage)	*Of which percentage change in formula grant (revenue support grant, police grant and redistributed business rates)*
2000–01	4.1	3.9
2001–02	5.5	4.8
2002–03	2.8	2.3
2003–04	15.9	9.5
2004–05	38.3	-6.7

Notes:

1. These figures are as reported by Rossendale borough council on the revenue out-turn (RO) returns submitted to ODPM.
2. Central Government funding is defined here as the sum of specific grants inside aggregate external finance (AEF) and formula grant (revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and police grant). Specific grants inside AEF are those revenue grants paid for councils' core services (such as waste collection), excluding funding for local authorities' housing management.
3. The information provided excludes capital funding and funding for local authorities' housing management responsibilities.
4. The information excludes those grant programmes, such as European funding, where authorities are simply one of the recipients of funding paid towards an area.
5. Comparisons across years may not be valid because the figures shown are not adjusted for changes in local authority responsibilities.

The increase in central Government funding in 2003–04 is in part due to housing benefit and council tax benefit administration specific grant doubling from £243,000 in 2002–03 to £493,000 in 2003–04.

The large increase in total central Government funding 2004–05 is principally due to a £2.2 million grant for a Housing Stock Options Appraisal Project.

The decrease in formula grant between 2003–04 and 2004–05 is due largely to the removal, with effect from 2004–05, of local authorities' responsibility for paying part of the costs of council tax benefit and housing benefit.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos Regulations

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the evidential basis is in relation to *(a)* risk and *(b)* cost of the Health and Safety Executive's recent proposals for modifying the Asbestos Regulations and revising the related code of practice. [38853]

Mrs. McGuire: The proposals for revised asbestos regulations and an approved code of practice take account of evidence on risk from a risk assessment, and on cost from a regulatory impact assessment. These documents are attached as annexes to the consultative document.

Benefit Claimants Living Overseas

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what reports he has received concerning benefit fraud by British citizens resident in Thailand; what steps he has taken to investigate them; and if he will make a statement on his policy on investigating allegations in newspapers. [41059]

Mr. Plaskitt: As with all allegations of benefit fraud, those involving people claiming benefits while living abroad are investigated where there is evidence that benefit is wrongly being claimed. Where benefit fraud is established appropriate action will be taken, which can include prosecution leading to imprisonment for the more serious offences.

Allegations in newspapers are considered on the same basis as all allegations of benefit fraud and will be investigated where there is evidence that benefit has been wrongly claimed.

Benefit Fraud

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many investigations into benefit fraud have been undertaken in each of the last 10 years; [27639]

(2) how many prosecutions have been brought for benefit fraud in each of the last 10 years; and how many were successful. [27640]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* The available information is in the tables.

Benefit fraud investigations,, prosecution, convictions and sanctions by DWP

	Referrals accepted for investigations	*Prosecutions*	*Convictions*	*Sanctions*
1995–96	720,617	12,181	9,993	n/a
1996–97	938,770	16,887	9,801	n/a
1997–98	925,501	11,523	11,386	n/a
1998–99	923,853	10,129	9,967	n/a
1999–2000	564,543	9,272	9,129	11,030
2000–01	441,368	11,584	11,403	15,560
2001–02	389,633	11,355	11,183	13,550
2002–03	334,974	9,396	9,267	14,270
2003–04	325,706	9,204	9,091	16,160
2004–05	309,343	8,670	8,573	18,505

Notes:

1. 'Referrals accepted for investigations' exclude general Matching Service cases.

2. The fraud database shows completed cases that commenced in the relevant period. Due to the time between commencement of investigation and completion of prosecution, some cases will be included data collated for earlier periods. All totals are therefore correct at the time when quoted but subject to adjustment at a later date.

3. The significant reduction in 1998–99 results from a changed definition of cases to be referred to investigation. Prior to this year any cases in error was referred. After that date any case in error where there was a suspicion of fraud was referred.

4. The decline in referrals from 1999–2000 reflects our success in reducing the level of fraud significantly over that period—down by over 60 per cent. in IS/JSA.

5. Sanctions include Administrative Penalties and Cautions. Administrative Penalties as an alternative to prosecution, were introduced by the Social Security Administration (Fraud) Act (1997) with effect from December 1998. Cautions were made available to local authorities as a sanction from the start of 2001–02.

Source:

Fraud Information By Sector system and data from Fraud Investigation Service (Serious and Organised Operations Branch)

Benefit fraud investigations, prosecution and convictions by local authorities

	Referrals accepted for investigations	*Prosecutions*	*Convictions*
1995–96	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996–97	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997–98	n/a	n/a	700
1998–99	n/a	n/a	800
1999–2000	n/a	n/a	900
2000–01	n/a	n/a	1,100
2001–02	214,722	2,101	1,732
2002–03	185,723	3,187	2,503
2003–04	163,231	4,601	3,747
2004–05	163,247	5,544	4,688

Notes:

1. The investigations figures only cover the local authorities that have submitted the relevant information on their stats 124 and WIB5 forms and are therefore a reflection of the information that we hold, which might not be complete.

2. For local authorities, figures prior to 2001–02 have been rounded to the nearest 100 because they include estimated values for non-responding local authorities.

3. Figures for local authority prosecutions which did not lead to conviction are not available prior to 2001–02.

4. The figures only cover the local authorities that have submitted the relevant information on their stats124 and WIB5 forms and is therefore a reflection of the information that we hold, which might not be complete.

Sources:

1. The data for the numbers of investigations have been taken from HB MIS stats124.

2. From 2001–02 onwards the numbers of prosecutions and convictions are taken from subsidy claim forms. Prior to this the numbers are taken from management information returns.

Benefit Office Closures

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* representations he has had from and *(b)* discussions he has had with (i) Citizens' Advice and (ii) other benefit advice organisations on the workload of such organisations since the benefit office closure programme. [34623]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 11 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the discussions he has had with the Citizen's Advice Bureau and other benefit advice organisations following the closure of benefit offices. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus was created in April 2002 bringing together the former Employment Service and those parts of the former Benefits Agency delivering services to working age people. We have been refurbishing and replacing the offices of the former Benefits Agency and Employment Service, on a rolling programme, to enable us to deliver the new, integrated Jobcentre Plus service to our customers.

Jobcentre Plus is not just about new offices however; it is about the service we provide to thousands of people. By 2006, we will have transformed our service making it available through the telephone, through the Internet and through the personal service that we offer to people in Jobcentre Plus offices.

The District Manager for Wrexham and North Wales Coast has written to local stakeholders, including the Citizen's Advice Bureau, on a number of occasions, since April 2004, to ensure they are kept fully informed of the changes we are making to local service delivery.

I hope this is helpful.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints were registered with the Child Support Agency in each year from 1997 to 2005 in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northamptonshire and *(c)* Wellingborough. [26777]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available at the geographical level requested.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will make a statement on the *(a)* reform and *(b)* performance of the Child Support Agency (CSA); and what recent meetings he has had with the chief executive of the CSA; [38519]

(2) when he expects *(a)* reform of the Child Support Agency (CSA) to be completed and *(b)* all CSA maintenance cases to be calculated under the new scheme. [38520]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Secretary of State will make an announcement on child support shortly.

I and ministerial colleagues regularly meet with the agency's chief executive Stephen Geraghty. While there have been some improvements in the Child Support Agency's performance we are not satisfied with its overall level.

A copy of the most recent Child Support Agency quarterly statistical summary, which gives information on the agency's performance, has been placed in the Library and is available on line at www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/csa.asp.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what bonus pay awards will be made to senior staff at the Child Support Agency this Christmas; and what the total cost to his Department of the bonus payments will be. [39179]

Mr. Plaskitt: No bonus pay awards will be made to senior civil servants at the Child Support Agency this Christmas and there will be no resulting cost to my Department.

CSA

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases are currently with the Child Support Agency's specialist enforcement teams; and what action he is taking to reduce that number. [26100]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 11 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases are currently with the Child Support Agency's specialist enforcement teams; and what action he is taking to reduce that number.

There are currently 15,784 cases with the Child Support Agency's specialist debt enforcement teams who are responsible for recovery of debt by means of civil debt recovery through the courts. It is expected that the number of cases referred to enforcement will increase over the short term as the Agency instigates enforcement action earlier in the process when lower amounts of debt have accrued.

The enforcement teams are becoming much more successful in utilising their enforcement powers. This is being demonstrated by the significant improvement in the in-month cash collections achieved, rising from £0.52m in January 2005 to £1.42m in November 2005.

In addition, the enforcement teams are closely monitoring the times taken to drive cases forward for both old scheme cases and new scheme cases and these times are improving. This action is being taken to ensure that we reach agreement on payment in full, or a payment arrangement with the non-resident parent quickly and effectively, ensuring money is obtained for the parent with care.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people the Child Support Agency has reported as not paying the correct amount of child support in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [26569]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 10 January 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people the Child Support Agency has reported as not paying the correct amount of child support in *(a)* Jarrow constituency *(b)* South Tyneside *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997.

The attached table shows the number and percentage of cases being charged maintenance via the CSA's collection service for which the NRP paid the full amount of maintenance requested in the quarter ending August of each year.

Where full payment was not received from the NRP, cases have been separated into two groups; those where partial payment was made and those where no payment was received.

Unfortunately it is not possible to disaggregate the information requested to any geographical levels requested below that of Great Britain.

I hope you find this answer useful.

Number and percentage of Child Support Agency collection service cases for which full, partial or nil payment of maintenance was received from the non resident parent in the quarter ending August of each year—Great Britain 1997–2005

Quarter ending August:	Nil compliant	%	Partially compliant	%	Fully compliant	%	Total
1997	70,000	32	58,000	26	93,000	42	221,000
1998	87,000	31	81,000	29	112,000	40	279,000
1999	101,000	30	84,000	25	151,000	45	335,000
2000	105,000	29	80,000	22	178,000	49	364,000
2001	101,000	27	96,000	26	173,000	47	370,000

Number and percentage of Child Support Agency collection service cases for which full, partial or nil payment of maintenance was received from the non resident parent in the quarter ending August of each year—Great Britain 1997–2005

Quarter ending August	Nil compliant	%	Partially compliant	%	Fully compliant	%	Total
2002	90,000	24	85,000	23	198,000	53	373,000
2003	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2004	123,000	30	101,000	24	191,000	46	415,000
2005	125,000	30	101,000	24	194,000	46	420,000

[1] Figures for the years 1997–2002 relate to old scheme cases only, whereas those for 2004–05 relate to overall performance across both old and new schemes. Robust information/information for new and old scheme cases on the new computer system is not available for the quarter ending August 2003.

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000 and percentages to the nearest whole per cent.
2. Figures are given as at August in each year as this is the latest available period for which comparable old scheme figures are available in earlier years.
3. The above includes those old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment and those new scheme cases with either a full maintenance calculation, or a default maintenance decision. Old scheme cases with a punitive interim maintenance assessment are excluded from this analysis in line with the Agency's target definitions, as are new scheme cases being processed clerically.
4. The proportion of compliant cases is calculated by expressing cases which are currently open and have paid any of the maintenance due via the collection service over the preceding quarter expressed as a percentage of all those (currently open) cases charged maintenance via the collection service (either regular maintenance and/or arrears) over the same quarter.
5. The table excludes maintenance direct cases (of which there were 99,000 in August 2005), in which the CSA have carried out a maintenance calculation or assessment, and the non resident parent then pays his/her maintenance liability directly to the parent with care. As the CSA is no longer directly involved in the case, it is not possible to say how much, if any of the original CSA maintenance liability is being paid.

Customer Management System

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost has been to date of the implementation of the Customer Management System computer system. [38387]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 11 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what the total cost has been to date of the implementation of the Customer Management System (CMS) computer system. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Firstly, CMS is not yet fully deployed across the Jobcentre Plus network of local offices and contact centres and consequently there will be implementation costs not yet incurred.

CMS and CMS2 were inter-related developments of the system and the costs were not separated. CMS3 was a release designed to improve the operation of the system based on lessons learned from the earliest deployment in a live environment.

The total cost of CMS and CMS2 to 31 October 2005 was £243.6 million. The cost of CMS3 is estimated to be £9.98 million.

I hope this is helpful.

Departmental Expenditure

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of administering the Department's appraisal system was in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05, broken down by (i) staff time costs, (ii) travel and meeting costs, (iii) venue hire and (iv) other associated administration costs. [38744]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The information requested is not available.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria were used to determine performance-related bonus payments for senior civil servants in his Department in each of the last four years. [30013]

Mrs. McGuire: For each of the last four years bonus decisions have been made by relatively assessing individuals in relation to others in the same senior civil service pay band. When determining performance-related bonus payments the following criteria were used:

2004–05	Performance against agreed priority business objectives or targets; Total delivery record over the year; Relative stretch; Response to unforeseen events which affected the performance
2003–04 and 2004–05	How successful staff were in meeting their objectives; How difficult/challenging the objectives were, given available resources, foreseen and unforeseen factors; How the success had been achieved taking account of the departmental aims and values.
2002–03	A particularly high achievement in relation to a particular task or tasks; A strong performance in response to unexpected developments or requirements which emerged during the year; Contribution to departmental objectives over and above the immediate demands of the job by changed working practices, improved productivity or delivered efficiency savings; Whether challenges were taken on which were above and beyond the agreed range of the individual's objectives which delivered benefits for the organisation

Disability Living Allowance

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people under the age of 60 years receiving *(a)* the middle rate of the care component, *(b)* the higher rate of the care component and *(c)* the higher rate of the mobility component of disability living allowance stopped receiving these benefits due to death in each month of the last five years. [41409]

Mrs. McGuire: The available information is in the table.

Disability living allowance: number of awards in Great Britain which included a higher rate care component, or a middle rate care component, or a higher rate mobility component in which payment was terminated by the death of recipients under 60 years of age at the time of their death in each quarter in the period from 30 November 2001 to 31 May 2005

Quarter ending on the last day of:	*Number of awards in which payment was terminated by death of recipients under 60 years of age (thousands)*
May 2005	5.1
February 2005	5.4
November 2004	5.1
August 2004	5.1
May 2004	5.0
February 2004	4.8
November 2003	4.5
August 2003	3.9
May 2003	4.1
February 2003	4.9
November 2002	4.9
August 2002	4.7
May 2002	4.3
February 2002	4.9
November 2001	4.6
August 2001	4.0
May 2001	4.3
February 2001	4.7
November 2000	4.7

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.

2. Figures include only cases where the reason for termination of payment is recorded as "death of claimant". Not all cases where payment has terminated have a reason recorded.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study for totals and 5 per cent. samples for detail/long time series.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Audit Board of the Administrative Commission on social security for migrant workers, *(b)* Technical Committee on information processing and *(c)* Committee for implementation of the action programme to promote gender equality have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38799]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is as follows:

(a) There was one meeting of the Audit Board of the Administrative Commission on social security for migrant workers during the UK presidency. An official from the Department of Health presided and two other officials from the Department of Health also attended.

(b) There was one meeting of the Technical Commission on Data Processing during the UK presidency. An official from the Department for Work and Pensions presided and an official from the Department Health also attended.

(c) The Committee for the implementation of the action programme to promote gender equality met once during the UK presidency. An official of the European Commission chaired the meeting. A representative of the Department of Trade and Industry attended.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations attend Councils by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Advisory Committee on the implementation of the Community action programme to combat social exclusion, *(b)* Advisory Committee on the Free Movement of Workers and *(c)* Technical Committee for the implementation of regulations concerning the free movement and employment of workers have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [38800]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is as follows.

(a) There was one meeting of the Advisory Committee on the implementation of the Community action programme to combat social exclusion during the UK presidency. An official of the European Commission chaired the meeting. The UK was represented by an official from the Department for Work and Pensions.

(b) The Advisory Committee on the Free Movement of Workers and *(c)* the Technical Committee on the Free Movement of Workers each met once during the UK presidency. An official of the European Commission chaired each meeting. On each occasion, the UK Government were represented by two officials from the Department for Work and Pensions.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12 to 15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations attend councils by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Administrative Commision on social security for migrant workers (and working parties), *(b)* Committee of the European Social Fund and *(c)* Technical adaptation

Committee on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38801]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is as follows:

(a) The Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers met twice during the UK presidency. There were no working parties during the UK presidency. An official from the Department for Work and Pensions presided over both meetings. Two other DWP officials attended the first meeting and three attended the second. An official from the Department of Health attended both meetings and two officials from HM Treasury were present at the second meeting.

(b) There were two meetings of the EU Advisory Committee of the European Social Fund during the UK presidency. An official from the European Commission chaired the meetings. The UK representatives were two officials from the Department for Work and Pensions and representatives from the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress.

(c) The Technical Adaptation Committee on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work did not meet during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations attend Councils by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Standing Committee on agricultural statistics, *(b)* Advisory Committee on employment and *(c)* Advisory Committee on incentives in the field of employment have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38803]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is as follows:

(a) There has been one meeting of the Agricultural Statistics Committee under the UK presidency; an official from Defra attended the meeting. There was prior consultation between Defra and the devolved administrations ensuring that the representations made at the Committee reflected the common view of Defra and the devolved governments. The Committee is presided over by the Commission.

(b) There have been two meetings of the Employment Committee (EMCO) under the UK presidency the first was an informal meeting on the 18 and 19 October and the second on the 24–25 November. All EMCO meetings are presided over by an elected chair; this is currently Maarten Camps (Netherlands). Both meeting were attended by officials from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Officials from the Scottish Executive attended the Informal EMCO held between Glasgow and Edinburgh in October.

(c) The Advisory Committee on Employment Incentives (EIM) meets twice a year in the spring and autumn, therefore it has only met once under the UK presidency on 7 October. No UK officials attended (only delegations from half the member states managed to attend the meeting due to industrial action in Belgium). When the Committee does meet it is presided over by the Commission.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations attend Councils by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the internet at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee on statistics relating to the trading of goods between member states, *(b)* Committee for implementation of the action programme to tackle discrimination and *(c)* Restricted Committee of the Safety and Health Commission for the Mining and other Extractive Industries have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39004]

Mr. Plaskitt: I understand from the Office for National Statistics that that there was one meeting of the Committee on statistics relating to the trading of goods between member states during the UK presidency. It was chaired by the Commission and was attended by representatives from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

The EU Committee for implementation of the action programme to promote gender equality met once during the UK presidency and the Commission chaired the meeting, in the usual way. The Department of Trade and Industry represents the UK.

The Restricted Committee of the Safety and Health Commission for the Mining and other Extractive Industries was wound up when the European Commission rationalised its consultative machinery on health and safety during 2003–04. In its place, a Standing Working Party on Mining and the Other Extractive Industries of the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work has been established. The Standing Working Party has met once during the UK Presidency on 13 December 2005 and it was presided over by a German Government representative. A senior official of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) attended.

On such committees, it is normal practice to send a single UK representative. When appropriate, they will consult the devolved Administrations.

Jobcentres (Tower Hamlets)

Mr. Galloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) for what reasons the decision was taken not to use the local jobcentres in the London borough of Tower Hamlets to deliver the employment zone and the working neighbourhood pilot; [36366]

(2) how jobcentre staff in the London borough of Tower Hamlets were given the opportunity to compete with the private sector to provide job seeking services. [36372]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 11 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions asking for what reasons the decision was taken not to use the local jobcentres in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to deliver the Employment Zone and the Working Neighbourhood Pilot; and how jobcentre staff in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets were given the opportunity to compete with the private sector to provide job seeking services. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

In 1997 the then Employment Service was given the opportunity to compete to deliver the Employment Zone in Tower Hamlets, but decided not to submit an in-house bid. Instead, it formed a consortium with Manpower and Ernst & Young called Working Links' to provide a public/private partnership. This provided Jobcentre staff in Tower Hamlets with the opportunity of applying for secondment to work for Working Links.

Employment Zone contractors used their own premises to deliver their business. They were offered space within Jobcentre offices and most took the decision to provide a small presence for a first point of contact before referring customers to their own premises.

Lone Parents

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes to lone parent benefit entitlements have been implemented since 1990; and if he will make a statement. [36165]

Margaret Hodge: Currently, the only benefit for which "lone parent" is a category for entitlement is income support.

The criteria allowing lone parents to qualify for income support have principally remained unchanged since 1988 in that the customer would, in addition to being a lone parent, also have to satisfy other conditions of entitlement common to all claimants. The criteria for claiming income support as a lone parent did see substantial change when Work Focused Interviews were introduced in August 2000.

The Work Focused Interview for Lone Parent (LPWFI) regulations require lone parents to participate in a Work Focused Interview at the outset of their claim. From October 2005 lone parents are also required to attend a Work Focused Interview once every three months when their youngest child is aged 14 or over, to help them prepare for the transition to JSA once their child reaches 16 years and avoid drift onto incapacity Benefit.

While the introduction of LPWFI presented a major change to the criteria for claiming the benefit, income support has continued to evolve to meet the needs of all the people it provides for. Many changes introduced on income support have not been exclusive to lone parents, though along with other client groups they have continued to benefit from the enhancements made to the benefit; such as Mortgage Interest Run-On (MIRO) or the recent introduction of Child Maintenance Premium (CMP).

The key social security changes affecting lone parents are in the table.

Key changes to lone parent benefits since 1990

	Changes
1993	The introduction of the Child Support Agency (CSA) sought to ensure absent parents met the financial responsibilities for their children.
1997	Introduction of Child Maintenance Bonus payments on movement into full-time work, of 16 or more hours a week. Launch of New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) in eight prototype areas. Standard amount payable for Dependant Children Significant increase to the amount of Dependants Allowance.
1998	Lone parent premium in Income Support and One Parent Benefit abolished for lone parents making a new claim. Childcare disregard increased to £100 where two or more children are eligible (children up to age 12). NDLP implemented nationally. Improved provision for work-related training within NDLP. Introduction of linking rule to preserve benefit entitlement for breaks of up to 12 weeks.
1999	Family Credit replaced with Working Families' Tax Credit to supplement the income of working parents. Introduction of National Minimum Wage. Lone Parent Benefit Run-On (LPRO) introduced—subsequently replaced by the two levels of Job Grant in October 2004, which ensure the financial assistance available to assist customers in their transition from benefits into work is more equitable for all benefit recipients.
2000	Work Focused Interview target group extended to those with a youngest child aged three or over (formerly aged five and three months or over). Introduction of compulsory Personal Adviser meetings in three 'pathfinder' areas. Introduction of In-Work Training Grant pilots for those already in employment.
2001	Target set to get 70 per cent. of lone parents into work by 2010. National introduction of compulsory Personal Adviser meetings for new and repeat claimants and existing claimants with youngest child 13–15 years. Extension of NDLP to all non-working lone parents and to those working fewer than 16 hours (regardless of whether claiming benefits). Extension of Work-Based Learning for Adults to lone parents aged 18–24.

Key changes to lone parent benefits since 1990

	Changes
	Basic skills screening introduced at initial NDLP interview. Adviser Discretion Fund replaces Jobseeker's Grant for lone parents. Introduction of Jobcentre Plus. Self employment option is available for NDLP from autumn 2001.
2002	Outreach to increase participation in voluntary NDP/NDLP. Personal advisor (PA) meetings extended further with roll-out to existing one parent claimants with youngest child aged 9–12 and new repeat clients with youngest child aged three and above. Compulsory six monthly PA review meetings in pathfinder areas and for all new lone parent claimants nationally. Full national roll out of Jobcentre Plus. 12-monthly review meetings for existing lone parent claimants introduced.
2003	New Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credits begin. Mandatory PA meetings extended to new and repeat lone parent claimants of IS with children under 3 and to existing claimants with youngest children aged 5–8 years.
2004	Mandatory PA meetings extended to cover more frequent interviews. Extended WFI regulations ensuring all lone parents on income support are covered. A new mentoring service across the country tailored specifically for lone parents. The development (working closely with employers) of a targeted communications strategy in six metropolitan areas, to supplement existing national and local advertising campaigns. Discovery Week pilots in six major metropolitan areas to boost soft skills and knowledge of help available. Childcare taster pilots from April 2004. The introduction of a new £20 per week Work Search Premium in 8 pilot areas and new £40 per week In-Work Credit in 12 pilot areas available to lone parents who have been on income support for 12 months or more. A new flexible fund for debt advisory services. Lone parents joining Employment Zones.
2005	The Pathways to Work for Lone Parents pilot was launched, bringing together extra support and childcare help with added financial incentives for lone parents to look for and move into work.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of lone parents are in employment; what work search responsibilities apply to lone parents with teenage children; and if he will make a statement. [36166]

Margaret Hodge: Since 1997 the lone parent employment rate has increased by 11 percentage points to 56.6 per cent. In May 2005 there were 787,000 people claiming lone parent benefits, down from 1,013,500 in May 1997.

New deal for lone parents (NDLP) is a voluntary programme, which is available to lone parents who are not working, or working less than 16 hours a week. They must be aged 16 or over and have a dependent child under 16 years of age. Under NDLP, lone parents are offered support and financial incentives via Personal Advisers, who can help their customers identify and deal with any barriers preventing them from moving into work.

Lone parents in receipt of income support are required to participate in a Work Focused Interview at the outset of their claim. From October 2005 lone parents are also required to attend a Work Focused Interview once every three months when their youngest child is aged 14 or over, to help them prepare for the transition to JSA once their child reaches 16 years and avoid drift onto incapacity benefit.

From October 2005 lone parents are also required to agree an action plan with their Personal Adviser as a condition of completing their initial WFI.

The condition of entitlement to IS as a lone parent ceases once their youngest child reaches age 16. At this stage, if they are not in work and wish to continue to receive benefit, they must claim jobseeker's allowance or, if they have a health problem, incapacity benefit. They would then be subject to the respective conditionally rules associated with these benefits.

Ministerial Cars

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Department has spent on ministerial cars in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [27149]

Mrs. McGuire: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office has asked Roy Burke, Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) to write to the hon. Member with details of the costs of ministerial vehicles provided to Departments in 2004–05. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

For information for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04 I refer the hon. Member to the letters from the Chief Executive of the GCDA to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) dated 10 January 2005 and to the then hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs dated 13 September 2003. Copies of these letters are available in the Library.

Mr. Gareth Davies

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to which official post Mr. Gareth Davies has been appointed in his Department; what level of remuneration he will receive; and from what date the appointment took effect. [40352]

Mrs. McGuire: Mr. Gareth Davies has not been appointed to any post in this Department.

New Deal

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* over 25s, *(b)* lone parents, *(c)* over 50s and *(d)* young people have participated in the new deal in Beverley and Holderness in each year since its inception. [37441]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in the tables.

Number of starts to new deal 25 plus, per year, in Beverley and Holderness (individuals)

Time period	*Number starts to ND25+ (individuals)*
July 1998-March 1999	70
April 1999-March 2000	90
April 2000-March 2001	90
April 2001-March 2002	150

Number of starts to new deal 25 plus, per year, in Beverley and Holderness (individuals)

Time period	Number starts to ND25+ (individuals)
April 2002-March 2003	170
April 2003-March 2004	140
April 2004-March 2005	130
April 2005-August 2005	20

Notes:
1. New deal 25 plus was introduced nationally in July 1998.
2. Latest data is to August 2005.
3. Data is rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Number of starts to new deal for lone parents, per year, Beverley and Holderness (individuals)

Time period	Number starts to NDLP caseload (individuals)
October 1998-March 1999	40
April 1999-March 2000	80
April 2000-March 2001	80
April 2001-March 2002	80
April 2002-March 2003	150
April 2003-March 2004	120
April 2004-March 2005	220
April 2005-August 2005	80

Notes:
1. New deal for lone parents was introduced nationally in October 1998.
2. Latest data is to August 2005.
3. Data is rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Number of starts to new deal for young people, per year, in Beverley and Holderness (individuals)

Time period	Number starts to NDYP (individuals)
April 1998-March 1999	270
April 1999-March 2000	180
April 2000-March 2001	160
April 2001-March 2002	150
April 2002-March 2003	140
April 2003-March 2004	160
April 2004-March 2005	150
April 2005-August 2005	80

Notes:
1. New deal for young people was introduced nationally in April 1998.
2. Latest data is to August 2005.
3. Data is rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Number of starts to new deal 50 plus, per year, in Beverley and Holderness (individuals)

Time period	Number starts to ND50+ caseload (individuals)
January 2004-March 2004	20
April 2004-March 2005	60
April 2005-August 2005	20

Notes:
1. New deal 50 plus starts to caseload data is only available from January 2004.
2. Latest data is to August 2005.
3. Data is rounded to nearest 10.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

Pension Forecasts

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pension forecasts have been sent by his retirement pension forecasting team *(a)* in total and *(b)* to persons aged (i) under 18 years and (ii) between 18 and 25 years of age since the inception of the scheme. [38060]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* State pension forecasts have been issued since 1988. Information on the number of forecasts issued is only available from April 1996. Since that date 21.85 million pension forecasts have been issued.

Information on age groups is only available from April 2003. Since that date 560,000 pension forecasts have been sent to persons aged under 18 years, and a further 1.20 million pension forecasts have been sent to persons aged between 18 and 25 years.

Pensioner Poverty

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people of retirement age were living on an income deemed to be beneath the poverty line in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales, *(d)* Northern Ireland and *(e)* London in each of the last five years. [40612]

Mr. Timms: The number of pensioners living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median—a measure of 'relative' low income—and below 60 per cent. of 1996–97 GB median—a measure of 'absolute' low income—are presented in the following tables. For consistency all figures are presented as three-year rolled averages as single year estimates for the English regions, including London, are not robust. Equivalent data is not available for Northern Ireland, as the necessary information has only been collected for two financial years.

Number of pensioners living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median

Million

	Three-year rolling averages				
Before housing costs	*1997–98 to 1999–2000*	*1998–99 to 2000–01*	*1999–2000 to 2001–02*	*2000–01 to 2002–03*	*2001–02 to 2003–04*
England	1.98	1.96	1.96	1.97	1.95
Scotland	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.17	0.17
Wales	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.12	0.13
London	0.19	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19
After housing costs					
England	2.33	2.26	2.14	2.05	1.92

Number of pensioners living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median

Million

Before housing costs	*1997–98 to 1999–2000*	*1998–99 to 2000–01*	*1999–2000 to 2001–02*	*2000–01 to 2002–03*	*2001–02 to 2003–04*
			Three-year rolling averages		
Scotland	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.19	0.18
Wales	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.12
London	0.30	0.29	0.28	0.25	0.24

Number of pensioners living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of 1996–97 GB median

Million

Before housing costs	*1997–98 to 1999–2000*	*1998–99 to 2000–01*	*1999–2000 to 2001–02*	*2000–01 to 2002–03*	*2001–02 to 2003–04*
			Three-year rolling averages		
England	1.77	1.62	1.43	1.27	1.12
Scotland	0.16	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.09
Wales	0.12	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.07
London	0.17	0.16	0.15	0.13	0.12
After housing costs					
England	2.03	1.73	1.37	1.09	0.90
Scotland	0.20	0.17	0.13	0.10	0.08
Wales	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.05
London	0.27	0.23	0.19	0.14	0.12

Note:
Tables show numbers in millions and rounded to the nearest 10,000.

Pensioners

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* single female pensioners, *(b)* single male pensioners and *(c)* married pensioner couples are receiving financial assistance to bring them up to the minimum pension level in (i) each constituency in Wales and (ii) each ward in the Vale of Clwyd. [39300]

Mr. Timms: The available information is in the following table:

Guarantee credit recipients by parliamentary constituency in Wales as at September 2005

	All			*Single*			*Couples*		
	Total	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*	*Female claimant*	*Male claimant*
Wales	126,500	81,800	44,700	100,500	76,900	23,600	26,000	4,900	21,100
Aberavon	3,500	2,300	1,200	2,700	2,200	600	800	100	600
Alyn and Deeside	2,500	1,700	800	2,100	1,600	400	500	100	400
Blaenau Gwent	3,700	2,400	1,300	3,000	2,300	700	700	100	600
Brecon and Radnorshire	2,500	1,700	800	2,000	1,600	400	500	100	400
Bridgend	2,900	1,900	1,000	2,300	1,800	500	600	100	500
Caernarfon	3,100	2,100	1,100	2,500	2,000	500	600	100	500
Caerphilly	3,800	2,400	1,400	2,900	2,300	600	900	100	700
Cardiff Central	2,100	1,300	800	1,700	1,200	500	400	100	300
Cardiff North	2,200	1,500	700	1,800	1,400	400	400	100	300
Cardiff South and Penarth	4,400	2,700	1,700	3,600	2,500	1,000	800	100	700
Cardiff West	3,600	2,200	1,400	2,900	2,100	800	700	100	500
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	3,000	1,900	1,100	2,400	1,800	600	600	100	500
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	3,200	2,000	1,200	2,500	1,900	600	700	100	600
Ceredigion	2,700	1,700	1,000	2,100	1,600	500	600	100	500
Clwyd South	3,100	2,000	1,100	2,500	1,900	600	600	100	500
Clwyd West	3,500	2,200	1,200	2,700	2,100	600	800	200	600
Conwy	3,000	2,000	1,000	2,500	1,900	600	600	100	500
Cynon Valley	3,200	2,100	1,000	2,500	2,000	500	700	100	500
Delyn	2,700	1,700	1,000	2,100	1,600	500	600	100	500
Gower	2,800	1,900	900	2,200	1,800	500	500	100	400
Islwyn	2,900	1,900	1,000	2,300	1,800	500	600	100	500
Llanelli	4,200	2,800	1,500	3,300	2,600	800	900	200	700
Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	1,900	1,200	700	1,500	1,200	400	400	100	300
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	3,700	2,400	1,300	3,000	2,300	700	700	100	600
Monmouth	2,700	1,800	900	2,100	1,700	500	500	100	400
Montgomeryshire	2,100	1,400	700	1,700	1,300	400	400	100	300
Neath	3,400	2,300	1,100	2,700	2,100	600	700	200	500
Newport East	2,700	1,800	1,000	2,100	1,700	500	600	100	500
Newport West	3,400	2,200	1,200	2,800	2,100	700	600	100	500
Ogmore	3,100	2,000	1,100	2,400	1,800	600	700	100	500
Pontypridd	3,300	2,200	1,200	2,600	2,000	600	700	200	600
Preseli Pembrokeshire	3,100	2,000	1,100	2,500	1,900	600	700	100	500
Rhondda	4,300	2,800	1,500	3,400	2,600	800	900	200	800
Swansea East	3,700	2,400	1,400	2,900	2,200	700	900	200	700
Swansea West	3,700	2,400	1,400	3,000	2,200	800	700	100	600
Torfaen	3,600	2,300	1,200	2,800	2,200	600	800	200	600

Guarantee credit recipients by parliamentary constituency in Wales as at September 2005

	All			Single			Couples	
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female claimant	Male claimant
Vale of Clwyd	3,800	2,400	1,400	3,000	2,200	800	900	200	700
Vale of Glamorgan	3,100	2,000	1,100	2,500	1,900	600	600	100	500
Wrexham	2,900	1,900	1,000	2,300	1,800	600	500	100	400
Ynys Mon	3,300	2,100	1,200	2,500	2,000	600	700	100	600

Guarantee credit recipients by ward within the Vale of Clwyd as at May 2005

	All			Single			Couples	
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female claimant	Male claimant
All	3,835	2,415	1,420	2,985	2,240	750	850	180	670
Bodelwyddan	60	30	35	40	30	15	20	[1]	20
Denbigh Central	65	45	20	60	50	10	5	[1]	5
Denbigh Lower	155	115	35	125	105	20	25	10	15
Denbigh Upper/Henllan	140	80	60	115	70	35	30	5	20
Dyserth	100	60	40	80	55	25	25	5	20
Llandyrnog	85	55	25	70	55	20	10	5	10
Prestatyn Central	175	115	65	135	105	30	40	5	40
Prestatyn East	180	120	60	150	120	30	25	[1]	30
Prestatyn Meliden	100	65	40	70	55	15	30	5	25
Prestatyn North	405	245	160	285	225	65	125	25	95
Prestatyn South West	190	115	80	135	100	30	60	15	45
Rhuddlan	160	105	50	125	100	20	35	10	30
Rhyl East	470	315	155	390	300	95	85	15	65
Rhyl South	195	120	75	125	100	25	70	20	50
Rhyl South East	330	210	120	250	195	55	80	15	65
Rhyl South West	350	220	130	275	205	75	75	15	60
Rhyl West	365	175	180	305	170	135	60	15	45
St. Asaph East	75	55	20	60	50	15	10	[1]	5
St. Asaph West	90	60	30	65	55	15	20	[1]	20
Trefnant	105	75	30	95	70	20	10	5	5
Tremeirchion	45	30	15	30	25	10	10	5	5

[1] Nil or negligible.

Notes:

1. Parliamentary constituency caseloads are rounded to the nearest 100 therefore totals may not sum.
2. Data for parliamentary constituency and wards are not released simultaneously. The data provided is the most recent for each.
3. All benefit counts at ward level are rounded to a multiple of 5 to protect the confidentiality of the individual claimants.
4. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
5. WPLS data are taken as at 31 May2005.
6. These figures used for the parliamentary constituencies are early estimates.

Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases and these figures become available three to four months after the early estimates.

7. Couples may contain a number of partners who are less than the age of 60.
8. The table includes clients who are in receipt of Guarantee Credit only and those who receive Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit.
9. Parliamentary constituencies and wards are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.
10. All wards nest within the Vale of Clwyd parliamentary constituency apart from Llandyrnog which is partly with Clwyd West constituency, therefore the sum of the wards will not match the Vale of Clwyd parliamentary constituency value.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (100 per cent. data).

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed between 18 and 32 weeks of gestation in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority in 2004–05, broken down by week of gestation. [36416]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the table.

Number of abortions by gestation 18 weeks and over for women resident in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority, 2004[1]

Gestation weeks	Number
18	52
19	48
20	36
21	21
22	17
23 and over	20

[1] Data published by calendar year. Data for 2005 will be available in summer 2006.

Note:

Totals for gestations over 23 weeks are less than 10 and for confidentially reasons are not available for release.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions have been performed in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic

health authority in each year since 1975 on girls between the ages of 10 and 17, broken down by age; and how many were performed to save the life of the patient. [36417]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the table.

Numbers of terminations by age for women aged under 18, resident in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority (SHA), 2002–04[1]

	Age			
	14 and under	*15*	*16*	*17*
2004	32	66	154	239
2003	27	76	148	225
2002	34	57	150	223

[1] Prior to 2002, information was published by health authority and not directly comparable with SHAs.

Notes:

1. The total number of terminations to girls under 18 resident in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA that were performed to save the life of the pregnant woman was less than 10, between zero to nine, and for confidentiality reasons are not available for release.
2. Individual ages for 14 and under are less than 10 and for confidentiality reasons are not available for release.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* live births and *(b)* abortions there were in (i) Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority, (ii) Northampton primary care trust, (iii) Daventry and South Northamptonshire primary care trust and (iv) Northamptonshire Heartlands primary care trust in each year since 1976. [36419]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the table.

Number of live births and abortions to residents of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority (SHA) and Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Heartlands primary care trusts, 2002–04[1].

	Live Births	*Abortions*
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA		
2004	19,407	4,831
2003	19,090	4,641
2002	18,061	4,474
Northampton PCT		
2004	2,758	835
2003	2,813	772
2002	2,600	742
Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT		
2004	1,183	260
2003	1,163	257
2002	1,543	223
Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT		
2004	3,453	818
2003	3,311	858
2002	3,267	847

[1] Prior to 2002 information was published by health authority and not directly comparable with SHAs or PCTs.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority had more than one abortion in the last five years, broken down by the number of abortions; [36422]

(2) how many abortions were performed in *(a)* Northampton primary care trust, *(b)* Daventry and South Northamptonshire primary care trust and *(c)* Northamptonshire Heartland primary care trust in the last five years, broken down by the number of previous abortions performed on the woman concerned. [36741]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the tables.

Number of abortions[1] *to women resident in Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Heartland primary care trusts (PCTs) and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority (SHA) in 2002–04*[2]

	Number of previous abortions		
Northampton PCT	*0*	*1*	*2 and more*
2004	612	177	46
2003	557	172	43
2002	553	151	38

	Number of previous abortions		
Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT	*0*	*1*	*2 and more*
2004	194	54	12
2003	184	59	14
2002	169	41	13

	Number of previous abortions			
Northamptonshire Heartland PCT	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3 and more*
2004	599	178	26	15
2003	636	189	20	13
2002	631	169	30	17

	Number of previous abortions				
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4 and more*
2004	3,484	1,087	202	44	14
2003	3,321	1,068	189	45	18
2002	3,294	937	184	38	20

[1] Number of abortions throughout the whole of the women's reproductive life.

[2] Prior to 2002, information was published by health authority and not directly comparable with SHAs or PCTs.

Note:

For confidentiality reasons, groups shown are where the totals are 10 or more.

Academic Medicine

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many posts in academic medicine there were in each of the last 10 years, broken down by specialty; and what forecasts have been made for such posts for each of the next three years. [35160]

Mr. Byrne: The council of heads of medical schools and the council of deans of dental schools collect this information which can be found at www.chms.ac.uk. The Department does not collect data centrally on clinical academics.

Agency Staff

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which she has responsibility in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London in 2004–05. [35940]

Jane Kennedy: The total number of staff employed by executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Department as at 31 March 2005 is recorded in table 2 of public bodies 2005, a copy of which is available in the Library and is also available on the civil service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/the_future_of_the_civil_service/agencies_and_public__bodies/news/index.asp.

However, public bodies does not give the regional breakdowns sought and this data is not held by the Department. They could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The number of staff employed in the Department's executive agencies as at 1 April 2004, including a regional analysis, is available in civil service statistics 2004, published in February 2005. A copy is available in the Library and is also available on the civil service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2004__report/index.asp.

Alcohol Misuse

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Home Secretary on developing multi-agency action on alcohol misuse through the community safety partnerships. [39429]

Caroline Flint: The Department and Home Office Ministers have regular discussions on a range of issues including the role of community safety partnerships.

Multi-agency action is an important building block of the alcohol harm reduction strategy. Community safety partnerships, which include the police, local authorities, and primary care trusts, are taking forward local initiatives to manage the night time economy and the impact that alcohol misuse can have in the community.

The recently launched, "Alcohol Misuse Interventions—Guidance on developing a local programme of improvement" places a great emphasis on working in partnership. Annex G specifically mentions the role of the crime and disorder reduction partnerships and encourages health organisations to work within them to plan for and deliver improved local alcohol treatment services and other interventions.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Home Secretary on providing education and training for *(a)* public and *(b)* voluntary sector staff who work with vulnerable groups on screening for alcohol problems, with particular reference to people in the criminal justice system. [39438]

Caroline Flint: The Department and Home Office Ministers have regular discussions on a range of issues involving alcohol misuse.

The Department plans to commission a programme of trailblazer pilots for alcohol screening and brief interventions. Although the contract has still to be finalised, we have selected a consortium led by St. George's Medical School (University of London) and Newcastle University to operate theses pilots and extract the learning from them to apply to a larger roll-out programme planned for the future.

These trailblazer pilots will operate in three settings; primary care, accident and emergency and criminal justice settings. These pilots will involve training people within the criminal justice system to deliver alcohol screening and brief interventions In some of these settings voluntary sector agencies may be contracted to provide these interventions and they will be appropriately trained to do so. The purpose of the pilots is to determine which methods of training, which screening tools and which brief interventions are most effective in each of the settings.

As the findings from these pilots emerge, we will make the learning available to the wider health and social care network, including the voluntary sector, as well as the criminal justice system to encourage them to implement the alcohol screening and brief interventions into their practice.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to develop local campaigns to promote sensible drinking. [39439]

Caroline Flint: Local communications are being considered as part of a national campaign to address binge drinking. The national campaign will develop new materials for use at local level. Currently, some local national health service organisations are already considering or delivering local campaigns to promote sensible drinking.

Animal Insulins

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the pharmaceuticals company Novo Nordisk will continue to produce pork insulins for use in the UK; [40154]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with Wockhardt regarding maintaining the supply of animal insulin; and if she will make a statement; [40156]

(3) pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2108W, on diabetes, what steps she has taken to ensure that patients requiring insulin treatment have access to their usual insulin species while in hospital as an in-patient. [40448]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 9 January 2006]*: Novo Nordisk has informed the Department that it will make a decision about the continued supply of its animal insulin in the United Kingdom in 2006.

The Department is in regular contact with Wockhardt UK. The company has confirmed that it has no plans to discontinue supply of its animal insulin's in the UK.

Animal insulin's are available in the UK to treat patients in hospitals, as well as those in the community. It is up to the clinician, in consultation with the patient, to decide which treatment is most suitable.

Aylesbury Vale PCT

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account she has taken in decisions on funding for Aylesbury Vale primary care trust of changes in the number of people in the area was reported living with a limiting long-term illness between the 1991 and 2001 census. [39675]

Caroline Flint: The weighted capitation formula used to inform allocations to all primary care trusts in England includes an age standardised measure of limiting long-term illness from the 1998 to 2000 Health Survey for England in the component of the formula that measures relative additional need for primary medical services.

Cancer Treatment

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the *(a)* Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency product licence and *(b)* National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance to be issued on the use of Herceptin for the treatment of early stage breast cancer. [23964]

Jane Kennedy: On the 22 September 2005, the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) issued a press statement anticipating that Roche would submit a product licence variation application for use of Herceptin in early stage breast cancer by the beginning of 2006. The statement further indicated that similar types of submissions in important oncology indications in the past have been dealt with by the EMEA in an expedited review within two to three months.

Herceptin for early stage breast cancer was referred to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) on 21 July 2005. Herceptin will be one of the first drugs to be appraised using NICE'S new single technology appraisal process, which will allow guidance to be issued shortly after any licence is granted.

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients with suspected cancer waited less than two weeks for a specialist appointment in the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement. [38578]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In the last 12 months some 498,310 (96.6 per cent.) patients with suspected cancer were seen by a specialist within two weeks of urgent referral by their general practitioner.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Services

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how long on average patients who had had a heart attack waited for cardiac rehabilitation services in *(a)* England, *(b)* Kettering hospital NHS Trust and *(c)* Northampton General hospital NHS Trust in 2004–05. [40538]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Cholesterol

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of the annual cost to the NHS of treating people with unhealthy cholesterol levels. [36760]

Caroline Flint: £769 million was spent on lipid-regulating drugs for the treatment of unhealthy cholesterol levels in England in 2004. The wider costs of treatments for people with raised cholesterol have not recently been estimated.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the NHS on (i) dietary advice and (ii) drug treatment for those at risk of raised cholesterol. [36765]

Caroline Flint: To date, the Department has spent approximately £6.9 million on promoting positive benefits of a healthy diet and approximately £2.82 billion on lipid-regulating drugs, used to treat those at risk of raised cholesterol. The Department has not separately estimated the cost of dietary advice for those at risk of raised cholesterol.

Contingency Planning

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation has been undertaken concerning the preparation of the draft emergency regulations which could be made under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in the event of a health emergency. [35051]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government maintains a set of draft emergency regulations which could provide the basis for emergency regulations should the criteria for the use of emergency powers set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 be met. The development of these draft regulations has been informed by the regular dialogue which takes place within and beyond government on the full range of civil contingencies issues, including health emergencies.

Dentistry

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the potential impact of the new general dental services contract on NHS dentistry. [38905]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]*: The impact of the new general dental services contract means that instead of being paid separate fees for each individual item of treatment, dentists will carry out an agreed number of courses of treatment over the course of a year. The required commitment will be 5 per cent. below traditional levels of activity.

The evidence from pilot personal dental services schemes, where dentists do not work on the item of service system, is that moving away from the 'item of service' treadmill allows dentists to follow a more preventive approach, with fewer, individual items of treatment within the average course of treatment.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) will now hold their own dental budget for primary care services. For the first time, PCTs will be able to commission new services to replace capacity where a dentist leaves the national health service or reduces their NHS commitment, and to determine where new practices are established to meet local needs.

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Manchester, Withington constituency have stopped carrying out NHS work since 1997. [40406]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Within the Withington constituency, one dental surgery working in the national health service general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) ceased to provide a GDS or PDS service between September 1997 and September 2005.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she intends to abolish the maximum annual patient dental charge with the introduction of the new General Dental Services contract in April 2006. [36432]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No maximum annual patient dental charge currently exists. The maximum charge per course of treatment is £384. The new charging regime means that from April 2006 the maximum charge for national health service dental treatment will be a band three charge, which for 2006–07 is £189—a reduction of over 50 per cent. from the current maximum charge for treatment.

Departmental Staff

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in her Department were *(a)* civil servants, *(b)* contractors and *(c)* other staff in each year since 1997. [27444]

Jane Kennedy: For the number of civil servants between 1998 and 2004, I refer the hon. Member to table C in Civil Service Statistics 2004 which covers permanent staff numbers (full-time equivalent basis) in the Department. Civil Service Statistics 2004 are available in the Library and on the Cabinet Office Statistics website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

The data for 1997 can be obtained from table C in Civil Service Statistics 2003, which is also available in the Library.

Information on the number of contractors within the Department is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Diabetes

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2108W, on diabetes, what assessment she has made of the safety of long-term use of insulin analogues, with particular reference to carcinogenic risks. [40447]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Human insulin analogues are licensed through the European centralised licensing procedure. The quality, safety and efficacy of these products in assessed prior to licensing by the European Scientific Advisory Committee, the Committee on Medicines for Human Use in accordance with European regulatory guidelines, including "Points to consider document on the non-clinical assessment of the carcinogenic potential of insulin analogues". The available clinical data does not provide any evidence to suggest that diabetic patients who receive either human insulin, insulin analogues or animal insulin analogues are at an increased risk of developing cancer.

The safety of human insulin analogues in clinical practice is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the European Medicines Agency.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2108W, on diabetes, what steps she has taken to *(a)* ensure that patients' next-of-kin and carers are able to make a fully informed choice among all insulin treatment options and *(b)* such choice is also available when individual insulin options are discontinued. [40449]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave on 23 November 2005, Official Report, column 2108W and the reply I gave today.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2109W, on diabetes, what guidance on the use of insulins her Department has issued to inform decision making by *(a)* patients and *(b)* clinicians; and what steps she has taken to provide information on the risks and benefits of all insulin regimes. [40450]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The choice of insulin prescribed to a patient is a clinical decision made as a result of a joint decision making process between the patient and their clinician taking into account all available evidence and the individuals specific clinical needs. From January 2006, the national Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on patient education will require all primary care trusts to implement NICE recommendations by providing all people with diabetes with high quality, structured education which should include information on insulin use.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings of the EU Pharmaceutical Committee have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38777]

Jane Kennedy: During the United Kingdom Presidency, the Pharmaceutical Committee met in Brussels on 12 September and 2 December 2005. On both occasions the meeting was chaired by a senior official from the Commission, which is the norm for this committee. The UK's role was largely unaffected by the Presidency, other than reporting on Council Presidency business. At the 12 September meeting the UK was represented by senior officials from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate; at the 2 December meeting, the UK was represented by two senior officials from the MHRA. The UK members of the Pharmaceutical Committee represent UK-wide interests on the Committee and work in co-operation with the Scottish Executive and other Devolved Administrations as required.

Eye Tests

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received from ophthalmologists and opticians about the retention of the nationally negotiated sight test and fee; [35062]

(2) what representations she has received from ophthalmologists and opticians on the continuation of the right of optometrists and registered corporate bodies to hold a local general ophthalmic services contract. [35063]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have received letters from optical representative bodies and from honourable members on behalf of opticians in their areas seeking reassurances in relation to the effect of the clauses in the Health Bill concerning General Ophthalmic Services (GOS).

I met with the three main optical bodies on 27 October 2005. They raised the issue of the continuation of the right optometrists and registered corporate bodies to hold a local general ophthalmic services contract. I assured them that we envisage the sight testing service operating like the GOS system now. Contractors, who meet agreed national criteria, subject to local decision on matters such as quality of service, will be able to have a GOS contract. Patients will be able to choose a GOS contractor who provides their sight test. We also envisage continuing to have a centrally negotiated sight test fee with access to sight tests not being constrained locally by individual primary care trust budgets.

Food Labelling

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes the planned amendments to food labelling laws will make to the information and choice available to consumers on genetically modified derivatives. [38971]

Caroline Flint: Rules for the labelling of genetically modified food products are provided by Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on genetically modified food and feed and the related national regulations, The Genetically Modified Food (England) Regulations 2004. There are no current plans to change the labelling of genetically modified food under these regulations.

The Regulations require that foods, which contain or consist of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), or are produced from or contain ingredients from GMOs, are labelled as containing or consisting of genetically modified ingredients. This includes ingredients such as glucose syrup, maize flour and soya oil.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact upon *(a)* existing brands and *(b)* consumer confidence of the proposed regulation of nutrition and health claims on food packaging and the prohibition of endorsements from healthcare professionals; and whether compensation will be available to businesses adversely affected. [39447]

Caroline Flint: The introduction of new safeguards is expected to increase consumer confidence in claims made for food products and to help consumers when making healthy eating choices. A partial regulatory impact assessment (RIA) on the impact of this proposed European Parliament and Council Regulation is available in the Library. This is being revised in light of the latest position and comments from interested parties.

During the first reading stage of the negotiations, the United Kingdom played a key role in securing deletion of various proposed bans on health claims. A prohibition on endorsements by individual healthcare professionals in labelling and advertising remains in the text and officials are exploring the potential impact of this prohibition on existing claims. Some stakeholders have expressed concern that this ban would apply to all advice by healthcare professionals However, only claims made in commercial communications would be affected.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consideration she has given to the way in which the Food Standards Agency should assess which charitable and healthcare organisations should be permitted to give endorsements to food products under the proposed regulation of nutrition and health claims made on food; what assessment she has made of the impact of this new regulation on the incomes of charities; and if she will make a statement. [39451]

Caroline Flint: The original proposal for an European Commission regulation on nutrition and health claims made on food sought to ban claims which referred to the advice of doctors or other health professionals, or their professional associations, or charities. The partial regulatory impact assessment recognised that this would seriously affect a number of charities and helped to inform United Kingdom policy. The UK was largely responsible for overturning this aspect of the proposal during the first reading stage of negotiation, in favour of control of endorsements or recommendations being left to national rules.

It is intended to introduce best practice guidelines to the food industry, medical associations and health charities, but there are no plans to introduce a list of charities or healthcare organisations permitted to make recommendations or endorsements of food products. The Food Standards Agency expects to consult on the guidelines before the regulation is adopted.

Food Supplements

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress of the EU proposal for a regulation on the addition of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients to foods; what her objectives are for the negotiations on this legislation; what assessment she has made of the implications for the setting of maximum permitted levels for nutrients in food supplements under article 5 of the food supplements directive of the proposed authorisation of the fortification of foods under this new regulation; and if she will make a statement. [39795]

Caroline Flint: The proposed European Parliament and Council regulation on the addition of vitamins and minerals and other substances to foods has completed its first reading under the co-decision procedures and is due to begin its second reading in the European Parliament. The United Kingdom has achieved key objectives during the first reading phase of protecting traditional products and of introducing harmonised European Commission arrangements for assessment and possible action concerning the safety of substances other than vitamins and minerals. Our objective is to help steer this proposal to adoption to ensure consumer protection and harmonised rules within the single market.

The proposal provides for the setting of maximum amounts for vitamins and minerals in foods, not food supplements, which must take into account a scientific risk assessment and intakes from other dietary sources, including food supplements. Article 5 of EC Directive 2002/46/EC on food supplements already contains a similar provision.

There are, as yet, no EC proposals for the setting of maximum levels for vitamins and minerals, and the Government have made no assessment in relation to their application to food supplements or the fortification of foods. Once proposals come forward, a regulatory impact assessment will be prepared and published for consultation.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance will be made available to small and medium-sized enterprises from *(a)* the Government and *(b)* the European Union in relation to the costs of compliance with the provisions of the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive; and if she will make a statement. [39450]

Jane Kennedy: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has to date held around 60 meetings to offer regulatory advice to individual companies on their initial plans to register traditional herbal medicines. These meetings are helping companies to use their resources effectively in preparing to meet the requirements of the new registration scheme. The Small Business Service offers guidance and information on new directives and regulations on its website at www.businesslink.gov.uk. The website also sets out the range of support, not linked to specific legislation, that is offered to small business.

GM Crops

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will list all tests carried out for the unauthorised presence of Bt10 in imported *(a)* maize, *(b)* maize products and *(c)* processed foodstuffs intended for (i) animal and (ii) human consumption; and which tests were (A) positive and (B) negative; [38979]

(2) if she will list all tests carried out for the presence of the illegal GM maize variety Bt10 at *(a)* British ports and *(b)* other entry points since March 2005; and which tests were (i) positive and (ii) negative. [38984]

Caroline Flint: The sampling of animal feeds (corn gluten feed and brewers' grains) for Bt10 has been carried out by local authorities within their jurisdiction since March 2005. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) does not hold information on the samples taken or the number of samples tested. This information is held by the authorities, which carried out sampling. The FSA is not aware of any sample that was tested and found to be positive for the presence of Bt10 maize.

The FSA has carried out its own survey in order to increase the number of samples tested for Bt10 maize. The intention of this survey was to sample consignments of raw or minimally processed maize products for animal and human consumption coming into the United Kingdom from the United States of America either at ports or at importers or feed mill premises. Results will be published in early 2006 in accordance with FSA's guidelines on surveys to publish results within 20 weeks of sampling.

GPs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether general practitioners who overspend their annual budget are penalised by her Department; and if she will make a statement; [34527]

(2) how many general practitioners had *(a)* an underspend and *(b)* an overspend in their budget in each primary care trust area in each of the last two years for which figures are available. [34528]

Mr. Byrne: General practitioner (GP) practices have been able to participate in practice based commissioning (PBC) since April 2005. Prior to this, practices have not been delegated indicative PBC budgets. Therefore, it is not possible to provide the data requested. The publication "Practice Based Commissioning:" Engaging practices in commissioning' is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/09/03/59/04090359.pdf. Paragraphs 19 to 22 and 33 of this publication address and provide guidance on the issue of GP practices overspending against their indicative practice based commissioning budgets.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the siting of local general practitioner practices. [40222]

Jane Kennedy: In line with the policy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", it is now for primary care trusts to plan, develop and improve general practitioner services. This includes making decisions about the location and relocation of general practitioner practices.

Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how compliance with section 15 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 is monitored; and which NHS organisations *(a)* have reached, *(b)* are below and *(c)* have exceeded the cap applied under that section. [34660]

Mr. Byrne: The terms of authorisation for national health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs) sets out the limitation on the level of income that can be derived from private patient charges in any financial year. This limitation is underpinned by section 15 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. Each of the current 32 NHSFTs is therefore required under primary legislation and their terms of authorisation to limit the percentage of private patient income to the same level as it was when the organisation was an NHS trust in 2002–03, and cannot increase its income from private patients at the expense of NHS patients.

Monitor (the statutory name of which is the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts) assesses whether NHSFTs are complying with their terms of authorisation using its compliance framework, which is available at www.monitor-nhsft.gov.uk. Compliance with the restriction on private patient activity is measured on an annual basis. I am informed by the chairman of Monitor that no NHSFT has so far exceeded its 'private patient cap'. To do so would mean breaching a statutory duty and the terms of authorisation, where Monitor could use its powers to intervene. Further details on the restriction of private patient income for NHSFTs can be found in Monitor's Review and Consolidated Accounts of NHS Foundation Trusts 2004–05, which was recently laid before Parliament and is also available on Monitor's website.

Health Committee Evidence

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral evidence from Mr. Andrew Foster to the Health Committee on 1 December 2005, HC 736-i, on public expenditure on health and personal social services 2005, what the figures on agency staff are which are referred to at Question 128. [36480]

Mr. Byrne: The figures referred to in the question are the provisional 2004–05 trust financial returns which show that the percentage of total national health service pay bill spent on agency staff has decreased from 5.1 per cent. in 2003–04 to 4.2 per cent. in 2004–05. This is the lowest percentage level in six years.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to question 172 of the oral evidence from Mr. John Bacon to the Health Committee on 1 December 2005, HC736-i, on public expenditure on health and personal social services, how many patients were waiting over *(a)* six months for in-patient treating and *(b)* 13 weeks for out-patient treatment in each week since 30 September. [36481]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table. It is important to note that this weekly provider data are not subject to the same validation process as the monthly and quarterly commissioner data published by the Department and is therefore not as robust.

Number of patients waiting for in-patient and out-patient treatment

Week ending	*Over six month in-patient waits*	*Over 13 week out-patient waits*
25 September 2005	39,635	50,462
2 October 2005	36,119	43,666
9 October 2005	35,476	45,300
16 October 2005	34,001	44,402
23 October 2005	31,241	39,708
30 October 2005	27,473	33,769
6 November 2005	26,112	32,995
13 November 2005	24,781	32,253
20 November 2005	21,587	28,668
27 November 2005	17,084	22,059
4 December 2005	12,962	13,529

Note:
Figures included Welsh patients waiting at a hospital in England.
Source:
Provider based weekly monitoring data

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral evidence from Sir Nigel Crisp to the Health Committee on 1 December, HC736-i, on public expenditure on health and personal social services 2005, if she will break down the efficiency savings referred to at question 8 by cost area; how much of the saving was made *(a)* centrally and *(b)* in each strategic health authority area; and in what time frame she intends further savings to be made. [36490]

Mr. Byrne: Our autumn performance report published on 7 December provides a breakdown of the current £1.7 billion savings and identifies future plans.

Efficiency gains have been calculated using national level data and have not been disaggregated to strategic health authority level.

Health Services (Northamptonshire)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health to which NHS organisations in Northamptonshire her Department intends to send turnaround teams. [36142]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not intend to send turnaround teams to any organisations in the Northamptonshire area.

Health Staff (Early Retirement)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* general practitioners, *(b)* consultants and *(c)* nurses have retired early in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [34600]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is currently unavailable. The NHS Pensions Agency however expects the information to be available from April 2006 and will write to the hon. Member to provide it in the format requested.

Hepatitis C

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the hepatitis C FaCe it campaign. [34659]

Caroline Flint: Qualitative research of hepatitis C awareness among general practitioners and practice nurses has been carried out this year. This research, which repeats a baseline study carried out in 2001, indicates that awareness of hepatitis C is much improved compared to 2001 and that hepatitis C testing is being offered to those known to be at risk.

The Health Protection Agency has been monitoring the number of reported laboratory diagnoses of hepatitis C, which is a national outcome indicator for implementation of the "Hepatitis C Action Plan for England". There has been a noticeable upward trend in hepatitis C diagnoses since 2000 from just under 5,000 reports to around 8,000 in 2004.

Injecting drug users are the group currently at greatest risk of hepatitis C infection in this country. The unlinked anonymous prevalence monitoring programme's survey of injecting drug users in contact with specialist services showed that 67 per cent. had had a voluntary confidential test for hepatitis C in 2004 compared to 49 per cent. in 2000.

There has also been qualitative research this year into format and design of the hepatitis C "Face Your Past" leaflet, which is being widely distributed as the hepatitis C awareness photography exhibition tours regional cities. This research suggested that the design, content and tone were effective at gaining attention and giving a clear message without causing panic.

Research into public awareness of hepatitis C will be carried out in 2006. This will repeat a survey of awareness among the general public and groups at increased risk of infection in 2003.

Note:

For example, needle exchanges or treatment programmes, such as methadone maintenance.

Heroin Addicts

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the use of *(a)* buphrenorphine and *(b)* suboxone in tackling heroin addiction among prisoners. [40688]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* People in prison are prescribed buphrenorphine in line with national treatment guidelines. Suboxone is not licenced for use in the United Kingdom for the treatment of heroin addiction.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were recorded as HIV positive in *(a)* Northamptonshire and *(b)* England in each of the last 10 years. [34874]

Caroline Flint: HIV data are not available by county; they are available by strategic health authority (SHA) or by region. The data for Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA and England are available on the Health Protection Agency's website at: http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/hiv/epidemiology/hars_tables.htm.

Hospital Beds

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many hospital beds there were per capita in each strategic health authority in England in each of the last 10 years; [35156]

(2) what was the average bed occupancy rate in each strategic health authority area in England in each of the last 10 years. [35158]

Mr. Byrne: Data for the years 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05 are shown in the table. Strategic health authorities (SHAs) were established in 2002 and, therefore, data prior to 2002–03 are not available on an SHA basis.

Beds available in wards open overnight per 1,000 people and occupancy rate, strategic health authorities in England: 2002–03 to 2004–05

		Beds per 1,000 people			Occupancy rate (percentage)		
Org ID	Name	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	3.8	3.8	3.7	85.3	85.7	85.2
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	2.7	2.6	2.6	82.7	81.0	83.1
Q03	Essex HA	3.1	2.9	3.0	85.4	88.0	88.8
Q04	North West London HA	3.8	3.7	3.7	89.2	90.2	88.9
Q05	North Central London HA	4.7	4.8	4.7	88.4	88.3	88.5
Q06	North East London HA	4.0	4.0	3.9	89.4	89.4	91.9
Q07	South East London HA	3.8	3.8	3.8	87.8	87.8	87.3
Q08	South West London HA	3.4	3.7	3.6	86.6	86.2	85.5
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	5.0	5.1	4.9	79.8	82.1	81.5
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley HA	4.3	4.3	4.1	80.3	80.6	81.7
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolns	3.2	3.2	3.1	82.6	80.6	78.6
Q12	West Yorkshire HA	4.1	4.1	3.9	83.7	83.8	81.6
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire HA	4.0	3.9	3.7	82.4	83.6	83.3
Q14	Greater Manchester HA	4.2	4.2	4.1	85.2	84.7	83.4
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside HA	4.1	4.1	4.3	85.5	86.6	85.9
Q16	Thames Valley HA	2.9	2.9	2.8	87.5	86.2	86.3
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	3.2	3.2	3.2	82.9	85.9	84.8
Q18	Kent and Medway HA	3.0	3.0	2.9	90.1	89.7	89.7
Q19	Surrey and Sussex HA	3.5	3.5	3.2	87.7	87.5	87.4
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	3.8	3.7	3.6	85.8	85.4	83.9
Q21	South West Peninsula HA	3.6	3.8	3.7	83.2	85.2	82.7
Q22	Somerset and Dorset HA	4.0	4.0	3.9	85.1	85.2	85.0
Q23	South Yorkshire HA	4.7	4.6	4.6	85.3	85.4	76.1
Q24	Trent HA	3.3	3.5	3.4	84.6	84.4	84.7

Beds available in wards open overnight per 1,000 people and occupancy rate, strategic health authorities in England: 2002-03 to 2004-05

Org ID	Name	Beds per 1,000 people			Occupancy rate (percentage)		
		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	3.4	3.4	3.3	83.4	83.8	83.5
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	3.2	3.3	3.3	85.1	87.1	86.7
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country HA	4.0	4.0	4.0	87.1	88.5	86.8
Q28	West Midlands South HA	3.2	3.1	3.1	87.7	87.4	89.3

Source
Department of Health form KH03. ONS Mid Year population Estimates

Hospital Re-admissions

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were re-admitted to hospital in 2005 after being discharged. [35260]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the total number of people re-admitted is not currently available. Information on England's readmissions, calculated using the star ratings re-admission rate definition, "emergency re-admissions to hospitals within 28 days of discharge to hospitals", is available at www.nchod.nhs.uk. The latest year available there is 2003–04. A full definition of the indicator is given in the guidance notes.

Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will lower the age at which the routine winter influenza vaccination becomes available to 50; [23037]

(2) whether she plans to extend the routine seasonal influenza immunisation programme to all aged 50 years and over. [33269]

Caroline Flint: Department of Health funded research is being carried out on the potential benefits of routinely immunising people aged 50 years and over. The results of this research will be considered by the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation (JCVI) which advises us on all issues regarding immunisation.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people of retirement age have sought but not received influenza vaccinations in each London borough in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [40614]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Long-term Conditions (Policies)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the roles are of *(a)* the national service framework for long-term conditions and *(b)* the long-term conditions strategy. [37297]

Mr. Byrne: The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions aims to make sure that services for people with long-term neurological conditions and their families and carers are:

quicker and easier to use and more closely matched to people's needs;

better co-ordinated—so people do not have to see too many professionals and tell them the same information about themselves again and again;

provided for as long as people need them, so that treatment continues without the need for a new referral every time the person has a new problem;

better at helping people with neurological conditions and their carers to make decisions about care and treatment;

provided by people with knowledge and experience of specific conditions;

giving people with long-term neurological conditions better results from their treatment;

planned around the views of people with long-term neurological conditions and their carers; and

better at helping people to live more independently.

The purpose of the long-term conditions information strategy is to ensure that the implementation of the 11 quality requirements, detailed in the NSF, is facilitated by the availability of the appropriate information for patients, families and carers, the general public and care professionals.

Mental Health

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the NHS has taken to improve *(a)* mental health and *(b)* well-being in the community. [36278]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Mental health services are continuing to implement the national service framework for mental health in order to improve access to effective treatment and care, reduce unfair variation, raise standards, and provide quicker and more convenient services. In line with the targets set in the "NHS Plan" 343 crisis resolution, 262 assertive outreach and 109 early intervention teams were established in England at the end of March 2005. On the same day, 1,520 community gateway, 654 carer support and 648 graduate workers were in post.

Progress is also being made towards meeting the Department's public service agreement target to reduce the death rate from suicide and undetermined injury by at least 20 per cent. by 2010. The rate is now 6.6 per cent. below the baseline.

The "Choosing Health" White Paper recognised the importance of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and adults: To that aim, the White Paper included a set of actions to strengthen individuals and communities and reduce structural barriers. These actions to strengthen individuals and communities and reduce structural barriers. These actions include developing day services further to provide support for employment, occupation and mainstream social contact beyond the mental health system; encouraging employers to adopt policies to promote better mental health at work; expanding help for people with mental health problems by improving access, care planning and referral arrangements; offering new models of physical healthcare for people with mental health problems and developing new approaches to helping them manage their own care; and making available information on all aspects of health and wellbeing.

Morning-after Contraception Pill

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have purchased the morning after contraception pill in London in each of the last five years; and what assessment she has made of the reasons given for purchase. [40809]

Jane Kennedy: Data are not held centrally in respect of over the counter purchases of emergency hormonal contraception, or the reasons for purchase.

Neurological Conditions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 265–6W, on neurological conditions, what the planning recommendations to strategic health authorities were. [34525]

Mr. Byrne: The planning recommendations for the workforce are published by the Workforce Review Team and are available at:

www.healthcareworkforce.org.uk/c4/2005/default.aspx.

NHS Care (Private Providers)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been paid to private providers for treatment given to NHS patients in each year since 2000; and what the projected figure is for 2005. [37311]

Mr. Byrne: Expenditure on centrally procured independent sector treatment providers was £78.8 million for 2004–05. Data prior to 2004–05 is not available. The projected spend for 2005–06 is £203.5 million.

Expenditure on locally procured independent sector treatment providers is not separately identified in the annual financial returns of national health service trusts, primary care trusts and health authorities.

NHS Direct

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1521W, on NHS Direct, whether she has *(a)* undertaken an assessment of, *(b)* (i) commissioned and (ii) evaluated research into and *(c)* considered the impact of the operation of NHS Direct on staff recruitment in NHS accident and emergency departments. [31816]

Mr. Byrne: No such specific assessment or research has been commissioned or undertaken.

NHS Finance

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 266W, on NHS finance, what role the Department's recovery support unit plays in assessing recovery plans. [34526]

Mr. Byrne: The Department manages the financial performance of the national health service through strategic health authorities (SHAs). NHS organisations that overspend are required to develop recovery plans to return to financial balance. Recovery plans are agreed and managed by SHAs. A number of NHS organisations and SHAs will be supported in this by the turnaround teams that were recently announced. The turnaround teams will report to the chief executives of the local NHS organisations. The Department's recovery and support unit will continue to performance manage SHAs on the delivery of all key targets including financial performance.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on the stability of local health economies of her plan to penalise overspending NHS organisations. [34658]

Mr. Byrne: The impact of any deficits in 2005–06 will be discussed with each strategic health authority as part of the financial planning process for 2006–07. The planning process for 2006–07 will be completed before the start of the financial year.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Written Statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance data, how many turnaround teams she intends to establish; who will staff the turnaround teams; how staff in turnaround teams will be remunerated; whether *(a)* strategic health authorities, *(b)* NHS trusts and *(c)* primary care trusts are being supported by turnaround teams; whether there are specific trusts to which she intends to send turnaround teams; who will take the decision to send turnaround teams to trusts in financial difficulty; under what legislation the powers available to turnaround teams have been made available; what the total budget for operating turnaround teams will be in (i) the current financial year and (ii) 2006–07; and if she will make a statement. [36346]

Mr. Byrne: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on the 1 December 2005 that teams of financial and management experts are to be sent to support the strategic health authorities, national health service trusts and primary care trusts that have the biggest delivery problems.

An initial assessment began on the 7 December to ensure that the organisations that are forecasting the most significant deficits, expected to number 63, have financial control and that there are an agreed set of actions to restore financial balance.

Following the initial assessment, the SHA, the Department and the organisation will agree on a tailored package of turnaround support. The chief executives of the most challenged organisations will then be supported in delivering turnaround. The type and length of engagement will be tailored to the needs of specific organisations. The chief executives will remain responsible for delivery in their organisations. The Department has always provided additional expert advice to challenged organisations to support delivery and the turnaround teams are no different as they are not operating under any specific legislation.

The teams will bring together specialists from the NHS and the commercial sector, including NHS staff with a track record of helping challenged NHS trusts, to provide more locally focused support than the existing performance management systems.

The contract for the initial assessment was awarded in accordance with the Department's tendering arrangements. The amount of the contract is to be treated as commercial in confidence.

The cost of the further turnaround support will be dependant on the type of engagement.

NHS Management

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* chief executives, *(b)* finance directors and *(c)* other board members have left the boards of (i) strategic health authorities, (ii) NHS trusts and (iii) primary care trusts in each financial year since 1997. [36433]

Mr. Byrne: Information about how many chief executives, and finance directors have left the boards of national health service bodies is not available centrally. The NHS Appointments Commission has informed about the appointment of non-executive board members since 2001, when it was established. I have asked the NHS Appointments Commission to write to you directly regarding your inquiry.

NHS Reconfiguration

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action a primary care trust (PCT) can take if its strategic health authority presents an NHS consultation document on PCT reconfiguration which it considers to be biased; [36448]

(2) what role *(a)* she and *(b)* her Department's independent external panel has in ensuring that (i) strategic health authorities (SHAs) present options for primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration fairly in their formal NHS consultation document and (ii) SHAs effectively engage the relevant PCT in preparing their formal NHS consultation document on PCT reconfiguration where there are sharply differing views on particular options; [36449]

(3) what steps she is taking to ensure that the advice given in John Bacon's letter dated 30 November on strategic health authorities engaging primary care trusts in preparing their formal NHS consultation document is followed; [36450]

(4) what steps she is taking to ensure that the advice given in John Bacon's letter dated 30 November to strategic health authorities (SHAs) regarding SHA and primary care trust reconfiguration is being followed. [36451]

Mr. Byrne: Guidance issued from the Department to strategic health authorities (SHAs) on the forthcoming consultations clearly states that;

> "All options must be presented fairly and given equal weight in your documentation. Appropriate primary care trusts (PCTs) should be involved in drafting sections where an option is not the preferred option of the SHA".

A further communication was sent on 8 December to all SHA chief executives, which stated

> "Responsibility for approving PCT consultations, ensuring they reflect the conditionality set out in my 30 November letter and that equal weight is given to all options, rests with the SHA".

The letter went on to stress how important it is that particular attention is paid to this, and asked SHA chief executives to personally oversee this.

We have written to SHAs in a further communication that when preparing a report on the results of the consultation, all views generated as a result of the consultation must be taken into account.

Consultees can express their views throughout the consultation, and the Secretary of State will take into consideration any objections raised when deciding whether to make the reconfiguration order or not.

NHS Targets

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the targets her Department has set which apply to the NHS; and when these targets are expected to be met in each case. [36430]

Jane Kennedy: Details of the national targets for the national health service and social services are set out in "National Standards, Local Action", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/60/58/04086058.pdf

NICE

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cancer drugs approved by the EU Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use are being assessed by the Department prior to referral to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; [19894]

(2) how many drugs approved by the EU Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use were not approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in each of the last five years; [19899]

(3) how many drugs approved by the EU Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use are awaiting approval from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [19900]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) does not approve drugs for use; it provides advice to the national health service on the clinical and cost effectiveness of medical treatments. There are no cancer drugs approved for use by the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use currently awaiting referral to NICE by the Department.

We are aware of 23 drugs currently undergoing appraisal by NICE that have been approved by the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence plans to update the technical guidance on atypical anti-psychotic drugs through a general review of its clinical guidelines on the management of schizophrenia. [40233]

Jane Kennedy: I understand that the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) plans to review its guidance on atypical anti-psychotics drugs as part of the review of its clinical guideline on the management of schizophrenia. NICE plans to start its work in mid 2006. Further information can be found on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk.

Palliative/Neurological Services

Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance has been issued to local commissioners on the requirement to implement full cost recovery for *(a)* palliative and *(b)* neurological care services; [36172]

(2) what progress has been made towards meeting the commitment in the Treasury's report, The Role of the Voluntary Sector in Service Delivery, in relation to full cost recovery for voluntary providers of palliative care services by 2006; and if she will make a statement. [36173]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Her Majesty's Treasury's cross cutting review recommended that funders should recognise that it is legitimate for voluntary and community sector providers to include the relevant element of overheads in their cost estimates for providing a given service under a contract or service agreement. This recommendation was drawn to the attention of primary care trust commissioners through the Chief Executive Bulletin published on 14 April 2005 (Issue 264, 8–14 April 2005).

Patient Costs

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the cost per patient treated at *(a)* foundation hospitals and *(b)* non-foundation hospitals in the last year for which figures are available. [32124]

Mr. Byrne: There is no data collected centrally at individual patient level. However, data is collected on a finished consultant (FCE) basis. An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. The latest cost data available is 2003–04 when the average cost per FCE for all national health service trusts was £1,206.

It is not possible to assess the average cost per FCE for existing foundation trusts, as they did not become operational until 2004–05 and cost data for that year is not yet available.

Prescriptions (Pre-payment Certificates)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 855W, on prescriptions (pre-payment certificates), how many pre-payment certificates were issued in each *(a)* London borough, *(b)* primary care trust and *(c)* strategic health authority in each month. [40345]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the number of pre-payment certificates (PPCs) issued for London by borough, primary care trust or strategic health authority, is not separately identifiable.

The number of PPCs issued for the whole of England, by month, for each of the last 12 months, was provided in the reply I gave the hon. Member on 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 855W.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1178W, on primary care trusts, for what reasons her Department had not collected this information by 24 October as requested in the letter by her Department's director of access dated 13 October. [31892]

Mr. Byrne: Each of the 303 primary care trusts (PCTs) has provided the Department with data on the providers and services that they have commissioned under the requirement to be offering a choice of at least four secondary care providers to patients from 1 January 2006.

In conjunction with each PCT, the Department is producing locally-tailored information booklets to support choice of at least four, based on the responses to the letter of 13 October. Each booklet will list the locally-commissioned services for the top 15 specialties. The booklets will be published in due course as part of the roll out of choice of at least four from 1 January 2006.

Radiographers/Speech Therapists

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many training commissions there were for *(a)* radiographers and *(b)* speech and language therapists in each strategic health authority in each year since 2002. [34713]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Commissions: 2004–05

Strategic health authorities	*Radiography (diagnostic)*	*Radiography (therapeutic)*	*Speech therapy*
Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire	60	27	0
Birmingham and the Black Country	102	30	99
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	89	21	0
Cheshire and Merseyside	0	0	0
County Durham and Tees Valley	57	0	0
Cumbria and Lancashire, Hereford and Worcester	163	36	0
Devon and Cornwall	30	0	50
Dorset and Somerset	24	0	0
Essex	7	8	0
Greater Manchester	0	0	80
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	55	16	8
Kent and Medway	60	2	1
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	2	0	43
North Central London	0	0	0
North East London	0	0	0
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	0	0	0
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	52	18	20

Commissions: 2004–05

Strategic health authorities	*Radiography (diagnostic)*	*Radiography (therapeutic)*	*Speech therapy*
North West London	0	0	231
Northumberland Tyne and Wear	0	0	53
South East London	0	0	0
Shropshire and Staffordshire	9	0	0
South West London	210	67	0
South Yorkshire	34	33	0
Surrey and Sussex	2	4	1
Trent	0	0	61
Thames Valley	45	14	41
West Midlands South	0	0	0
West Yorkshire	92	30	54
National Total	1093	306	742

Senior NHS Management

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many displaced chief executive officers and other senior NHS employees without permanent roles are working in each strategic health authority area. [37319]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information is not collected centrally.

Smoking

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received on tackling smoking in pregnancy. [34427]

Caroline Flint: We regularly receive representations on tackling smoking in pregnancy. We have recently received five parliamentary questions on smoking in pregnancy, four from the hon. Member and one from a Peer.

We have made good progress on this issue since the publication of the White Paper "Smoking Kills' in 1998, where we set a target to reduce the percentage of women who smoke during pregnancy from 23 percent., to 15 percent., by the year 2010; with a fall to 18 percent., by the year 2005.

Information on smoking in pregnancy is obtained from the report on infant feeding which is carried out every five years; the most recent survey was in 2000, this shows the proportion of women, in England, who smoke during pregnancy has fallen to 19 percent.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public money has been spent on smoking cessation schemes for pregnant women in each of the last 10 years. [34429]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what protection the smoking legislation in the Health Bill will give to *(a)* domestic servants and *(b)* au pairs in their places of work. [34584]

Caroline Flint: The smoke-free provisions of the Health Bill will cover 99 percent., of enclosed public places and workplaces.

The Government have proposed to exempt residential accommodation to give effect to the right to respect for the home and private life in Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

However, nothing in the Health Bill undermines the Health and Safety obligations which employers already have.

Social Services

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many younger adult clients were seen by social services in Milton Keynes in each of the last five years. [35268]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is for adults aged 18 to 64.

In 2003–04, 120 new clients were assessed and 520 existing clients were reviewed by Milton Keynes council with social service responsibilities. Data for earlier years are not available on a comparable basis.

Sustainable Procurement

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to reassess sustainable procurement practices in the NHS, with particular reference to reusable nappy use on maternity wards. [39503]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has a strong commitment to the principles of sustainable development, and this is reflected in the new United Kingdom strategy for sustainable development.

Through this policy, the Department and its agencies are committed to considering the environmental, social and economic impacts of its procurement. The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) works with the Department and other Government Departments to increase awareness of sustainable development within the national health service supply chain, and to ensure that wherever possible NHS PASA support the achievement of sustainable development objectives, and support the improvement of the nation's health and well being.

The use of disposable or re-usable nappies in the national health service is a matter for individual maternity units and trusts to determine locally.

Vitamin D

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review vitamin D supplements for pregnant and nursing mothers. [37131]

Caroline Flint: The Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy and the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition particularly recommend dietary vitamin D supplements for all pregnant and nursing mothers of 10 micrograms per day.

As part of the reform of the Welfare Food Scheme the Department is considering options for the manufacture and supply of bespoke vitamin supplements, which include vitamin D.

Supplements developed as part of the Welfare Food Scheme reforms may also be considered for wider use among pregnant and nursing mothers.

Zoonotic Disease Risk

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has assessed the zoonotic disease risk in the UK posed by the intensification of meat and dairy production in other countries. [40530]

Caroline Flint: The risk of zoonotic disease in the United Kingdom is affected by many factors, of which farming practices are only one. In the case of zoonotic disease a cross-departmental working group monitors human and animal surveillance and assesses the risk associated with new and emerging pathogens. Outputs from this group are reported to the national expert panel for new and emerging infections.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 12 January 2006

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Small Businesses (Fraud)

24. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Solicitor-General what further steps he plans to take to protect small businesses from fraudulent schemes. [41085]

The Solicitor-General: The Government are taking considerable steps to assist small company fraud. Fraud is an issue for SME's as more of them do business through the Internet. A new one-stop-shop website for up-to-date information about online safety has recently been launched.

Get Safe Online www. getsafeonline.org aims to give home users and small businesses the advice they need to use the Internet safety. The campaign is a joint initiative between HM Government, the National Hi-Tech Crime Unit, and private sector sponsors from the worlds of technology, retail and finance.

Human Trafficking

25. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Solicitor-General what additional steps the Law Officers will take to tackle human trafficking for prostitution; [41086]

27. **Huw Irranca-Davies:** To ask the Solicitor-General what the Crown Prosecution Service's policy is on prosecuting men who use prostitutes who have been trafficked from other countries. [41088]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers regard tackling human trafficking, for both sexual and non-sexual exploitation, as a priority. I am a member of the ministerial group on human trafficking and am working jointly with Home Office Ministers to tackle human trafficking including for prostitution, by co-chairing a Joint Ministerial NGO Stakeholder /Consultative Group on Human Trafficking on the issue. This will seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of criminal justice policy and will be informed by the public consultation document on proposals for a UK action plan, launched last week.

In cases involving allegations of a sexual offence, assuming the evidential test is satisfied, prosecution policy makes it clear that the public interest will strongly favour a prosecution. This applies equally to cases where the victim has been trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Fraud Trials

26. **John Robertson:** To ask the Solicitor-General what assessment his Department has made of the need for effective trial management in complex fraud trials. [41087]

The Solicitor-General: The need for effective judicial trial management of complex trials, especially large fraud trials, was recognised in the Lord Chief Justice's Protocol for the Control and Management of Heavy Fraud and Other Complex Criminal Cases and Practice Direction issued on 14 March 2005. I welcome the Criminal Procedure Rules 2005 but they will not be sufficient of themselves to resolve all the issues of trial management in the most serious cases which is why we are seeking non jury trials in a few cases each year.

Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1W, on corruption, whether the Serious Fraud Office has commenced an investigation into the allegation of corruption involving a Department of Trade and Industry employee. [41631]

The Solicitor-General: I am informed that the Serious Fraud Office has not commenced an investigation into any allegation of corruption involving a Department of Trade and Industry employee.

Serious Fraud Office

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 731W, on the Serious Fraud Office, if he will place in the Library the paper commissioned by the Attorney General from the Serious Fraud Office on the policy and legislative changes they thought would assist them in the investigation and prosecution of overseas corruption offences. [41414]

The Solicitor-General: Further to my answer of 1 December 2005 a consultation paper was issued on 8 December 2005 by the Home Office entitled "Reform of the Prevention of Corruption Acts and SFO Powers in cases of bribery of foreign officials". This reflects submissions made to me by the Director of the Serious Fraud Office. A copy of the consultation document can be found at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/2005-cons-bribery ?version = 1

PRIME MINISTER

"Day in the Life"

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister what costs were incurred at public expense in the production of the film "Day in the Life". [40975]

The Prime Minister: The production of the film "Day in the Life" cost £900.

So far nearly 55,000 people have downloaded the film via the Downing street website. The film was also available to download on the Sky and BBC News websites.

Administration Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Prime Minister what the total administration costs were for his Office in the last

year; and whether these are regarded as identifiable or non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [40051]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire (Jim Murphy) to reply.

Al-Jazeera (Bombing)

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Government holds information which records President Bush's discussions with him about the bombing of the al-Jazeera television station in Qatar. [41191]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 23W.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment of his Office was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40078]

(2) what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of his Office in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40079]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire (Jim Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Prime Minister how much his Office spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40328]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire (Jim Murphy) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 200W.

Departmental Jobs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister how many jobs are located in his office in London. [39873]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Belfast, East (Mr. Robinson) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 163–64W.

Energy Issues (Russia)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions in the last five years when he has discussed energy issues with President Putin of Russia. [41628]

The Prime Minister: I regularly discuss a wide range of issues with President Putin, including energy.

European Council

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Prime Minister who represented the UK at the recent European Council when he was chairing the Council. [39666]

The Prime Minister: As is always the case, the country holding the Presidency represent themselves at the European Council.

Joint Intelligence Committee

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Prime Minister what investigations are being made into the source of leaks of the report of the Joint Intelligence Committee written prior to 7 July 2005 that al-Qaeda was planning a high priority attack on the underground; and if he will make a statement. [39879]

The Prime Minister: In order to safeguard security and investigative arrangements, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on the conduct and outcome of leak inquiries.

Lords Lieutenants

Chris Ruane: To ask the Prime Minister what the name is of each person who has been appointed to a post of Lord Lieutenant of the County in each of the last 30 years; and in respect of which county each was appointed. [39287]

The Prime Minister: This information requested is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate costs.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines his Office owned in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [40077]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire (Jim Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Rendition Flights

Lynne Jones: To ask the Prime Minister whether *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have requested details from the US Administration of (i) the specific purpose of each rendition flight given landing rights at any airport in the United Kingdom and (ii) the destination of each such flight. [39790]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the right hon. and learned Member for North-East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1652–53W.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the written statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 5WS.

UK Overseas Territories

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister what powers of intervention his Government have over the domestic monetary and fiscal policies of *(a)* Guernsey, *(b)* Jersey, *(c)* the Isle of Man, *(d)* the Falkland Islands, *(e)* Gibraltar, *(f)* Saint Helena, *(g)* Anguilla, *(h)* Montserrat, *(i)* Bermuda, *(j)* the British Virgin Islands, *(k)* Turks and Caicos Islands and *(l)* the Cayman Islands. [39117]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary on 10 January 2006 [39216].

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Tenants

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners whether compensation has been offered by the Commissioners to tenants of the Commissioners' properties at *(a)* Mitre street, *(b)* Ufford street and *(c)* Webber street in relation to the outcomes of renovation; and if the Commissioners will disclose all relevant documents relating to these properties to the tenants. [40767]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Commissioners have given tenants on an ex-gratia basis one week's rent rebate. In view of the threat of litigation by some tenants it is not appropriate for the Commissioners to comment further.

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what safeguards are employed by the Commissioners to ensure that personal information on Church Commissioners' tenants is not passed to third parties; what measures are in place to provide redress when such information is passed on; and what disciplinary measures are in place relating to staff misuse of tenants' personal information. [40766]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Commissioners seek to follow best practice regarding the maintenance and use of tenants' personal information, including the sharing of information with third parties where properly necessary. Some such information may be properly shared with professional advisers and managing agents.

Any alleged instances of the improper sharing of tenants' personal information may be reported to the Commissioners' Chief Surveyor. The matter will then be investigated.

All staff of the National Church Institutions are expected to observe standards of conduct and are subject to a formal disciplinary procedure where they fail to do so.

WALES

Departmental Expenditure

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the total administrative costs of his core Department were in the last period for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39838]

Mr. Hain: I refer my hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan (Mr. Salmond) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2277W.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what websites come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visitors to those sites was in the last year for which figures are available. [40796]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has responsibility for www.walesoffice.gov.uk and its parallel Welsh language site www.swyddfa.cymru.gov.uk

The cost of running both sites was £5,875 in 2005, with an additional £58.75 charged to renew the domain names.

The English language site received 568,201 page requests last year, while the Welsh language site received 92,432.

Gwydyr House (Disabled Access)

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will take steps to ensure that the access for disabled people to Gwydyr House is always in working order; and for what reasons it was not working on the evening of 14 December. [39155]

Mr. Hain: Unfortunately due to problems with misuse the gate to the Disabled Access ramp for Gwydyr House is kept locked.

Due to a problem with the process for obtaining the key on the evening of 14 December the gate could not be opened. This was later rectified and the ramp was available later that evening for people leaving the building.

There have been new instructions issued to all relevant personnel to prevent this from happening again.

National Assembly

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on what dates and for how long he has *(a)* attended sessions of the National Assembly, *(b)* spoken at sessions of the National Assembly and *(c)* met the National Assembly to discuss the Government's legislative programme. [40739]

Mr. Hain: As soon as is reasonably practicable after the beginning of each session of Parliament, I participate in a session of the National Assembly to discuss the Government's legislative programme.

Thus, I attended sessions of the Assembly on the following dates:

26 November 2002

10 December 2002

3 December 2003

11 December 2004

21 June 2005

RAF St. Athan

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what funding has been *(a)* allocated and *(b)* spent by the Welsh Development Agency to support RAF St Athan. [39132]

Nick Ainger: RAF St. Athan was acquired by the WDA in 2003 for redevelopment. To date £15.9 million has been spent on land acquisition and other development costs. There is no future allocation for the project as budget allocation for capital projects undertaken by the WDA is agreed on an annual basis as part of the normal business planning process.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Claims Handlers

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of Government Departments accepting industrial injury and disease compensation claims directly from claims handlers. [40694]

Bridget Prentice: None. It is primarily for the relevant Government Departments, in consultation as necessary with Treasury Solicitors and other Government Departments, to decide what arrangements they make to handle compensation claims whether brought on behalf of the injured party by a claims handling company, a solicitor or any other intermediary. The Government are introducing legislation in the Compensation Bill (HL) introduced on 2 November 2005 that will enable the statutory regulation of claims handling companies.

Legal Advice Direct

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the use of webcam technology as part of the online Legal Advice Direct project. [40824]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission is currently in contract negotiations with the firm responsible for Legal Advice Direct. It would therefore be inappropriate to comment on their services at this stage as this could compromise impartiality during the tender process. In general I am keen to embrace and work with new technology in ensuring that services are delivered using methods that best meet client need while demonstrating cost-effectiveness.

Legal Aid

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps her Department is planning to encourage law students to choose careers involving legal aid work. [40823]

Bridget Prentice: Supporting the development of the next generation of legal aid lawyers is a high priority for the Department and the Legal Services Commission (LSC).

The LSC has committed £10 million over three years in a training support grants scheme for students and trainee solicitors. To date nearly 400 grants have been awarded to 338 solicitors' firms and 49 not-for-profit organisations.

The LSC worked with the College of Law and the Law Society to develop a Legal Practice Course with a specialist option (or 'elective') in legal aid work.

The LSC promotes legal aid work to students and young lawyers as a career of choice in a range of ways: for example, exhibiting at the Graduate Law Fair, arranging work shadowing, and sponsoring the Young Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year award and the Young Solicitors' Group legal aid conference.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Parental Leave

Michael Connarty: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps are being taken to provide for equal parental leave rights to both parents in the second six months of their child's life. [40700]

Meg Munn: The Work and Families Bill includes provisions that will allow fathers to take time off in the second six months of their child's life. The first six months of maternity leave will be reserved for the mother, in the second six months the fathers will be able to take up to six months additional paternity leave (APL) if the mother has returned to work.

Pregnancy and Maternity (Equality and Employment Law)

Michael Connarty: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps are being taken by the Government *(a)* to harmonise, *(b)* to consolidate and *(c)* to simplify (i) equality and (ii) employment law relating to pregnancy and maternity. [41173]

Meg Munn: The Discrimination Law Review, led by the Women and Equality Unit in the Department of Trade and Industry, is examining the current framework of anti-discrimination legislation, by developing proposals for a more modern, coherent and effective legal framework for tackling discrimination across all equality strands. This includes discrimination in employment on grounds of pregnancy and maternity.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what size of culling area the Department is considering for the control of bovine TB; and what percentage of badgers would have to be despatched in those areas in order for the policy to be effective; [39629]

(2) what restrictions there will be on areas chosen for badger culling to control bovine TB; and whether restrictions will apply to locations where active study of the badger population is under way. [39630]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently consulting both on the principle of culling badgers to control bovine tuberculosis (TB), and on how a badger cull might operate. Options are set out in the consultation document "Controlling the spread of bovine tuberculosis in cattle in high incidence areas in England: Badger Culling". These include possible culling areas ranging from 1 km to 3 km from an eligible farm's boundary to areas of 100 km^2 or more. Until the consultation is complete no decisions on culling badgers or the detail of how an effective cull would operate can be made.

In deciding whether to introduce a badger culling policy we will take account of scientific evidence, the effectiveness of culling as a way of reducing bovine TB in cattle, and whether this is cost-effective. We will also consider what is practical and sustainable. Copies of the consultation document are available in the House Library or on the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/badgers-tbcontrols/index.htm

The deadline for responses is 10 March 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what additional powers the Department requires to enforce a cull of badgers in locations where the landowner does not agree to the policy. [39631]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently consulting both on the principle of culling badgers to control bovine tuberculosis, and on how a badger cull could operate. If we do decide to introduce such a policy, the consent of landowners would be needed for culling to take place on their land.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the carbon dioxide emissions of *(a)* China, *(b)* India, *(c)* the US and *(d)* the UK were as most recently reported for the purposes of the Kyoto and Montreal agreements; and what projections have been made for that purpose for (i) 2020 and (ii) 2050 in each case. [39789]

Mr. Morley: The following table shows historical and projected carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions in million tonnes of CO_2 ($MtCO_2$) for China, India, the USA and the UK.

Emissions estimates are submitted under the United Nations framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC) which is the parent treaty for Kyoto protocol and the Montreal decisions, and also covers the US which has not ratified the protocol.

The USA and UK are annexe 1 parties to the UNFCCC, and submit emissions inventories annually; the most recent year for which data are available is 2003. China and India are non-annexe 1 parties to the UNFCCC; the most recent data they have submitted is for 1994. The table also provides US and UK CO_2 emissions for 1994 from UNFCCC submissions for comparison. The data in the table cover all sectors including land-use, land-use change and forestry as reported by the country. The UK's data have been updated for consistency with the information provided in June 2005 to the European Union.

The USA and UK have submitted projections to the UNFCCC for CO_2 emissions in 2020, but China and India have not. Projections to 2050 are not available for any of the countries, although the UK policy, as set out in the 2003 Energy White Paper, is to put ourselves on a path to a reduction of some 60 per cent. by 2050.

	CO_2 emissions ($MtCO_2$)		
Country	*1994*	*2003*	*2020*
China	2,666.0	n/a	n/a
India	793.5	n/a	n/a
US	4,327.8	5,013.5	6,763.0
UK	559.8	555.9	524.7

n/a = Not available.

The International Energy Agency provides estimates of projected emissions from use of fossil fuels which indicate, for China and India respectively, increases of about 210 per cent. and about 240 per cent. over the period 1994 to 2020. Fossil fuels account for the majority of CO_2 emissions but do not include land-use, land-use change and forestry which in 1994 reduced emission from China by about +5 per cent. and increased those of India by about 8 per cent.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures her Department is implementing to cut carbon emissions from transport; and what the percentage change in emissions from transport was between 2000 and 2005 *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each year. [39905]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government set out its policy on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors in its publication "Climate Change: The UK Programme" in 2000. The Climate Change Programme (CCP) is currently under review, and as part of this review the Government are considering the scope for additional policy measures to further reduce emissions from all sectors, including transport.

The following tables contain carbon emissions from 2000 to 2003, the latest year for which published data are available, expressed as million tonnes of carbon (MtC) equivalent. Percentage changes are shown as a year-on-year change and as a total change from 2000 to 2003.

The first table shows carbon emissions from domestic transport, which includes emissions from road, diesel rail, domestic aviation and domestic shipping. The second table shows carbon emissions from international shipping and international aviation; under guidelines agreed internationally, these emissions are not included in UK total emissions, but are estimated for information purposes and do not count towards the achievement of the UK's Kyoto target.

Domestic transport

	Total transport emissions (MtC)	*Percentage change between each year*	*Percentage change in total (2000-03)*
2000	33.63	—	—
2001	33.50	-0.39	—
2002	34.00	1.49	—
2003	34.34	1.00	2.11

International aviation and shipping

	Total transport emissions (MtC)	*Percentage change between each year*	*Percentage change in total (2000-03)*
2000	9.81	—	—
2001	9.79	-0.20	—
2002	9.35	-4.49	—
2003	9.49	1.50	-3.26

EC Water Framework Directive

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of lakes of more than one hectare in area in England and Wales have been designated as water bodies under the EC Water Framework directive. [40629]

Mr. Morley: 432 lakes were designated and reported to the European Commission in March 2005 as part of the first round of river basin district characterisation under the EC Water Framework directive. Of these 432, a total of 137 lakes were greater than 50 hectares in size and 295 lakes were less than 50 hectares in size (50 hectares being the minimum size threshold required for designation and reporting to the European Commission).

There are 6,247 lakes of more than one hectare in England and Wales. 432 of these lakes were designated as water bodies under the Water Framework directive (WFD), and this equates to 6.9 per cent. of lakes of greater than one hectare.

The Environment Agency and DEFRA are working with English Nature and Countryside Council of Wales to ensure that the designation of smaller waters under the WFD is in line with relevant EU WFD Common Implementation Strategy Guidance.

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that additional *(a)* lakes, *(b)* rivers and *(c)* other small waters of high biodiversity significance beyond those already identified by the Environment Agency will be designated as water bodies in time for the first round of the River Basin Management Planning under the EC Water Framework directive. [40634]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is working with English Nature and Countryside Council of Wales, to identify water bodies of biodiversity significance in line with the relevant Guidance developed under the EU Water Framework directive (WFD) Common Implementation Strategy and the UK WFD Technical Advisery Group (UKTAG). A protocol for the appropriate designation of these water bodies is being developed with DEFRA and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Further details of this protocol will be discussed with members of the WFD Stakeholder Forum for England which is chaired by my Department and meets next on 18 January 2006.

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of length of rivers in England and Wales has been designated as water bodies under the EC Water Framework directive. [40635]

Mr. Morley: A total of 51,182.7 km of rivers were designated as water bodies in accordance with the EC Water Framework directive (WFD) and associated EU WFD Common Implementation Strategy Guidance, and reported to the European Commission in March 2005 as part of the first round of river basin characterisation. The reported length is approximately 31 per cent. of the total river network of 163,837km (at the scale of 1:50,000) which represents catchments greater than 10km2 as specified under the system A typology for rivers under the directive.

As part of the refinement of characterisation, the Environment Agency and DEFRA are working with English Nature and Countryside Council of Wales to ensure that smaller waters are dealt with in accordance with the relevant EU WFD common implementation strategy guidance.

Hunting Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of *(a)* sections 1 to 5 and *(b)* Schedule 1 of the Hunting Act 2004. [40997]

Jim Knight: The Government are satisfied with the operation of the Hunting Act 2004 to date.

Rural Communities (East Yorkshire)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to sustain rural communities in East Yorkshire. [38931]

Jim Knight: In its Rural Strategy 2004, the Government announced an ambitious and targeted set of priorities for rural communities and enhancing our natural environment, together with radical reforms for their delivery, all firmly within a sustainable development framework. Since the General Election in May we have reinforced those priorities through actions such as the establishment of the Affordable Rural Housing Commission, the announcement of a new Rural Social and Community funding programme and the introduction of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill. The Bill seeks, among other things, to establish both the Commission for Rural Communities-an expert adviser, advocate and watchdog for rural communities-and Natural England-a new integrated agency to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

All of these activities will impact on East Yorkshire. In addition, the East Riding of Yorkshire benefits from being a LEADER + rural development area and forms part of the Humber Rural Pathfinder area for the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

DEFENCE

Administrative Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40057]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has six Executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) and 11 advisory NDPBs.

Executive NDPB gross expenditure costs for reporting years 1999–2000 through to 2004–05 can be found in the supplementary annex to the Ministry of Defence annual report and accounts 2004–05 (http://www.mod.uk/publications/modara04_05/index.html). Figures given for each Executive NDPB are generally non-identifiable. Figures for the Fleet Air Arm Museum are identifiable.

Administrative costs for MOD advisory NDPBs in 2004–05 are listed in the following table.

£

Advisory NDPB	*Administrative costs*	*Contract costs*	*Total costs for 2004–05*
Animal Welfare Advisory Committee	6,665	0	6,665
Defence Nuclear Safety Committee	34,808	0	34,808
Nuclear Research Advisory Committee	18,169	0	18,169
Defence Scientific Advisory Council	369,929	134,140	504,069
Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors	n/a	n/a	n/a
Advisory Group on Medical Countermeasures	5,000	175,000	180,000
Armed Forces Pay Review Body	92,056	0	92,056
War Pensions Committee	38,507	0	38,507
Dartmoor Steering Group	0	0	0
National Employers Advisory board	21,300	0	21,300
Review Board for Government Contracts	41,943	347,518	389,461

Notes:
1. Administrative costs may include staff fees, travel and subsistence claims, conferences and advertising.
2. Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors has not met since 1996. There were no costs for 2004–05.
3. The Dartmoor Steering Group incurs no costs. Members are voluntary and no expenses are claimed.

Chinook HC2

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of all *(a)* reports, *(b)* memoranda, *(c)* audits and *(d)* other evaluations that were produced by (i) Boscombe Down and (ii) on behalf of Boscombe Down during the flight trials of the Chinook HC2 helicopter, including those covering engine-control software before 3 June 1994. [21756]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the right hon. Gentleman, and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

DESO

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2759W, on the Defence Export Service Organisation (DESO), whether records of such requests are kept or recorded in DESO's overseas offices. [41627]

Mr. Ingram: There is no requirement for overseas staff of the Defence Export Services Organisation to report to the London office details of instances in which advice has been given to companies about agents. It is therefore for each overseas post to determine in which cases there is a business need to record such advice.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many detainees being held by multi-national forces in Iraq *(a)* have been charged with a criminal offence and *(b)* are entitled to obtain independent legal advice regarding their detention. [33936]

Mr. Ingram: None of the individuals held by UK forces have been charged with a criminal offence. They are held because they are judged to be an imperative threat to security as coalition forces are authorised to do by International and Iraqi law. All of them are entitled to obtain independent legal advice regarding their detention.

The divisional temporary detention facility is subject to regular inspections by the ICRC.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 677–78W, on Iraq, (1) when the Government were first informed of the deaths in April; and what action was taken as a result; [36073]

(2) whether either of the two individuals who died in custody are known to have had prior contact with UK armed service personnel. [36071]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 December 2005]:* I am only aware of one death in April 2005 of an Iraqi that United Kingdom forces believe was at the time in the

custody of the Iraqi police service. It is believed that the death occurred between 10 April, when the individual was detained and 14 April, when officials became aware of it. Ministers were advised on 28 April. Strong representations were subsequently made to the Iraqi authorities, both in Basra and in Baghdad, that they should carry out a full investigation and that any human rights abuses in the treatment of prisoners in Iraqi custody should cease. As a result the unit in whose custody the death occurred was disbanded and three Iraqi police officers are under investigation.

UK armed forces were involved in the arrest of the individual on 10 April but there is no record of prior contact with him.

The other death to which I referred in my answer of 11 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 855W, occurred in September 2005. I am not aware that the individual concerned had any prior involvement with UK forces.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many of those suspected of committing a serious terrorism-related offence in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan and detained by the British armed forces (i) have been extradited to another state and (ii) have been handed over to US authorities in Iraq since March 2003; and if he will make a statement; [36671]

(2) what the legal status is of those in British custody but not charged in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [36672]

Mr. Ingram: British armed forces have neither extradited to another state nor handed over to US authorities in Iraq any detainees suspected of committing a serious terrorism-related offence in Afghanistan since March 2003. No one is currently held in British custody in Afghanistan.

I refer the right hon. Gentleman to my answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 221–22W, which gives the numbers of those suspected of committing a serious terrorism-related offence who have been transferred into US custody in Iraq since 2003. British armed forces have not extradited to another state any detainees suspected of committing a serious terrorism-related offence in Iraq since March 2003.

All internees in British custody in Iraq are held under the auspices of UN Security Council Resolution 1546 and Iraqi law.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the two different engines proposed to power the F35 Joint Strike Fighter are still to be produced. [40958]

Mr. Ingram: Work continues on developing both the F135 and F136 engines for the Joint Strike Fighter.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the three variants of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter with the different wings, power systems and weapons are still to be produced. [40959]

Mr. Ingram: Work on the development of the three Joint Strike Fighter variants continues.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the F35B version of the Joint Strike Fighter is the only aircraft that could operate from the proposed two new aircraft carriers. [41388]

Mr. Ingram: It remains our plan to operate the F-35B (Short Take-Off Vertical Landing variant) Joint Strike Fighter aircraft from the future carrier. We also retain the option to deploy Harrier GR9 initially. However, the design has the flexibility to be adapted to operate conventional take-off and landing aircraft if we decide to do so in the future. In addition a range of helicopters will operate from the ships.

Officer Training Corps

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether members of the Officer Training Corps are eligible for mobilised service. [41662]

Mr. Touhig: Members of the Officer Training Corps may be called out for mobilised service under Section 52 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996. No call-out Order has been made under that section.

PR Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department, *(b)* his non-departmental public bodies, *(c)* his Department's Executive agencies and *(d)* other bodies funded by his Department and for which he is responsible since May 1997; and what work was undertaken by each. [39190]

Mr. Touhig: Ministry of Defence expenditure on external assistance, of which consultants employed to manage PR is part, is available in the Library of the House for years 1995–96 to 2004–05 contained in the documents "Expenditure On External Assistance for the MOD by TLB/Agency", and "Expenditure On External Assistance for the MOD by Category". Although this is broken down by various categories, my Department does not centrally record expenditure on external PR or other related agencies.

RAF Tristars

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of RAF Tristars are fitted with *(a)* the defensive aid system and *(b)* cockpit armour. [40402]

Mr. Ingram: 33 per cent. of the RAF's Tristar fleet are currently fitted with a defensive aid suite and 78 per cent. are fitted with flight deck armour.

Sub-munitions (Kosovo)

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many BL755 sub-munitions were destroyed by *(a)* 33 Engineer Regiment and *(b)* other UK forces in Kosovo between June 1999 and July 2000. [40422]

Mr. Ingram: Information about the number and types of sub-munitions destroyed by United Kingdom forces is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Nonetheless, I can confirm that 212 sub-munitions tasks were conducted in Kosovo between 12 June 1999 and 30 June 2000; however, this figure relates to all sub-munitions tasks.

TRANSPORT

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997; [39113]

(2) if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department since May 1997. [39114]

Ms Buck: The requested figures for advertising are set out as follows. However, records of costs from 1997–98 until 2001–02 are not readily available due to departmental re-organisations and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

The majority of advertising investment by my central Department is in support of the THINK! Road Safety campaign. DVLA's main advertising expenditure has been to support the introduction of continuous registration.

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
DfT (Central)	10,446,000	10,427,000	9,021,724
DVLA	8,066,000	10,177,000	9,370,000
DSA	0	0	0
HA	232,135	137,703	388,024
VOSA	0	4,800	13,500
MCA	52,292	33,619	49,495
VCA	4,641	5,640	8,865
SRA	95,000	505,000	25,000

Listing the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* the Department and previous Departments with the Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which the Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by the Department since May 1997 could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the annual expenditure on training and development by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40007]

Ms Buck: The Department is committed to developing and improving the way it works to better achieve its business objectives. In order to do this it encourages all of its staff to take part in development activities that will improve their skills. In addition, certain staff may be required to carry out mandatory training for particular duties.

The information is as follows:

£

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 (planned)*
Department for Transport (Central)	2,206,518	2,627,595	2,845,353	2,937,748
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	—	1,071,251	714,289	869,879
Highways Agency	2,500,359	3,140,799	3,185,269	3,053,454
Driving Standards Agency	3,034,500	3,164,087	3,866,527	2,938,602
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	1,418,000	1,684,000	2,140,000	3,843,000
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	1,313,902	1,260,144	1,502,734	1,061,500
Vehicle Certification Agency	111,000	146,000	127,000	150,000
Government Car and Despatch Agency	60,409	80,393	56,237	51,645
Railway Heritage Committee	—	—	—	0
Northern Lighthouse Board	182,270	222,851	159,978	185,000
Trinity House Lighthouse Service	332,000	252,000	300,000	400,000
Rail Passengers Council	—	—	—	80,000
Commission for Integrated Transport	5,952	8,481	9,610	7,500
Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee	—	2,036	6,183	1,985
Traffic Commissioners and Deputies	0	0	0	0
Strategic Rail Authority	407,435	650,603	919,024	973,634
Standing Advisory Committee for Trunk Road Assessment	0	0	0	0

Financial records are not kept in a form which allows the Department to distinguish between country or region.

The Rail Passenger Council was launched on 25 July 2005.

The Railway Heritage Committee transferred to the Department for Transport on 21 November 2005.

There are no records for the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee prior to 2003–04.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency was set up on 1 April 2003.

Department for Transport (Central) was set up in May 2002 and the 2002–03 expenditure reflects that.

There is no current Standing Advisory Committee for Trunk Road Assessment set up.

Light Rail

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was given in subsidy by his Department to each light rail scheme currently in operation in each year since they commenced operation. [27504]

Mr. Darling *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* The following light rail schemes are currently in operation in England.

Blackpool Trams
Croydon Tramlink
Docklands Light Railway
Manchester Metrolink
Midland Metro
Nottingham Express Transit
Sheffield Supertram
Tyne and Wear Metro

Of these, only the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and the Tyne and Wear Metro, have received operating subsidy from the Department for Transport or its predecessors and agencies.

The operating subsidy provided is as follows.

£ million

	Docklands Light Railway	*Tyne and Wear Metro*
1987–88	2.126	—
1988–89	2.840	—
1989–90	5.420	—
1990–91	9.999	—
1991–92	19.759	—
1992–93	15.342	—
1993–94	14.399	—
1994–95	15.656	—
1995–96	13.249	—
1996–97	19.530	8.795
1997–98	6.716	8.619
1998–99	6.343	8.630
1999–2000	20.824	9.428
2000–01	4.911	9.787
2001–02	3.681	9.884
2002–03	4.594	11.831
2003–04	3.734	13.407
2004–05	5.838	15.952

From 2000 the DLR subsidy has been paid by Transport for London (TfL).

For the years prior to 1996–97 it is not possible to separately identify the Metro element within the overall support provided for heavy rail and Metro services in Tyne and Wear.

The concessionaire of Croydon Tramlink, though it does not receive a revenue subsidy from central Government, is entitled to compensation on a 'no better, no worse' basis where fares policy enacted by the Mayor results in revenues per trip falling below those assumed in the 1996 financing plan which underpinned the Private Finance Initiative concession. It received compensation payments of £5.501 million in 2003–04 and £5.812 million (estimated) in 2004–05.

The local authorities which are responsible for the running of these systems may make some contribution to their operating costs depending on the commercial arrangements with the system operators in each particular case. The Department does not hold any central records on this.

The Department's capital expenditure on the construction of light rail systems in England since 1980 is as follows:

£ million

	Amount
Tyne and Wear Metro	237.5
Docklands Light Railway	335.5
Manchester Metrolink	123.0
Sheffield Supertram	220.0
Midland Metro	80.0
Croydon Tramlink	125.0
Nottingham Express Transit	167.0

Normally this is paid as an upfront capital sum, except in the case of Nottingham Express Transit where the funding is in the form of annual availability payments.

Mobility and Inclusion Unit

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the work completed to date by the Mobility and Inclusion Unit; and what issues the unit is working on. [40743]

Ms Buck: The Mobility and Inclusion Unit contributes to the delivery of the Department for Transport's aim to

"make transport accessible and affordable to users of public transport, pedestrians and motorists, and to promote diversity in transport provision".

Specifically the current focus of the unit is to:

improve accessibility to transport, in particular through implementation of Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 provisions, and promote personal mobility;

reduce social exclusion through implementation of recommendations of the Social Exclusion Unit report and promote social inclusion, in particular through implementation of the Race Equality Scheme;

work with partners to reduce crime and fear of crime on the transport network.

Details of the recent achievements and current objectives of the unit can be found in the Mobility and Inclusion Unit Business Plan 2005–06 which is available on the Department for Transport's website.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the retention of expertise in the Mobility and Inclusion Unit; and if he will make a statement. [40744]

Ms Buck: Staff in the Mobility and Inclusion Unit often stay in posts longer than is usual elsewhere in the Department for Transport. We balance the benefits of retaining expertise in the short-term with providing opportunities for development and promotion to allow us to sustain this valuable work in the long-term.

Passenger Subsidies

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* revenue subsidy per passenger mile travelled was for each transport authority in the most recent year for which figures are available. [38159]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1620W.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress of each public service agreement target set for his Department. [40980]

Ms Buck: Progress against public service agreement targets is set out in the Department's annual report and autumn performance report, as well as on the Department's website.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with stakeholders about progress of each public service agreement target set for his Department; and if he will make a statement. [40981]

Ms Buck: Management of public service agreement targets is an integral part of the Department's business and discussions with stakeholders about delivery of these targets take place on a routine basis.

TREASURY

Cancer

Mr. Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were diagnosed with *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years. [41166]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many people were diagnosed with *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years.(41166)

The most recent available information on registration of newly diagnosed cases (incidence) is for the year 2003. Numbers of newly diagnosed cases of selected cancers registered in England and Wales between 1994 and 2003 are given in the attached table.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of selected cancers registered in England and Wales, 1994–2003

	Prostate[1]	*Breast*[1]	*Colorectal (bowel)*[1]		*Lung*[1]		*All other cancers*[2]	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
1994	19,399	31,671	14,811	14,093	23,314	12,297	54,622	54,114
1995	19,239	31,834	15,013	13,917	22,481	12,432	54,679	54,211
1996	20,098	32,393	15,547	14,353	21,398	12,117	54,518	53,852
1997	19,501	33,457	15,837	14,123	21,180	12,223	55,255	54,967
1998	20,597	34,822	16,266	14,757	20,768	12,559	56,365	55,046
1999	22,403	36,438	16,507	14,731	20,445	12,566	57,055	56,092
2000	24,726	35,888	16,653	14,255	20,311	12,880	57,599	56,574
2001	27,773	36,392	16,174	13,943	19,758	12,719	56,685	56,432
2002	28,577	36,659	16,276	13,928	19,182	12,634	56,297	55,715
2003	28,810	38,864	16,636	13,906	18,841	13,071	56,841	56,748

[1] Cancers registered in 1994 and 1995–2003 are, respectively, defined by codes in the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (IC.D9) and Tenth Revision (JCDI0). Therefore, prostate cancer is defined by codes 185 or C61, breast cancer by codes 174 or C50, colorectal (bowel) cancer by codes 153–154 or C18-C21 and lung cancer by codes 162 or C33-C34.
[2] "All other cancers" are defined by codes 140–208 or COO-C97 (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer 173 or C44 and excluding the codes in footnote 1 above).
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mr. Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people died from *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years. [41167]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many people died from *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years. (41167)

The latest year for which data are available is 2004. Figures for deaths from cancer by site are shown in the attached table for each year from 1995 to 2004.

Number of deaths from cancer by site,[1] *England and Wales, 1995 to 2004*[2]

Calendar year	*(a) prostate*	*(b) breast*[3]	*(c) bowel*	*(d) lung*	*(e) other cancer site*
1995	8,866	12,623	15,749	31,627	70,293
1996	8,742	12,246	15.447	30:S10	70.214
1997	8.523	12.047	15,219	29,976	69.882
1998	8.573	11.835	14,984	30,199	70,738
1999	8,533	11.670	14,607	29,493	69.832

Number of deaths from cancer by site,[1] England and Wales, 1995 to 2004[2]

Calendar year	(a) prostate	(b) breast[3]	(c) bowel	(d) lung	(e) other cancer site
2000	8,293	11,433	14,236	29,029	69,695
2001[4]	8,912	11,638	14,142	28,728	72,419
2002[4]	8,973	11,557	14,275	28,806	73,166
2003[4]	9,166	11,276	14,051	28,765	72,697
2004[4]	9,169	11,031	14,171	28,328	72,157

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the years 1995 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for 2001 onwards. The codes used are listed as follows:

Malignant neoplasm of prostate—ICD-9 185; ICD-10 C61;

Malignant neoplasm of breast—ICD-9 174–175; ICD-10 C50;

Malignant neoplasm of colon and rectum—ICD-9 153/154; ICD-10 C18-C21;

Malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus and lung—ICD-9 162; ICD-10 C33-C34;

Other cancer sites—ICD-9 140–208 excluding the above codes; ICD-10 C00-C97 excluding the above codes.

[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] Figures include deaths in males as well as females.

[4] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from cancer by site is described in an article published in August 2004 [5] .

[5] Brock A. Griffiths C. Rooney C (2004) The effect of the introduction of ICD-10 on cancer mortality trends in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 23. 7–17.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the five-year survival rates were for *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years. [41168]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the five-year survival rates were for *(a)* prostate cancer, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* bowel cancer, *(d)* lung cancer and *(e)* all other cancers in each of the last 10 years.(41168)

Cancer survival rates are only produced for specific cancers and are calculated by combining several years of diagnosis.

The latest available five-year survival rates for the selected major cancers in England are for adult patients (aged 15–99 years) diagnosed during 1998–2001 and followed up to the end of 2003, These figures and survival rates for patients diagnosed during 1991–95 and 1996–99 in England and Wales are given in the attached table.

Five-year age-standardised[1] relative survival (%) for adult patients[2] diagnosed during 1991–95 (England and Wales), 1996–99 (England and Wales) and 1998–2001 (England), major cancers by sex

		Five-year relative survival		
Cancer		Patients diagnosed 1991–95 England and Wales	Patients diagnosed 1996–99 England and Wales	Patients diagnosed 1998–2001 England
Prostate[3]	Men	53.6	64.8	70.8
Breast[3]	Women	72.8	77.5	79.9
Colon[3]	Men	42.1	46.9	49.4
	Women	42.8	47.9	50.2
Rectum[3]	Men	40.3	46.8	50.0
	Women	44.8	51.1	53.6
Lung[3]	Men	5.2	5.8	6.3
	Women	5.4	6.4	7.5

[1] As cancer survival varies with age at diagnosis, the relative rates for all ages (15–99) have been age-standardised to control for changes in the age profile of cancer patients over time, thus making them comparable with previously published figures.

[2] Aged 15–99 years.

[3] Cancers registered in 1991–94 and 1995–2001 are, respectively, defined by codes in the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD9) and Tenth Revision ICD10). Therefore, prostate cancer is defined by codes 185 or C61, breast cancer by codes 174 or C50, colorectal (bowel) cancer by codes 153–154 or C18-C21 and lung cancer by codes 162 or C33-C34.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mr. Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the mortality rate was for cancer in people under 75 years in each of the last 10 years. [41169]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the mortality rate was for cancer in people under 75 years in each of the last 10 years. (41169)

The latest year for which data are available is 2004. Figures for deaths from cancer in people aged under 75 years are shown in the attached table for each year from 1995 to 2004.

Age-standardised death rate[1] from cancer,[2] in persons aged under 75 years,[3] England, 1995 to 2004[4]

Calendar year	Rate per 100,000
1995[5]	144.7
1996[5]	141.6
1997[5]	137.3
1998[5]	136.0
1999[5]	132.0
2000[5]	129.0
2001	125.8
2002	124.4
2003	121.3
2004	118.7

[1] Age-standardised to the European standard population.

[2] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the years 1995 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for 2001 onwards. The codes used are listed as follows:

Malignant neoplasms—ICD-9 140–208; ICD-10 C00 C97.

[3] Data exclude deaths at age under 28 days.

[4] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[5] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The figures presented in this table for the years 1993 to 2000 have been adjusted using comparability ratios to be comparable with ICD-10.
The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from all cancer and cancer by site is described in an article published in August 2004.*
* Brock A, Griffiths C, Rooney C (2004) The effect of the introduction of ICD-10 on cancer mortality trends in England and Wales "Health Statistics Quarterly" 23, 7–17.

Child Benefit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons the weekly amount of child benefit paid to the first child in each household is higher than the rate paid in respect of other children in the household; and if he will make a statement. [41424]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government are committed to helping families with children through the financial support system. Its approach is based on the dual principles of providing financial support for all families with children, recognising the extra costs and responsibilities associated with bringing up a child; and offering more help to those who need it most, when they need it most. In the Child Poverty Review (2004), the Government also set out its long-term aspiration to improve the financial support available to large families.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of taxing child benefit at the marginal rate of tax; and if he will make a statement. [41433]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government's system of financial support for families with children is built on the principle of progressive universalism, delivering help for all families and more help for those who need it most. Universal child benefit forms the foundation of this system, recognising the extra costs and responsibilities associated with bringing up a child. The Government believe it is right that society should recognise the importance of family life by providing financial support for every family with a dependent child, and will not tax child benefit. Child benefit is complemented by child tax credit, which delivers greatest support to those who need it most, including families on lower incomes, those with children under one, and parents of disabled children.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the annual revenue yield of taxing child benefit at the marginal rate of tax. [41485]

Dawn Primarolo: An estimate of the annual cost of exempting tax on Child Benefit for 2005–06 is published in Table 7 of 'Tax ready reckoner and tax reliefs', published alongside the pre-Budget report.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of Child Trust Fund vouchers issued to date have been used to open accounts which are valued at *(a)* £500 and *(b)* £250; and if he will make a statement. [41465]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1783 to the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Mr. Davey).

Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of sections *(a)* 1 and *(b)* 2 of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005; [41736]

(2) when he expects each section of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 to come into force; and if he will make a statement. [41737]

Dawn Primarolo: Most of the provisions of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 were brought into force by Commencement Order (Statutory Instrument 2005 no. 1126) with effect from 5.45 pm on 7 April 2005 shortly after the Act had received Royal Assent. The Order provided for the remainder of the Act to come into force on 18 April 2005.

Those sections, including sections 1 and 2, brought into force on 7 April enabled preparatory work to begin on the setting up of HM Revenue and Customs and the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office. The transfer of functions from the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise was completed on 18 April, when the new Departments were launched.

Details of the current Commissioners can be found in HM Revenue and Customs' Annual Report 2004–05, which is available in the House Library.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1964W, on council tax, if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* internal guidance and manuals and *(b)* external guidance for local authorities in Wales that the Valuation Office Agency produced for the Welsh council tax revaluation. [39961]

Dawn Primarolo: No internal guidance or manuals were produced by the Valuation Office Agency for local authority departments in Wales for the Welsh council tax revaluation. Copies of external guidance will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Expenditure

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department has spent on *(a)* online and *(b)* non-online self assessment in each year since 1997; and how much was spent on (i) set up and maintenance of the website, (ii) advertising and (iii) investigation of fraud and error; and if he will make a statement. [38348]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is as follows:

(i) The Inland Revenue's on-line service for self assessment tax returns went live in 2000–01 (on 3 July 2000). Costs provided are for set up and maintenance of that website based service.

£ million

	(i) Set up and maintenance of website
1998–99	0
1999–2000	0
2000–01	7.4
2001–02	7.3
2002–03	10.0
2003–04	6.5

(ii) In respect of costs of advertising attributable to self assessment may I refer the hon. Member back to the answers given to him on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1334W and 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 1093W and the reply to the hon. Member for West Dorset (Mr. Letwin) on 5 January 2004.

(iii) HMRC do not separate the costs of compliance for online/non online filers. The information can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Economic Activity (Ethnic Groups)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the economic activity rates were for *(a)* men and *(b)* women in each ethnic group in the last year for which figures are available. [40661]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic activity rates for ethnic groups. (40661)

The attached table gives the estimate of the economic activity rates for people of working age by ethnic groups for the twelve month period ending December 2004 from the Annual Population Survey.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the Annual Population Survey (APS) are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Economic activity rates for people of working age[1] by ethnicity and sex: United Kingdom—12 months ending December 2004

	All persons		Men		Women	
	Levels (000s)	Activity rates (%)[4]	Levels (000s)	Activity rates (%)[4]	Levels (000s)	Activity rates (%)[4]
Total[2]	28,327	78.0	15,503	83.2	12,824	72.6
White[2]	25,388	79.5	13,826	84.1	11,562	74.6
of which:						
British[3]	24,089	79.6	13,124	84.2	10,965	74.8
Other white[3]	1,299	77.1	702	82.9	597	71.3
Mixed	185	71.1	91	77.8	94	65.5
of which:						
White and Black Caribbean	52	69.3	24	73.5	28	66.2
White and Black African	25	75.5	11	79.8	14	72.4
White and Asian	50	67.5	29	77.2	21	57.4
Other mixed	58	74.3	27	81.9	31	68.5
Asian or Asian British	1,060	63.8	658	76.7	402	50.1
of which:						
Indian	555	74.0	320	81.1	234	66.1
Pakistani	251	51.8	178	71.8	73	30.9
Bangladeshi	91	48.0	67	70.5	24	25.3
Other Asian	163	68.9	93	77.4	71	60.3
Black or Black British	545	69.9	273	75.8	272	64.9
of which:						
Black Caribbean	269	76.8	132	80.3	138	73.8
Black African	251	63.7	129	72.0	122	56.7
Other Black	24	72.0	12	72.6	12	71.4
Chinese	105	59.4	56	63.0	49	55.8
Other	279	63.1	166	71.8	113	53.6

[1] Includes men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59.
[2] Includes people who did not state their ethnic origin.
[3] Excludes Northern Ireland. Detailed level ethnicity questions are not asked of the white group in Northern Ireland.
[4] Economically active as a percentage of all persons in the relevant ethnic group.
Source:
ONS—Annual Population Survey

Equity Release

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Government's approach to equity release, with particular reference to maintaining older people in their homes. [41503]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Property is the most important and sometimes only significant asset of elderly people. The Government's approach to equity release schemes is to ensure that all homeowners, including older people, are able to make informed choices when purchasing these products, to offer suitable consumer protection, and to ensure that there is a level regulatory playing field in the equity release market.

There are two main types of equity release schemes: lifetime mortgages and home reversion plans. The Financial Services Authority regulates the sale and administration of first charge mortgages on primary

residences, including lifetime mortgages. Following extensive consultation, the Regulation of Financial Services (Land Transactions) Act gained Royal Assent on 19 December 2005, bringing home reversion plans into regulation. The Government will consult further on the detail of the changes in due course.

EU Agriculture Budget

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the EU's agriculture budget was spent on *(a)* direct payments, *(b)* market price support, *(c)* input subsidies and *(d)* export subsidies in the last period for which figures are available. [40948]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2004, the EU spent a total of €43.7 billion under the "Agriculture" heading of the Financial Perspective. €29.9 billion (68 per cent.) was spent on direct payments and €8.5 billion (19 per cent.) on "interventions in agricultural markets", which broadly corresponds to market price support, of which €3.3 billion (8 per cent.) was for export subsidies (export subsidies are one of the tools used to support market prices). Input subsidies are not separately identified in the budget, but the OECD estimates that €14 billion was spent in the EU in 2004 on payments based on input use and input constraints in 2004, some of which was nationally funded, out of a total of €108 billion support provided to EU farmers by EU taxpayers and consumers.

The EU's agriculture budget accounts for only part of EL market price support, the bulk of which is paid for by consumers. Fuller analysis can be found in DEFRA and HM Treasury's recent paper, "A Vision for the Common Agricultural Policy", in particular in Chapter 2.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff are employed in Southend by HM Revenue and Customs, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* grade. [41756]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the current breakdown of HMRC staff in Southend on Sea by grade and sex.

	Female	*Male*	*Total*
SCS	1	3	4
Grade 6	6	11	17
Grade 7	15	24	39
Senior Officer (SEO)	116	206	322
Higher Officer (HEO)	245	255	500
Officer (EO)	322	168	490
Assistant Officer (AO)	380	154	534
Admin Assistant (AA)	263	134	397
Total	1,348	955	2,303

Identity Cards

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate has been made by his Department of the total cost to the Exchequer of introducing a national identity card scheme; what approval for such expenditure has been given by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [41505]

Mr. Des Browne: The Treasury has not conducted any separate estimates of the costs of creating and maintaining a national identity card.

However, as with other policy formulation, the Treasury contributed to the cross-government estimates of the costs and benefits of ID card scheme led by the department leading the policy area, in this case the Home Office. The estimates for the global costs for the scheme were set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment. This can be found at: http://www.identitycards.aov.uk/library/Identity_cards_bill_regulatory_impact.pdf

The Government announced it would proceed with the ID cards scheme in November 2003. At the time it was agreed that all costs will be met from existing departmental budgets and charging. This remains the case, as the Home Secretary reiterated to the House on 13 October 2005.

Income Tax (Self-assessment)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria are used to determine which taxpayers are required to fill in a self-assessment income tax return. [40926]

Dawn Primarolo: The criteria used to determine which taxpayers are required to make self assessment returns are published on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/sa/guidelines.htm and in other HMRC guidance.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many self-assessment tax returns were issued in each year since 1997. [40931]

Dawn Primarolo: The total numbers of self assessment tax returns issued in each financial year are detailed as follows. The figures for the financial year 1997–98 are not available.

Return year	*Year issued*	*Total number issued (million)*
1997–98	1998–99	9.189
1998–99	1999–2000	9.346
1999–2000	2000–01	9.324
2000–01	2001–02	9.246
2001–02	2002–03	9.431
2002–03	2003–04	9.816
2003–4	2004–05	10.069

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to answer questions 19721, 19172, 19285, 19180, 19290, 18639, 19720, 19719, 20015, 20442, 20441, 20440, 20692, 23571, 23294, 23573, 24587, 24586, 24547, 24542, 24506, 25243, 25250, 25253, 25249, 25248, 25242, 25252, 29703, 29704, 29706, 29984, 30662, 30008, 30661, 30567 and 33747, tabled by the hon. Member for Yeovil. [40852]

Dawn Primarolo: Most of the questions concerned have already been answered and I hope to be in a position to answer the remainder soon.

Treasury Ministers attach importance to answering Parliamentary questions promptly. Responding to questions which are tabled in very large numbers (the Treasury has received 373 written questions from the hon. Gentleman since the May 2005 General Election) seeking information on issues where extensive documentation has already been provided to Parliament, or where it cannot easily be established whether the information is actually available and capable of being assembled reasonably quickly without incurring disproportionate cost, can, however, be a time-consuming business and delays are almost inevitable.

Population Statistics (London Boroughs)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the current population of each London borough based on *(a)* the 2001 census, *(b)* electoral rolls and *(c)* health service users; and what projections he has made for the next five years. [39923]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 12 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question regarding estimates of the current population of each London borough on *(a)* 2001 Census, *(b)* electoral rolls and *(c)* health service users; and projections for the next five years. (39923)

The Office for National Statistics publishes annual mid-year population estimates. The latest estimates are for mid-2004 and are given in Table 1. These mid-year population estimates are calculated using a robust methodology and are the best estimates of the resident population in an area. They are based on aged-on 2001 Census data adjusted for births, deaths and net migration. Further information on the methodology can be found at: www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 575.

Population projections for each London borough (and the City of London) for mid-2005 to mid-2010, are also given in Table 1. These projections are based on the mid-2003 population estimates and are the latest population projections available. They assume that trends in fertility, mortality and migration at the time of the mid-2003 population estimate will continue into the future.

The 2001 Census provided estimates the number of people usually resident in an area on Census day, 29 April 2001. These figures can be obtained from the published 2001 Census table KS01 a copy of which is held in the House of Commons Library in the published volume Census 2001, Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales.

Electoral rolls provide counts of the number of people registered to vote. The latest available data on the local/European electorate for 1 December 2004 can be found in the Table 2. It should be noted that the number of people eligible to vote is not the same as the resident population aged 18 and over. There are numerous reasons for this. For example, not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (for example, persons from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners etc. are not eligible), some people do not register to vote and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place. Further there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. These factors may have a different impact from place to place.

The number of people registered with a GP, living in each London borough (and the City of London), in July 2004, can also be found in the Table 2. It should also "be noted that patient register counts differ from estimates of the usually resident population for a number of reasons.

Some patients may have more than one NHS number and be double counted and people may be on a patient register after having left the country. Patient registers for local areas may be inflated, for example, student areas, due to students who do not quickly re-register after finishing their course of study and moving away from an area. The patient registers also exclude individuals who are ineligible to be registered with a GP, such as persons employed in the armed forces, prisoners that are sentenced for a term of two years or more and certain patients in long stay medical hospitals. Again this has differential impact from area to area.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what basis the calculation was made that £2 million be written off from the £174 million of tax credit overpayments arising from software errors in 2003–04 and 2004–05. [19172]

Dawn Primarolo: As was noted in the Inland Revenue 2003–04 annual report and accounts, £37 million was written-off in respect of tax credit overpayments that had arisen as a result of a computer software error, where the overpayment was less than £300. Further analysis of the payment data within the tax credit system identified additional cases amounting to £1.85 million. This was rounded to 'some £2 million' in the Comptroller and Auditor General's standard report on the 2004–05 accounts of the Inland Revenue.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what streamlined procedures were introduced earlier in 2005 to deal with disputed overpayments of tax credits; [19719]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the instructions issued to Tax Credit Office staff prior to the introduction of the new procedures. [40453]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC's policy on tax credits overpayments is set out in their code of practice 26. The Tax Credit Office streamlined the procedures to clear a backlog of cases where claimants had disputed recovery of an overpayment. The streamlined procedures involve a risk-based approach. As is normal practice with risk-based compliance activity HMRC does not publish details of the procedures.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of tax credit fraud in Northern Ireland have been detected in 2004–05. [21356]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total number of overpayments due to official errors in the new tax credit system is; and what their value was in each year since April 2003. [30567]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the form requested.

For the total number of disputed overpayments written off as a result of official error, I refer the hon. member to the reply I gave him on 27 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 497W, and on 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1214W.

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ask the Tax Office to provide claimants with a full explanation of how the demands for repayment of *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit are calculated. [32421]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) code of practice 26 "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?" explains the rates of recovery for overpayments of tax credits. From April 2006 HMRC will introduce an improved version of the tax credits award notice. This will include a section on overpayments and how any overpayment will be recovered.

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit applications are being processed; and how many of each were received (i) up to six months ago and (ii) more than six months ago. [36669]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the form requested. There is a single claim form for tax credits so it is not possible to differentiate between claims for child tax credit and working tax credit.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if his Department will extend the criteria for suspension of the recovery of a tax credit overpayment to include cases where *(a)* a letter has been sent by an hon. Member to the Paymaster General regarding a case of disputed overpayment, *(b)* the Parliamentary ombudsman has commenced an investigation into a case where the claimant has been overpaid and *(c)* a letter has been sent by an hon. Member to the Tax Credit Office in Preston regarding a case of overpaid tax credits. [38626]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 19 December 2006]:* Where a claimant wishes to dispute recovery of an overpayment, HM Revenue and Customs will initiate suspension of recovery following receipt of a letter or a form TC846 (request to reconsider recovery of tax credits) from the claimant; or a letter sent on behalf of the claimant, and with their authority.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of forged tax credits there were in the Gravesham area in each of the five years before the Jobcentre Plus scheme was launched; and how many there were in the last year for which figures are available. [39453]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of forged tax credits resulting in prosecution have been reported relating to Jobcentre Plus in the Gravesham area in the last 12 months. [39454]

Dawn Primarolo: None.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 804W, on tax credits, on what date was a written assurance received from EDS that the IT system would be fit for the purpose of supporting tax credits. [40452]

Dawn Primarolo: EDS provided a certificate on 4 April 2003 confirming that the IT system was fit for the purpose of supporting tax credits and on 5 April 2003 EDS wrote to the Inland Revenue in similar terms.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people he estimates were entitled to, but did not claim, tax credits in each year since 2000–01; how much he estimates was unclaimed; and if he will make a statement. [41463]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the number of families entitled to, but not claiming working families tax credit in 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03, and the value of unclaimed WFTC entitlements, are available on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/wftc/takeup_rates.htm (tables 1 and 2 of each annual publication). Analysis relating to 2003–04 is on-going and we expect this work to be completed towards the end of 2005–06.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of not reclaiming overpaid tax credits from those whose incomes rise by less than £25,000. [41714]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Members for Birkenhead (Mr. Frank Field) and for Yeovil (Mr. David Laws) on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1836W.

Tax Debt

Dr. Strang: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how HM Revenue and Customs traces those who owe tax for whom it has an incorrect address. [41028]

Dawn Primarolo: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) use a number of ways to trace those who owe tax for whom it has an incorrect address.

1. HMRC sources: Departmental data is checked to see if the Department holds an alternative address.

2. Other Government Departments and Agencies: Legislation provides legal gateways that allow HMRC to obtain current address information held on other Departments' systems.

3. Private sector sources: Some use is made of data already in the public domain held by private sector organisations.

4. Contact by phone or personal call: HMRC staff will attempt contact by telephone as customers may retain their telephone number when they move address.

Tax Investigations

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what provisions there are for a taxpayer to offset against taxes the cost of tax investigation by HM Revenue and Customs. [41174]

Dawn Primarolo: Costs arising out of an investigation into taxes are deductible in calculating the taxable profits of a business, if those taxes are paid as part of the expenses of carrying on the business. In addition, the normal expenses incurred in preparing accounts and calculating the income tax or corporation tax liabilities in respect of the profits of a business are deductible in calculating its taxable profits.

Additional expenses arising out of an investigation by HMRC are not deductible if the investigation reveals additional income tax or corporation tax liabilities arising from negligent or fraudulent conduct.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria are used to decide which taxpayers will be subject to tax investigation. [40925]

Dawn Primarolo: Cases for direct tax investigation into Self-Assessment returns are selected according to the risk of loss of duty to the Treasury.

The only exception to this is the small proportion of cases that are statistically selected at random in order to police the system while at the same time providing information as to the extent of compliance in the general population.

For indirect taxes, "investigation" is the term specifically used to describe the Department's activity to combat cases of suspected fraud.

The selection of taxpayers for mainstream assurance contact, including visits, is based upon interpretation of the Department's risk analysis systems, past results and other information and intelligence.

The Department focuses its contacts not only on the wilfully non-compliant through tax investigations, but also on those taxpayers needing education and support through an educational and enabling programme.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax investigations were carried out in each year since 1997. [40927]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of tax investigations carried out in each year is as follows:

Year ending 5 April:	*Number*
1999	250,415
2000	510,103
2001	469,750
2002	448,650
2003	313,231
2004	298,819
2005	279,302

For the years ended 5 April 1997, 5 April 1998 and 5 April 1999 the IR did not report the number of tax investigations carried out but reported the number of tax investigations settled annually. The respective annual settlement figures are 96,905, 93,558 and 79,133.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much additional tax was recovered by the Inland Revenue as a result of tax investigations in each year since 1997. [40929]

Dawn Primarolo: The total additional liability brought into charge as a result of HMRC tackling non-compliance is as follows:

5 April:	*£ billion*
1997	4.3
1998	3.9
1999	4.0
2000	5.4
2001	4.5
2002	3.8
2003	4.3
2004	4.5
2005	5.7

It should be borne in mind that not all of these liabilities may be collected due to a variety of factors, for example insolvency. We have no data indicating what proportion of these liabilities is ultimately collected.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in respect of how many people tax investigations resulted in a recovery of income tax of *(a)* nil, or negative tax recovery, *(b)* under £500, *(c)* between £500 and £1,000, *(d)* between £1,000 and £2,000, *(e)* between £2,000 and £3,000, *(f)* between £3,000 and £4,000, *(g)* between £4,000 and £5,000 and *(h)* over £5,000 in each year since 1997. [40930]

Dawn Primarolo: These statistics are not routinely kept or reported and the costs involved in extracting the data would be too prohibitive.

Tax Returns

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have been fined for filing their income tax return late in each year since 1997. [40932]

Dawn Primarolo: The total numbers of late filing penalty notices (the first automatic penalty) issued in each financial year are detailed as follows. The figures for the financial year 1997–98 are not available.

Return year	*Year issued*	*Total number issued (000)*
1997–98	1998–99	748
1998–99	1999–2000	744
1999–2000	2000–01	808
2000–01	2001–02	823
2001–02	2002–03	847
2002–03	2003–04	953
2003–04	2004–05	998

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money was received in fines from filing late income tax returns in each year since 1997. [40933]

Dawn Primarolo: Available information on the amount paid in respect of penalties for failure to submit income tax self assessment returns, since the start of self assessment, is shown in the table as follows. The years relate to accounting years that run to the end of October.

Year to end of October	*Penalties paid (£ million)*
1998	18.07
1999	29.29
2000	33.01
2001	36.20
2002	36.45
2003	37.68
2004	37.26

Tax Treatment

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to treat payment made to people who mark examination papers as self-employed income. [41177]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 10 January to his questions 40625 and 40626. We have no plans to change the tax treatment of examiners.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Business Financial Reviews

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the meetings held between his Department and the Treasury at which the decision to remove the obligation on businesses to publish operating and financial reviews was discussed. [36707]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not had any such meetings.

Departmental Expenditure

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total administrative costs for his core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39837]

Hilary Benn: DFID's provisional outturn for its gross control administration costs limit for 2004–05 is £216,457,000.

DFID's total expenditure, including administration costs, is classified as identifiable, outside the UK for the purpose of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA).

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39858]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not have responsibility for any agencies.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40067]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not have responsibility for any non-departmental public bodies.

Departmental Functions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40012]

Hilary Benn: The total number of UK staff is 1,372, of which 822 are based in London and 550 based in Scotland. DFID's Scotland HQ provides the majority of DFID's support services, including Human Resources, Finance and Corporate Performance, IT and office services. It also provides advisory and operational services for Policy, Knowledge and regional Divisions.

DFID does not break down its administration costs by location in the UK; however we estimate that for 2004–05, £45 million of our total administration outturn of £216,457,000 can be attributed to the teams based in Scotland.

DFID has moved a number of posts to Scotland in line with the Efficiency Review recommendations.

Famine

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the threat of famine in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. [41415]

Hilary Benn: Poor rains in much of the Horn of Africa at the end of 2005 have left many communities who are dependent on farming and raising livestock in serious difficulties. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has issued a report saying that as many as 11 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti may require assistance in 2006. The severe food shortages in parts of these countries are sadly not a new phenomenon, and DFID has been responding with humanitarian assistance for many years. We are aware of the particular threat this year, the possibility that the current crisis may deepen, and that other areas may come to be affected.

DFID humanitarian advisers visited the worst affected areas in Kenya in November 2005, and visits to Somalia and Ethiopia are planned for early 2006.

This month DFID contributed £1 million to the World Food Programme for Somalia on top of the over £5 million we spent there on humanitarian interventions in 2005. This includes a number of health and nutrition operations in the worst affected parts of Southern Somalia.

In Ethiopia DFID made a commitment of £43 million in March 2005 to the cash and food aid based Productive Safety Net programme. This programme provides assistance to some of the poorest communities in Ethiopia. In December 2005 we announced a further £2.7 million for Kenya in response to the situation there.

DFID will continue to monitor the situation closely and we stand ready to provide additional support if necessary.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what has been the annual expenditure on training and development for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in

(A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39983]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The available information is given in the following tables. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is not responsible for any training expenditure in bodies in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Expenditure on training in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is split between budgets held centrally in the training and development team and those held by line management. The central budget covers the ODPM's induction programme, performance management training, the learning library and Skills for Life programme, helps deliver the ODPM's Excellence in Delivery programme and supports the implementation of Professional Skills for Government. Expenditure on training by line managers is via the Training Framework which offers over 600 public scheduled courses covering a wide range of topics to ensure staff have the necessary core skills.

With regard to the Audit Commission, this is an operational matter for that body. I will ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member and to ensure the answer is made available in the Library of the House.

Table 1

£000

	2002-03 Out-turn	*2003-04 Out-turn*	*2004-05 Out-turn*	*2005-06 Planned*	
ODPM Central	2,304	1,941	2,162	3,706	Regional breakdown not available
Government Offices	1,680	2,452	2,412	1,779	See regional breakdown in Table 2
Residential Property Tribunal Services	83	108	129	122	Regional breakdown not available
Queen Elizabeth II Conference centre	31	48	27	39	Expenditure all in London
Planning Inspectorate	576	524	457	635	Regional breakdown not available; expenditure in both England and Wales
English Partnerships	346	356	453	1,133	Regional breakdown not available
Fire Service College	266	435	261	316	Regional breakdown not available
Stonebridge HAT	110	109	59	30	Expenditure all in London
London Thames Gateway Development Corporation	n/a	n/a	5	30	Expenditure all in London and South East. Corporation established in 2004-05
Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation	n/a	2	11	12	Expenditure all in London and South East. Established in 2003-04
West Northants Development Corporation	n/a	n/a	n/a	24	Expenditure all in West Midlands. Established in 2005-06
Housing Corporation	304	605	839	675	Regional breakdown not available
VTS	n/a	n/a	217	255	Regional breakdown not available. Established in 2004-05
Standards Board for England	121	59	87	80	Regional breakdown not available
Total	5,821	6,639	7,119	9,122	

n/a = Not available.

Table 2

Government Offices (Regions)	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
North East	n/a	290	286	189
North West	n/a	300	456	281
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	187	166	170
West Midlands	n/a	264	235	189
East Midlands	n/a	294	110	55
East region	n/a	176	192	161
South West	n/a	226	277	166
South East	n/a	188	160	157
London	n/a	189	180	135
Regional Co-ordination Unit (based in London)	n/a	338	350	235
Total	1,680	2,452	2,412	1,779

n/a = Not available.

The Architects Registration Board's accounts operate on an annual basis—from January to December, rather than the financial year from April to March. The training expenditure, in £000 is as follows:

	£
2002	10
2003	6
2004	13
2005	6
2006	16

Departmental Publications

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to publish as an annex to his annual report a list of all publications published by his Department in the preceding year; and if he will make a statement. [41018]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A database of publications issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since May 2002 is available on the ODPM website at: http://www.publications.odpm.gov.uk/ Information can be accessed by both date and policy area.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to publish this information in duplicate in our annual report.

Fire Service Restructuring

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received on his proposals for regional fire control centres; what assessment he has made of the implications for individual fire authorities of leaving certain functions out of scope of the regional control centre project; and what assessment he has made of the implications for council tax of the continuation of the performance of out of scope activities by local fire brigades. [39705]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received three representations directly from fire and rescue authorities since the end of the summer recess. While they raise concerns over finance, none has opposed the fundamental principles of the FiReControl project. On out of scope activities, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 255W. There are not expected to be implications for council tax payers of the continuation of out of scope activities since the overall savings from the project will more than offset any costs arising.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action his Department is taking to reduce increases in the cost of auditing to local councils. [40775]

Mr. Woolas: The Audit Commission is responsible for setting the fees for audit. Its current consultation paper "Local Councils—Proposed fee scales 2006–2011" gives details of proposed reductions on audit fees for many small councils.

Non-governmental Organisations

Alistair Burt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations for which his Department had responsibility on 1 January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2006; how many people were employed by each body in each year since 2001; and what the salary of the chief executive of each body was in each year since 2001. [41506]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was established in May 2002. Cabinet Office's publication 'Public Bodies 2002' provides information on the non-departmental public bodies sponsored by ODPM, including a figure for staff employed by each body and the salary of the chief executive or other senior officer. A copy of 'Public Bodies 2002' was placed in the Library of the House of Commons. Similar information for years up to 31 March 2005 can be found on Cabinet Office's Public Bodies database at:

http://www.knowledgenetwork.gov.uk/ndpb/ndpb.nsf/0/8AC82848303185688025 70AD0044C876?OpenDocument

On 1 January 2006, ODPM sponsored the following executive public bodies:

The Architects' Registration Board;

The Audit Commission for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales;

English Partnerships (consisting of the Commission for the New Towns and the Urban Regeneration Agency);

The Housing Corporation;

The Leasehold Advisory Service;

London Thames Gateway Development Corporation;

The Standards Board for England;

Stonebridge Housing Action Trust;

Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation;

West Northants Development Corporation; and

The Valuation Tribunal Service.

Official Residences (Council Tax)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the council tax bills for his official residences have been paid out of public funds, in each year since his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister. [39478]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* I have reviewed the arrangements for the payment of council tax on the official residence I occupy at Admiralty house.

The Government have paid a discounted amount of council tax on this flat since 1997, continuing the arrangements in place for the previous Conservative Administration. The residence at the time was the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence. Consequently, the following amounts of council tax have been paid out of public funds for my official residence:

£

	Ministry of Defence	*ODPM and predecessors*
1997–98	[1]266.52	—
1998–99 to 2004–05	—	3,564

[1] Pro-rata share subsequently taken over by DETR.

I was paying council tax on my Hull constituency home and on a rented flat in London, which I vacated in November 2003. I believed that I was paying council tax on all three properties.

In 1997 I was assigned an official residency at Admiralty house that was deemed as my primary residence in accordance with the House of Commons rules.

As part of this arrangement I paid additional income tax on the benefit in kind arising from the utilities and services associated with my occupancy of the official residence, equivalent to 10 per cent. of my ministerial salary. This is in accordance with legislation first introduced in the Finance Act 1977 and included in the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 and the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003.I believed that council tax on the official residence was included in this.

In 1997 the Government carried on paying council tax as before on the flat, and claimed a discount (on a second home/company basis). This was not confirmed with me and nor was any advice given to me at the time.

On reviewing the situation, I am now aware that an inadvertent error has occurred, based on a genuine misunderstanding. To avoid any doubt, I have therefore:

issued this answer to a parliamentary question to correct the record and to fully apologise to the House;

instructed my Department to confirm to Westminster City council that Admiralty house is my primary residence;

insisted that future council tax bills should be sent direct and personally to me;

reimbursed the Department for their payment of council tax since 1997; and

although I have no legal obligation to do so, I will pay full council tax on Admiralty house for the whole of the period since 1997 and have requested that Westminster City council calculate any amounts arising from my decision to do so.

The Commons Fees Office have confirmed that I have acted within the rules at all times.

The Cabinet Secretary has confirmed that for the future he has put in place procedures to ensure that Ministers who are allocated official residences are given clear guidance on dealing with their council tax liabilities.

Dorneywood is owned and managed by an independent trust, which meets the cost of the council tax. There is no cost to public funds.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Olympic Games

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what aspirational target for medals at the 2012 Olympic Games has been set by *(a)* UK Sport and *(b)* her Department; and what representations have been received on these targets from the British Olympic Association. [41188]

Mr. Caborn: Neither the Department nor UK Sport has set an aspirational target for Olympic medals in London 2012.

The Chair of the British Olympic Association (BOA) met the Secretary of State on 16 November, and wrote on 2 December to indicate that the BOA's aspirational goal for London 2012 was fourth in the Olympic medal table.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations *(a)* the Department and *(b)* UK Sport received from the British Olympic Association on UK Sport's submission to the Treasury on the funding of elite athletes prior to the publication of the pre-Budget report. [41189]

Mr. Caborn: The Chair of the British Olympic Association (BOA) met the Secretary of State on 16 November, and wrote on 2 December about UK Sport's submission to the Department on funding for elite athletes. In addition, officials have also had periodic conversations with the BOA.

Officials from UK Sport and the BOA met on at least four occasions prior to the submission of UK Sport's 2012 funding proposals to the Department. In addition, the Chairs of the respective organisations met on 12 October to discuss funding for elite athletes.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions UK Sport met the British Olympic Association to discuss the funding of elite athletes prior to the publication of the pre-Budget report. [41192]

Mr. Caborn: On 12 July, the British Olympic Association (BOA) convened a meeting with UK Sport and Performance Directors from all the summer Olympic sports to assess the initial implications of the successful bid to host the 2012 Olympics.

Subsequently, officials from UK Sport and the BOA met on at least four other occasions prior to the submission of UK Sport's 2012 funding proposals to the DCMS. UK Sport and BOA officials also met with representatives from 22 of the 26 summer Olympic sports. In addition, the Chairs of the respective organisations met on 12 October to discuss funding for elite athletes.

Digital Broadcasting

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the average cost is per household of *(a)* digital switch-over and *(b)* aerial repairs to enable households to receive digital television. [40652]

James Purnell: On 8 November 2005, Ofcom published research by the Generics Group which examined the cost and power consumption implications of digital switchover for UK households. The report estimates that

"for those households that will incur a cost as a result of switchover, the actual cost will depend on the equipment requiring conversion and the level of voluntary conversion carried out before switchover. Typical non-voluntary costs for TVs and recorders in households containing an average collection of reception equipment are therefore estimated to range from £26 to £153."

Disabled People (Media Portrayal)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent assessment her Department has made of the portrayal of people with disabilities on television; and what recent discussions she has had with Ofcom on this issue. [40825]

James Purnell: None. Responsibility for what is broadcast on television and radio rests with the broadcasters and the organisations which regulate broadcasting—the Office of Communications (Ofcom), the Governors of the BBC and the Welsh Fourth Channel Authority. Ofcom did recently publish a report on the representation and portrayal of people with disabilities on analogue terrestrial television.

Free Television Licences

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioners in Hendon have received free television licences in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [41618]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, which administers free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, is not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in the Hendon constituency in 2004–05 was 5,740 according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

ICONS Online

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the *(a)* set-up costs, *(b)* annual running costs, *(c)* projected lifespan, *(d)* total cost and *(e)* impact on Barnett formula funding of ICONS online. [41549]

Mr. Lammy: ICONS is a Culture Online project run in partnership with Cognitive Applications. The project set-up cost to date is £510,000; running costs amount to £43,500 each month (£522,000 per year). The project ends in March 2007, but has been designed to become a self-sustainable non-profit organisation after that date. The total cost therefore amounts to just over £1,000,000. Culture Online's remit only extends to England, and the ICONS project has no impact on the Barnett formula funding.

Parliamentary Questions

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to reply to question 38358 tabled on 13 December by the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid Kent, on funding for elite athletes. [41186]

Mr. Caborn: I answered question 38358 from the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid Kent (Hugh Robertson) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 32W.

World Cup

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many Government officials will be attending FIFA World Cup matches in their official capacity. [41687]

Mr. Caborn: No decision has been made as to whether any Government officials will attend any of the FIFA World Cup matches in Germany this year in an official capacity.

It is likely that a number of Government Ministers may attend matches and will be accompanied by officials. Similarly, no decisions about Ministerial attendance have been made.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Bankruptcies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* personal and *(b)* company bankruptcies in (i) London and (ii) each London borough in each of the last three years. [40803]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table records the numbers of individual bankruptcy orders and company compulsory liquidations in the London Region classified according to Official Receivers' Office from 2002–03 to 2004–05.

Figures are not separately available for each London borough.

Numbers of compulsory insolvencies recorded in the London Official Receivers offices, 2002–03 to 2004–05 [1,2]

Financial year total

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05* [1,2]
Bankruptcy Orders	1,562	2,132	4,910
Company Compulsory Liquidations	1,211	823	1,137

[1] Croydon Official Receiver's Office is classified under London Region for 2004–05 only, when it accounted for 1,678 of the 4,910 bankruptcies and 209 of the 1,137 company compulsory liquidations.

[2] The 2004–05 figures also include Public Interest Unit (PIU) and Carousel, which together amount to 18 bankruptcies and 139 company compulsory liquidations.

Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of section 60 of the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004. [41001]

Alun Michael: To date there have been no proceedings in relation to offences covered by section 60 of the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004.

End of Life Vehicles Directive

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the UK is on track to meet the January 2006 targets set by the EU end of life vehicles directive. [40467]

Malcolm Wicks: The End-of-Life Vehicles (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2005, which transpose the targets in the Directive into national law, place obligations on vehicle producers and, in certain circumstances, Authorised Treatment Facilities, to achieve recovery and recycling of 85 per cent. of the weight of ELVs they scrap during the whole of 2006. A study commissioned by the Department last year established that 75 per cent. of the average weight of ELVs is made up of ferrous and non-ferrous metals, and this proportion may be deemed to have been automatically reused or recycled, under the terms of Commission Decision 2005/293/EC, to reflect usual commercial practice. A further 10 per cent. of the weight of ELVs needs therefore to be recovered during 2006. Fluids, including fuel, and tyres, plastics and glass are likely to contribute. Progress will be reviewed during the course of the year to ensure that obligated parties are on course to meet their targets.

Fireworks (Amendment) Bill

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations he has

received about the Fireworks (Amendment) Bill; how many *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the Bill; and if he will make a statement. [40999]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have received no representations on this Bill.

Gwynt-y-Mor Wind Farm

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has held with representatives of power renewables concerning the proposed development of the Gwynt-y-Mor wind farm. [40718]

Malcolm Wicks: Prior to an application being submitted under the Electricity Act 1989 officials in the Department had various discussions with npower about a proposed generating station at Gwynt-y-Mor. These discussions concerned issues relating to a formal scoping request under regulation 7 of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) England and Wales Regulations 2000 and more recently to matters concerning the making of an application under the Electricity Act and about the administrative processes triggered by such an application.

Industrial Disease Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to ensure that industrial disease compensation cheques are paid directly to miners. [40692]

Malcolm Wicks: Compensation cheques are made payable to the claimant but sent via the claimant's representative. The claimant's representative is responsible for ensuring that the correct moneys are paid to the claimant and, for deceased claims, that compensation is correctly distributed.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many pending coal health compensation claims there are in *(a)* North West Leicestershire, *(b)* the East Midlands, *(c)* England, *(d)* Wales and *(e)* Scotland involving claimants who worked as miners in both the public and private sectors where settlement is being delayed by lack of agreement with legal advisers to the former private sector employer. [40818]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not readily available. There are nearly 22,000 claims involving co-defendants which have yet to be settled. However, most of the issues preventing progress have been resolved. Consequently, the bulk of these 22,000 claims should be in a position to be processed in accordance with the priority system.

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether agreements between his Department and *(a)* the Claimants Group Solicitors and *(b)* the Union of Democratic Mineworkers are effectively identical so far as the payment of compensation to claimants is concerned; and in what ways they differ so far as the claimant is concerned as stated in the Boyd-Smith report. [38957]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* A claimant would receive the same compensation whichever handling agreement the claim is processed under. The medical assessment process is identical, the evidential burden is the same and the priorities for deciding which claims are processed first do not depend on the handling agreement that applies. There are some procedural differences but neither handling agreement delivers compensation any quicker than the other.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to set out the employment legislation relating to pregnancy and maternity for *(a)* employers and *(b)* employees. [40672]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A large amount of information is already available to both employers and employees, including guidance provided by DTI, DWP and HMRC. ACAS provides information through its dedicated helpline as well as through guidance. The information on the Businesslink.gov website is being enhanced to provide employers with more support in managing a pregnancy in the workplace. Information for employees has been drawn together on to the direct.gov website.

However, in the context of the changes to maternity leave and pay provisions which will follow the Work and Families Bill, DTI, DWP and HMRC will work together to rationalise the guidance on their own websites and ensure there is comprehensive and coherent information available that is easily accessible and properly signposted. This will include Government working with stakeholders to develop the proposal for a leaflet setting out the rights and responsibilities of both employers and employees which will be provided at an early stage of a woman's pregnancy.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to support micro and small businesses to manage pregnancy and maternity within their employee base. [40699]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government recognise that small businesses can sometimes face particular difficulties in managing and administering maternity leave and statutory maternity pay (SMP). Additional financial support is available for smaller employers. All employers are able to claim back 92 per cent. of the SMP they pay to their employees but smaller employers—those whose annual national insurance liability is £45,000 or less—are able to claim back 100 per cent. of the SMP they pay out plus an additional 4.5 per cent. Employers are also able to claim this money in advance from HMRC where making the payment would cause them cashflow problems.

Measures in the work and families package will also offer small employers more practical support. To give employers more certainty in managing maternity leave we will be extending, from 28 days to eight weeks, the amount of notice a woman must give if she is changing her plans about returning from maternity leave. We will also be clarifying in regulation that an employer may make reasonable contact with a woman during maternity leave. The introduction of keeping in touch

days will enable a woman to do some limited days' work activity for her employer. This will support employers and employees in maintaining contact during maternity leave and will help to ease a woman's return to work after maternity leave.

Government are also changing some of the SMP rules to ease administration for employers. Employers will be able to calculate a daily rate for SMP if this will help them to pay SMP at the same time as a woman's usual payday. Women will be able to choose to begin their maternity leave on any day of the week which will allow maternity leave and pay periods to be fully aligned.

No employer now needs to calculate SMP manually. From February 2005, HMRC introduced and supplied a new SMP calculate to all employers on its employers CD ROM 2005. HMRC has also improved the SMP calculators on its website. To support those less comfortable with electronic solutions, the HMRC employer's helpline will calculate the SMP amounts and dates payable and the amounts recoverable, and follow this up with prompt reassurance in the form of written confirmation.

Services Directive

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on current negotiations on the services directive under the Austrian presidency of the EU. [40955]

Ian Pearson: The proposed EU directive on services in the internal market was last discussed in Council at the Competitiveness Council on 28 November 2005. Ministers agreed that good technical progress had been made during the UK presidency, and that they should wait for the opinion of the European Parliament and the Commission's revised proposal before resuming discussions.

The European Parliament is scheduled to hold its first reading vote on the directive next month. The Commission has recently indicated that it will submit its revised proposal very soon afterwards.

The Austrian Chancellor has said that he hopes to present a solution on the directive, which is a priority dossier for their presidency. In their joint Operational Programme for 2006 (available at http://www.eu2006at/includes/Download_Dokumente/0512draft_operationalprogrammeEN.pdf), the Finnish and Austrian Governments have stated that they are committed to completing negotiations on the directive.

The UK Government strongly support the market-opening objectives of the directive and will work closely with the Austrian presidency, other member states and the Commission to take negotiations forward during 2006.

Sunday Trading

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Department has for evaluating the impact of Sunday trading on the family life of employees. [40685]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI will be assessing work-life balance issues as part of its wider evaluation of the impact of further liberalisation of Sunday trading hours.

Telephone Main Lines (Broadband)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many telephone main lines are in use in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* each of the English regions and *(d)* Northern Ireland; and how many are broadband in each case. [39199]

Alun Michael: The information is not available in the form requested, but Ofcom's Communications Market report 2005 showed that in the UK at the end of 2004 there were:

33.7 million fixed line connections;

61.2 million mobile connections;

15.9 million internet connections;

6.3 million broadband connections.

By September 2005, the number of broadband connections in the UK had risen to 8.1 million[1]. Great progress has been made towards providing broadband access across the UK as a whole, where 99.6 per cent. of households are now connected to a broadband enabled exchange. This is considerable progress against the 2003 (80 per cent.) and 2004 (93 per cent.) figures.

[1] *Source*:
Ovum, an analyst and consulting company in the telecommunication sector.

Veterinary Medicines

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to monitor the impact of the recent changes in the prescription of veterinary medicines and accompanying services. [40649]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The regulatory impact assessment accompanying the Supply of Relevant Veterinary Medicinal Products Order 2005 sets out that the Office of Fair Trading is responsible for reviewing and monitoring compliance with competition legislation. To achieve this they may request information from a wide range of parties. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons is responsible for the changes implemented through the Guide to Professional Conduct.

The legislation covering the placing on the market and safe use of veterinary medicines in the UK is set out in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/2745) and is the responsibility of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, an agency of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). These regulations will be revoked and replaced annually to ensure that they remain relevant. A regulatory impact assessment will be produced and published to accompany the Regulations and full public consultation will be carried out.

More generally, DEFRA continually assesses the impact of all factors affecting the veterinary sector, including the effect of new legislation.

Wind Power

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made

of the availability of equipment for wind power projects in relation to the Government's targets for renewable energy. [40777]

Malcolm Wicks: The availability of equipment for wind power projects is primarily a matter for wind power developers. However, the Department recognises that the current growth in the worldwide demand for wind turbines is having an impact on UK offshore wind farm developers in particular.

The Department's 2010 target team is working with developers and suppliers in order to minimise the impact on industry's ability to meet the Government's 2010 renewables target.

Working Time Directive

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on current negotiations on the working time directive under the Austrian presidency of the EU. [40956]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Austria has not yet publicly announced formal plans for handling negotiations on the working time directive, however, we would expect the Austrians to aim for political agreement during the next Employment Council in March 2006.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which other EU member states support the UK's position on maintaining its opt-out from the 48-hour week in the working time directive. [40957]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A significant number of member states support the retention of the individual right to opt-out from the 48-hour week in the working time directive, including Germany and Poland.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Hospitality Costs

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on hospitality by *(a)* the Secretary of State and Direct Rule Ministers, *(b)* Ministers in the Northern Ireland Assembly, *(c)* the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, *(d)* the Chief Constable and *(e)* district commanders in each of the last 10 years; and how much of that was spent on alcohol in each case. [38595]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the Police Service of Northern Ireland cannot provide the information requested by the hon. Gentleman. To do so would incur disproportionate costs as we cannot easily identify expenditure on hospitality or alcohol for the individuals the hon. Gentleman refers to.

House Prices

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on house prices in Northern Ireland. [2190]

Mr. Hanson: The peace process and the improved economic benefits associated with this have had a major impact on house prices which were, in the past, reasonably stagnant in comparison to the buoyant GB housing market. Many home owners are therefore benefiting from this. Rising house prices can create difficulties for first-time buyers and while Northern Ireland does not have a general affordability problem there are hot spot areas where affordability problems may occur. Recent Government initiatives such as the increase in the threshold at which stamp duty is paid from £60,000 to £120,000 coupled with the recent increase in the level of funding available to the Co-ownership scheme and the changes to the eligibility rules, will play an increasing role in helping those on lower incomes to become home owners.

Limavady Bypass

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes have been made to the Limavady bypass since its opening. [38954]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 12 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding what improvements or changes have been made to the Limavady Bypass since its opening. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Since the Limavady Bypass became operational in July 2003 some minor alterations, involving the realignment of kerbing and road markings, were carried out to provide smoother vehicle paths through priority junctions. Resurfacing work was also carried out on approaches to bridges following anticipated residual settlement of embankments.

I hope this information is helpful.

PE

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to establish a strategic approach to the development and support of curriculum physical education. [40770]

Angela E. Smith: The Government recognise the importance of physical activity for the long-term health and well-being of the community. Physical education will continue to be a compulsory part of the revised Northern Ireland school curriculum, which the Government plan to introduce from September 2006. The wider aspects of physical activity will be addressed in light of the report of the fit futures taskforce and the review of the physical activity strategy.

Pre-School Provision Report

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Department of Education in Northern Ireland will publish its response to the pre-school review. [40771]

Angela E. Smith: It is anticipated that the response to the review of pre-school education will be published following the announcement of the children and young people fund, which is due shortly.

Primary School (New Construction)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average cost of constructing a new one-form-of-entry 4 to 11 primary school has been in the last three years. [19526]

Angela E. Smith: In the last three financial years there have been five new seven-classroom primary schools, including two with nursery units, completed in Northern Ireland. The average construction cost was £1.8 million.

Review of Public Administration

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the legislative framework is for the implementation of the Review of Public Administration. [40780]

Angela E. Smith: The Government will be introducing a number of pieces of legislation over the next few years to provide for the implementation of decisions on the Review of Public Administration. Subordinate legislation will be brought forward before Easter to dissolve 18 health and social services trusts and establish five new trusts. It is intended to lay a draft Order in Council before Parliament in the current term to set the context for the review of local government boundaries. Separate Orders in Council will also be brought forward in due course for the further reorganisation of health and personal social services, education and local government structures; to provide for certain of the new or enhanced responsibilities of the new district councils; and, where appropriate, to implement any further decisions on executive agencies and public bodies.

Road Safety

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will move responsibility for all road safety measures in Northern Ireland into one Department; and if he will make a statement. [33534]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy 2002 to 2012 provides an integrated approach to the planning, co-ordination and delivery of Government's road safety activities and it requires the three main statutory bodies with responsibility for road safety in Northern Ireland (the Department of the Environment, the Department for Regional Development's Roads Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland) to work together closely in partnership.

A road safety steering group, comprising senior management from each of the three partners, is responsible for coordinating delivery of the strategy and ensuring cohesive and complementary education, enforcement and engineering road safety activities.

These partnership arrangements are working well and are making a significant contribution to casualty reductions and there are no plans at this time to change this approach.

Road Maintenance

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Department for Regional Development Roads maintenance budget expenditure in *(a)* Limavady and *(b)* Coleraine borough council areas was in each of the last three years. [38955]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 12 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding what the Department for Regional Development Roads maintenance budget expenditure in *(a)* Limavady and *(b)* Coleraine Borough Council areas was in each of the last three years.

I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The most recent figures available are up to the financial year ended March 2005 and I can confirm that the roads maintenance expenditure in Limavady and Coleraine Borough Council areas in each of the last three years are as detailed in the table below.

£000

Summary	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Limavady	2,636	3,555	3,156
Coleraine	3,740	5,167	3,960

I hope this information is helpful.

School Transport Costs

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the administration costs of transport were in each Education and Library Board in each of the last five years. [40836]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not available in the required format prior to 2002–03. The Education and Library Boards have, however, incurred the following expenditure in each of the last three years in relation to the administration of the home to school transport service:

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*Total*
2002–03	170,000	195,000	252,000	196,000	429,157	1,242,157
2003–04	223,000	231,000	236,879	367,000	350,979	1,221,858
2004–05	194,000	256,000	178,000	493,000	410,708	1,531,708

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of home to school transport was in each of the Education and Library Boards in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* board vehicles, *(b)* translink, *(c)* taxi hire, *(d)* mini-buses, *(e)* *bus* escorts and *(f)* other costs. [40837]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is only available in the required format for the past three years. Also, information is not held relating to the cost of providing escorts. The Education and Library Boards have, however, incurred the following expenditure in each of the last three years.

Belfast Board

	Board vehicles	Translink	Taxi hire	Private operators	Other	Total
2002–03	1,647,000	827,000	1,236,000	—	307,000	4,017,000
2003–04	2,338,000	845,000	952,000	105,000	366,000	4,606,000
2004–05	2,268,000	866,000	633,000	346,000	312,000	4,425,000

North-Eastern Board

	Board vehicles	Translink	Taxi hire	Private operators	Other	Total
2002–03	1,926,000	7,373,000	1,790,000	2,742,000	321,000	14,152,000
2003–04	1,996,000	7,620,000	2,007,000	2,713,000	919,000	15,255,000
2004–05	2,328,000	8,373,000	2,095,000	3,113,000	897,000	16,806,000

South-Eastern Board

	Board vehicles	Translink	Taxi hire	Private operators	Other	Total
2002–03	1,997,000	6,419,000	2,108,000	807,000	546,000	11,877,000
2003–04	3,058,507	5,917,792	2,656,528	692,803	547,678	12,873,308
2004–05	2,423,000	6,931,000	2,216,000	1,199,000	516,000	13,285,000

Southern Board

	Board vehicles	Translink	Taxi hire	Private operators	Other	Total
2002–03	4,620,000	5,135,000	1,833,000	3,030,000	223,000	14,841,000
2003–04	3,796,000	5,429,000	1,965,000	3,150,000	876,000	15,216,000
2004–05	4,274,000	5,966,000	2,022,000	3,140,000	965,000	16,367,000

Western Board

	Board vehicles	Translink	Taxi hire	Private operators	Other	Total
2002–03	5,936,000	3,731,000	694,000	1,175,000	780,614	12,316,614
2003–04	5,244,000	3,731,000	877,000	1,255,000	545,219	11,652,219
2004–05	5,836,553	4,340,631	1,046,192	1,300,316	642,872	13,166,564

Note:
The 'Other' category includes Strangford and Rathlin ferries, parents' car, Lough Swilly, building maintenance and administration costs.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of home-to-college transport was in each of the education and library board areas in each of the last five years. [40838]

Angela E. Smith: A detailed breakdown of the Home to College Transport spend in each education and library board, in each of the last five financial years where the information has been validated is as follows:

	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB
1999–2000	117,694	797,987	1,057,726	1,185,317	548,000
2000–01	131,844	914,672	1,033,867	1,012,821	563,941
2001–02	127,404	911,387	688,830	1,068,282	617,838
2002–03	106,233	932,185	675,954	1,036,222	611,289
2003–04	105,832	891,382	662,911	1,032,752	690,147

Stormont Spy Ring

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* police and *(b)* prison personnel in each parliamentary constituency were informed that they had to move from their homes following the collapse of the Stormont spy ring prosecutions. [42265]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI has advised that no police officers have applied for special purchase evacuated dwellings (SPED) as a result of the 'Stormontgate' case.

The police will only advise people of threats to their personal safety and cannot force anyone to move house. The decision to apply for SPED is for the individual alone to make.

The NI Prison Service advises that a total of 451 prison officers relocated under the assisted home removal scheme. As with the PSNI, the decision to move rests solely with the individual.

Student Finance

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many students will lose funding support as a result of the decision to withdraw funding for post-graduate diplomas in Northern Ireland. [39477]

Angela E. Smith: The decision to withdraw funding did not affect students already in receipt of an award.

Sub-regional Transportation Plan

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultations took place on the formulation of the sub-regional transportation plan in respect of the towns of Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle. [40783]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of the Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 12 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding what consultations took place on the formulation of the Sub-Regional Transportation Plan in respect of the towns of Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The preparation of the Sub-Regional Transport Plan has been supported by some 29 local transport studies of towns and cities across Northern Ireland, including those for Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle. These studies have been undertaken by independent consultants, working to a standard brief prepared by Roads Service, and their management has included interdepartmental liaison and participation of Translink. The consultants have worked closely with Roads Service Divisional staff and have taken full account of their local knowledge of the issues developed over the years through regular consultation with the Councils and contact with the general public.

As you will also be aware, the Draft Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 was published in December 2002. Consultation on the Area Plan, which includes Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle, involved the production of an Issues Paper in December 2000 and a series of public meetings facilitated and reported by Community Technical Aid. The consultation included transportation matters.

In preparing the Draft Sub-Regional Transport Plan, Roads Service had intended that an emerging blueprint, detailing the likely improvements in each local area, would have been available prior to Christmas. However, due to the draft NI Priorities and Budget 2006/08 and the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland announcements in December, and their potential impact, it was decided to defer issuing the blueprints until the New Year. The Councils were advised accordingly.

It is our intention to produce the Draft Sub-Regional Transport for formal consultation in March 2006, with the final Plan to be published in December 2006 and it is still Roads Service's intention to provide District Councils with sight of the blueprints for their respective towns, in advance of the formal consultation.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sustainable Development

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what parts of his Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [18440]

Angela E. Smith: The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate does not apply to devolved Administrations.

Water Service

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what financial investment he plans to make in the Water Service. [1358]

Mr. Woodward: The Priorities and Budget document published on 20 December 2004 provides for the following levels of investment in the Water Service:

£ million

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Current investment	110.4	114.7	112.4
Capital investment	279.5	228.8	224.4
Total investment	389.9	343.5	336.8

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Darfur

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan regarding the removal from their posts of regional administrators and mid-ranking military personnel who are suspected of committing war crimes in Darfur. [39694]

Ian Pearson: We have consistently made clear that those responsible for war crimes in Darfur must be brought to justice. We have called on the Sudanese Government to investigate those believed to be responsible for war crimes. We are encouraging anyone with information on the perpetrators of war crimes to pass it to the Sanctions Committee and the International Criminal Court for consideration in their work under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1591 and 1593.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the United States Administration regarding the restoration of funding for the African Union force in Darfur removed from the US's Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill 2006. [40413]

Ian Pearson: We are in regular and close contact with the US and other donors to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to ensure that the mission's funding requirements are met. The US Senate did propose an Amendment to the 2006 Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill to provide $50 million to AMIS, but for technical reasons this Amendment was not agreed. The US Administration and key members of Congress have assured us that they remain committed to continuing to support and help fund AMIS. Currently, the United States funds vital camp, vehicle, and communications operations and maintenance for the 34 AMIS camps as well as 14 contract Military Observers. Congress has not yet completed its budgetary processes, so there will be other opportunities for additional US funding for AMIS to be agreed. There are also alternative sources of funding within the US State Department which could be used to help finance AMIS.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the International Criminal Court on investigating and prosecuting *(a)* state governors, *(b)* provincial commissioners and *(c)* individuals in the formal military chain of command responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. [40415]

Ian Pearson: The Government have consistently made clear that those responsible for the terrible crimes committed in Darfur should be brought to justice. The UK sponsored UN Security Council Resolution 1593, referring the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Prosecutor of the ICC began a formal investigation on 6 June 2005.

It is for the ICC to consider the evidence and to make decisions regarding the indictment of specific individuals. The UK is committed to respect the Prosecutor's independence. Ministers and officials, in

their contacts with ICC, have underlined that the UK remains a strong supporter-in principle and in practice-of the Court's work.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Government of Sudan's co-operation with the work of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in Darfur. [40496]

Ian Pearson: On 13 December 2005, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, presented a report to the UN Security Council on the progress of his Office's investigation into the situation in Darfur. The report, available at www.icc-cpi.int/home.html stated that the Office had made good progress in the investigation's first phase, and noted that the next phase would seek the further assistance and co-operation of the Government of Sudan.

However, also on 13 December 2005, the Sudanese Justice Minister made comments suggesting that the ICC would not be allowed to enter Darfur to conduct investigations.

In response, on 14 December 2005, my noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, said:

"UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1593 referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC and called upon all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to co-operate with the ICC investigation. This referral sent a strong signal to the world at large that there can be no impunity for those guilty of grave human rights abuses. I am therefore deeply concerned to hear the recent statement by Sudan's Justice Minister, Muhammad Ali al-Mardi, that Sudan will not allow investigators from the ICC into Darfur. We expect the Government of Sudan to comply with all the wishes of the international community as set out in UNSCR 1593 and cooperate fully with the ICC should it decide to visit Darfur."

The Government will continue to support the ICC as it takes forward its investigation, and to maintain pressure on all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to provide full co-operation as requested by the ICC.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan concerning its decision not to allow international investigators into Darfur; and if he will continue to seek the Government of Sudan's agreement to sign up to the International Criminal Court. [40648]

Ian Pearson: In a statement issued on 14 December 2005, available at http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391638&a=KArticle&aid=1133774576642 my noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, said:

"UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1593 referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and called upon all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to co-operate with the ICC investigation. This referral sent a strong signal to the world at large that there can be no impunity for those guilty of grave human rights abuses. I am therefore deeply concerned to hear the recent statement by Sudan's Justice Minister, Muhammed Ali al-Mardi, that Sudan will not allow investigators from the ICC into Darfur. We expect the Government of Sudan to comply with all the wishes of the international community as set out in UNSCR 1593 and cooperate fully with the ICC should it decide to visit Darfur."

On 21 December 2005, the British ambassador to Sudan met with Vice President Taha of Sudan and also emphasised the importance of co-operation with the ICC.

The Government will continue to support the ICC as it takes forward its investigation, and to maintain pressure on all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to provide full co-operation in response to any ICC request.

Sudan is a signatory to the Rome Statute of the ICC but has not yet ratified the Statute. The UK believes in a strong ICC with global membership and jurisdiction that can help bring an end to the culture of impunity for the worst crimes against humanity including genocide and other war crimes. To this end, we urge Sudan to ratify the Rome Statute.

Ethiopia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of respect for human rights in Ethiopia; and what recent discussions he has had on this with the Government of Ethiopia. [40586]

Ian Pearson: We remain concerned about the human rights situation in Ethiopia and regularly raise those concerns with the Ethiopian Government. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, did so most recently during his visit to Ethiopia on 17 December when he discussed the current political crisis with Prime Minister Meles.

We will continue to work with the Government of Ethiopia, the international community and other stakeholders to help further progress on human rights and governance issues.

Illegal Weapons Trade

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* departmental officials will attend the review meeting of the United Nations programme of action to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. [41537]

Dr. Howells: We expect the UK delegation to the Review Conference to be made up of Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development officials led by our senior Ambassador on disarmament issues.

Indonesia

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is taking to urge the Government of Indonesia *(a)* to refrain from executing and *(b)* to release the three Christians imprisoned and sentenced to death in Sulawesi; and if he will make a statement. [39395]

Ian Pearson: On 14 November 2005, the UK expressed to the Indonesian Government the EU's regret at the decision to carry out the executions, and urged the Indonesian Government to refrain from carrying out the executions, and to consider the abolition of the death penalty.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent research his Department has commissioned on *(a)* religious discrimination, *(b)* church closures and *(c)* violence in West Java. [41030]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not commissioned any specific research on religious discrimination, church closures and violence in West Java. However, we continually monitor the situation.

We welcome the fact that President Yudhoyono issued an instruction in December 2005 to his Cabinet Secretary, instructing him to ensure that no more places of worship are closed and to assist congregations which no longer have a place of worship.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received from religious minorities in Indonesia; and what plans he has to discuss religious minority rights with the Indonesian Government. [41031]

Ian Pearson: Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and our embassy in Jakarta meet regularly with Indonesian religious minority representatives.

We discuss the rights of religious minorities with the Indonesian authorities regularly, as part of our on-going dialogue. In September this year, President Yudhoyono stressed that the state guaranteed every citizen religious freedom and called on the police and members of the public to act to prevent violence against any faith. The UK co-sponsored with the Indonesian Government in Bali, in July 2005, an international conference to promote inter-faith understanding and harmony. We will continue to co-operate with them on this important objective.

Israel

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he *(a)* has had and *(b)* is planning to have discussions with the Israeli Government about UK business contracts that might include transactions in East or West Jerusalem. [40701]

Ian Pearson: We have been in contact with the Israeli Government in the past in support of UK companies seeking business in Israel. However, it is the Government's policy that we will not support companies seeking contracts that involve work in East Jerusalem.

Niger

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Niger Government concerning the attacks upon Christian students by Muslim extremists in Niger state on 21 September at the Bosso campus of the Federal University of Technology at Minna; [28073]

(2) what representations he has made to the Niger Government concerning the attacks on Christians by Muslim extremists on 26 October at Tungan Rogo village in Niger state. [28074]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned by all incidents of inter-religious conflict and violence in Nigeria. We raise incidents with the relevant Federal and State authorities when they are brought to our attention and verified.

Representatives from the British high commission in Abuja repeatedly speak to senior Nigerian Christian and Muslim religious leaders about these issues. They have also spoken to one of the most senior Christian leaders in Northern Nigeria, who is not aware of the specific incidents in Niger State that my hon. Friend refers to.

We also fund projects to build trust between the various religious communities in Nigeria. We are funding the work of the International Centre for Reconciliation to promote understanding between Christians and Muslims in Plateau State. The Department for International Development are also working in two of the states most affected by ethno-religious unrest, Benue and Jigawa.

Religious Freedom

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to promote and protect religious freedom as a central objective of foreign diplomacy. [41032]

Ian Pearson: Promotion and protection of human rights is at the heart of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) policy. This includes a commitment to religious freedom throughout the world. We condemn instances where individuals are persecuted because of their faith or belief, wherever they happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned. We urge all states to pursue laws and practices which foster tolerance and mutual respect and protect religious minorities from persecution. The FCO's Annual Report on Human Rights, which was laid before the House on 21 July 2005, provides some further information on the work that we have done in this area.

Su Su Nwe

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Government of Myanmar regarding the detention of Su Su Nwe. [40789]

Ian Pearson: Our ambassador in Rangoon raised the detention of Su Su Nwe, and that of other prisoners of conscience, when she met the Burmese Interior Minister on 26 October 2005 and Burmese Foreign and Labour Ministers on 31 October 2005.

We will continue to raise her case with the Burmese authorities.

UN Convention Against Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2496W, on the UN Convention Against Corruption, how many written

representations his Department has received from *(a)* businesses, *(b)* business organisations and *(c)* non-governmental organisations on the UK signing and ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption; and how many of these stated that they were intended to remain confidential between the parties involved. [41626]

Ian Pearson: Due to the number of contacts, their diverse range, the varied nature of representations and the lengthy consultation period on this issue it is not practically possible to identify and list all written representations from all businesses, business organisations and non-governmental organisations. It is therefore also not possible to identify which of those representations stated that they were to remain confidential.

UN Security Council Resolutions

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government supports the proposal for a United Nations Security Council resolution by Vaclav Havel and Desmond Tutu in their report "A Threat to the Peace". [40790]

Dr. Howells: We fully support any action in the United Nations, including in the UN Security Council, which would help to promote reform and positive change in Burma. UN Security Council members discussed the situation in Burma on 16 December. The United Kingdom took an active role in this discussion, raising our concerns about human rights abuses, including the detention of political prisoners, internal conflicts and the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of Welsh claimants of *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* incapacity benefit returned to work in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39557]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the format requested.

The Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 244—Destination of benefit leavers 2004—showed that nationally, 62 per cent. of claimants leaving income support, incapacity benefit or jobseeker's allowance entered employment of 16 hours or more a week. Copies of the report are available in the Library.

Carers Allowance

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons levels of carers allowance reduce when carers reach pensionable age. [41720]

Mrs. McGuire: The payment of carers allowance is affected by the award of other social security benefits such as state pension, bereavement allowance and incapacity benefit, rather than simply reaching pension age. The reason why a carers allowance is not paid in full together with that other benefit is because they are both paid for income maintenance, and paying both benefits in full would duplicate provision for the same need. In practice the personal contributory benefit is paid in full and the carers allowance is adjusted against it. Where carers allowance is overlapped in full, the person maintains an underlying entitlement to the benefit which, in turn, gives them access to the carer premium in the income-related benefits, such as income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit, and to the carers additional amount in pension credit.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been non-compliant with their Child Support Agency assessment in each quarter since Q1 1996; and if he will make a statement. [28422]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 17 November 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 12 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been non-compliant with their Child Support Agency assessment in each quarter since Q1 1996; and if he will make a statement.

The information requested is provided in the table attached.

It should be noted that, whilst the number of non-compliant cases has nearly doubled between February 1996 and August 2005, the Child Support Agency's caseload has also increased significantly over this period. Over the same period, the Agency's case compliance rate has increased from 58 to 70 per cent.

I hope you find this helpful.

Child Support Agency collection service cases compliance status February 1996 to August 2005

Quarter ending	*Number of non compliant cases*
February 1996	66,000
May 1996	63,000
August 1996	67,000
November 1996	70,000
February 1997	70,000
May 1997	68,000
August 1997	70,000
November 1997	73,000
February 1998	76,000
May 1998	81,000
August 1998	87,000
November 1998	91,000
February 1999	97,000
May 1999	99,000
August 1999	101,000
November 1999	104,000
February 2000	106,000
May 2000	104,000
August 2000	105,000
November 2000	104,000
February 2001	104,000
May 2001	101,000
August 2001	101,000
November 2001	101,000
February 2002	99,000
May 2002	92,000
August 2002	90,000
November 2002	91,000
February 2003	90,000
May 2003	—

Child Support Agency collection service cases compliance status February 1996 to August 2005

Quarter ending	Number of non compliant cases
August 2003	—
November 2003	—
February 2004	—
May 2004	121,000
August 2004	123,000
November 2004	124,000
February 2005	126,000
May 2005	123,000
August 2005	125,000

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Robust information covering the period May 2003 to February 2004 is not currently available.
3. Compliance is defined as all those cases which are open and have paid money, either regular maintenance and/or arrears via the collection service over the preceding quarter.
4. The above includes only those old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment, and those new scheme cases with either a full maintenance calculation, or a default maintenance decision. Old scheme cases with a punitive interim maintenance assessment are excluded from this analysis in line with the agency's target definition.

Health-related Benefit Claims

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many health-related benefit claims by the working age population *(a)* were made in 2004–05 and *(b)* have been made in 2005–06 in (i) England, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) Stoke-on-Trent. [37741]

Mrs. McGuire: Information is not available in the format requested. The most recent available information on the number of recipients of health-related benefits is in the table.

Working age recipients of incapacity benefit (IB); severe disablement benefit (SDA); industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB); reduced earnings allowance (REA); retirement allowance (RA); income support disability premium (ISDP); or disability living allowance (DLA), by area

Area	IB/SDA	IIDB/REA/RA[1,2]	ISDP	DLA
England	2,201,500	154,500	913,300	1,288,200
West Midlands GOR	247,300	17,500	99,900	149,100
Stoke-on-Trent North parliamentary constituency	5,800	600	2,300	3,000
Stoke-on-Trent city council area	19,500	2,000	7,400	10,500

[1] IIDB and REA/RA figures are at March 2005, all others are at May 2005.
[2] A customer may be in receipt of either industrial injuries disablement benefit or reduced earnings allowance/retirement allowance or both.
Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. IB/SDA 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA (including IB credits only cases).
3. DLA totals show the number of people in receipt of an allowance, and exclude people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study100 per cent. data and Industrial Injuries Computer System 100 per cent. count.

Incapacity Benefit

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people receiving incapacity benefit who are no longer incapable of working. [29521]

Mrs. McGuire: Incapacity benefit is paid to those who are unable to work because of sickness or disability. For the benefit to remain in payment once the claimant was no longer incapable of to work would be the result of a fraud or an error.

The level of fraud and error in incapacity benefit was last measured in 2001 at which time it was estimated that the amount of fraud and error combined amounted to less than two percent of the total expenditure.

Industrial Injuries Scheme

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of administering industrial injuries benefit in 2004–05. [40473]

Margaret Hodge: The latest estimate of the cost of administering industrial injury benefits, for the year ending 31 March 2005, is £14 million.

Jobcentre Plus

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the charge per minute is of telephoning the Jobcentre Plus contact centre from *(a)* a land line and *(b)* from each mobile phone network; and what the average call duration has been in the last 12 months. [38388]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 12 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what the charge per minute is of phoning the Jobcentre Plus contact centre from *(a)* a land line and *(b)* from each mobile phone network; and what the average call duration has been in the last 12 months. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

To make a claim, the customer calls a contact centre. Contact centre staff ask the customer a series of questions to assess their potential eligibility to Jobcentre Plus benefits and then arrange to call the customer back at a mutually agreed time, to assist in completion of a claim form. This allows the customers to provide information over the phone, rather than completing a lengthy form.

Jobcentre Plus contact centres use 0845 numbers—which is equivalent to local rate when customers use a BT landline. The charge per minute will depend on the service tariff that customers have signed up to with their phone provider. Customers using mobile telephones or other landline networks are charged at their network provider's normal tariff for 0845 calls.

The average length of an inbound call is 11 minutes. BT call prices for 0845 numbers vary dependent on the time the customer calls, and can range from 1p to 3p per minute. Based on this information the cost of the inbound call using a BT line would be on average between 11p & 33p. Customers can also use "warm phones" in local Jobcentre Plus offices to call the contact centre free of charge.

To complete the information gathering process for a customer's claim to benefit, a call is made from the contact centre to the customer. There is no cost to the customer for this call.

New Deal

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of public expenditure on the new deal for each year from 1997–98 to 2008–09; and if he will make a statement. [36163]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the following table.

New deal expenditure

£ million

		Amount
1997–98	Outturn	43
1998–99	Outturn	314
1999–2000	Outturn	536
2000–01	Outturn	596
2001–02	Outturn	672
2002–03	Outturn	736
2003–04	Outturn	655
2004–05	Outturn	639
2005–06	Forecast outturn	557
2006–07	Plans	536
2007–08	Plans	538

Notes:

1. Figures comprise: programme expenditure; allowance payments, and the New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit (which was subsumed in the Working Tax Credit from 2003–04).
2. Figures also include total administrative expenditure up to 2002–03 but only the staff cost element of administrative expenditure from 2003–04.
3. Figures for 2006–07 and 2007–08 are indicative and subject to change.
4. Figures for 2008–09 are not available.

Source:

DWP Financial Strategy Division

Older Workers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of *(a)* men and *(b)* women aged between 50 years and state pension age who (i) changed jobs, (ii) changed careers, (iii) reduced their hours of work, (iv) took up educational courses, (v) retired early due to ill-health and (vi) retired early for reasons other than ill-health over the last 20 years; and if he will make a statement. [40483]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the tables.

Number of people aged 50 to state pension age changing occupation or employer since 1986

	Changed occupation or employer in last year			Changed occupation in last year		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
1986	135,000	76,000	211,000	102,000	59,000	160,000
1987	157,000	89,000	246,000	119,000	72,000	191,000
1988	184,000	99,000	283,000	142,000	79,000	222,000
1989	217,000	128,000	345,000	167,000	103,000	270,000
1990	227,000	131,000	358,000	175,000	98,000	273,000
1991	197,000	113,000	309,000	141,000	90,000	232,000
1992	169,000	91,000	260,000	127,000	68,000	195,000
1993	152,000	91,000	242,000	115,000	65,000	180,000
1994	154,000	98,000	252,000	108,000	75,000	182,000
1995	179,000	108,000	287,000	129,000	83,000	212,000
1996	192,000	113,000	306,000	133,000	75,000	207,000
1997	221,000	118,000	339,000	158,000	85,000	243,000
1998	213,000	138,000	352,000	148,000	100,000	248,000
1999	223,000	135,000	358,000	157,000	97,000	254,000
2000	.. 230,000	145,000	375,000	153,000	114,000	268,000
2001[1]	238,000	155,000	393,000	110,000	74,000	184,000
2002	227,000	147,000	374,000	109,000	69,000	179,000
2003	225,000	133,000	359,000	100,000	65,000	165,000
2004	237,000	155,000	392,000	112,000	75,000	188,000
2005	240,000	150,000	391,000	114,000	77,000	191,000

[1] Since 2001, it has been necessary to use a different method to assess whether people have changed occupation. Direct comparisons can therefore not be made with figures in previous years.

Notes:

1. The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey of private households, student halls of residence and NHS accommodation and is subject to statistical variation.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source:

Labour Force Survey

Percentage of people aged 50 to state pension age changing occupation or employer since 1986

	Changed occupation or employer in last year			*Changed occupation in last year*		
	Male	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*
1986	3.1	2.6	2.9	2.4	2.0	2.2
1987	3.7	3.0	3.4	2.8	2.4	2.6
1988	4.3	3.3	3.9	3.3	2.7	3.1
1989	5.1	4.3	4.8	3.9	3.5	3.7
1990	5.3	4.5	5.0	4.1	3.3	3.8
1991	4.7	3.9	4.3	3.3	3.1	3.2
1992	4.0	3.1	3.6	3.0	2.3	2.7
1993	3.6	3.1	3.4	2.7	2.2	2.5
1994	3.6	3.2	3.4	2.5	2.5	2.5
1995	4.1	3.5	3.9	3.0	2.7	2.9
1996	4.4	3.6	4.1	3.0	2.4	2.7
1997	4.9	3.6	4.3	3.5	2.6	3.1
1998	4.6	4.1	4.4	3.2	3.0	3.1
1999	4.7	3.9	4.4	3.3	2.8	3.1
2000	4.7	4.1	4.5	3.2	3.2	3.2
2001[1]	4.9	4.3	4.6	2.3	2.0	2.2
2002	4.6	4.0	4.3	2.2	1.9	2.1
2003	4.5	3.6	4.1	2.0	1.8	1.9
2004	4.7	4.2	4.5	2.2	2.0	2.1
2005	4.7	4.0	4.4	2.2	2.1	2.2

[1] Since 2001, it has been necessary to use a different method to assess whether people have changed occupation. Direct comparisons can therefore not be made with figures in previous years.

Note:

The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey and is subject to statistical variation.

Source:

Labour Force Survey

Number of people between 50 and state pension age who reduced their working hours and number of people who have taken up educational courses since 1986

	Reduced working hours[1]			*Engaged on educational course*[2]		
	Male	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*
1986	16,000	31,000	47,000	—	—	—
1987	23,000	26,000	49,000	—	—	—
1988	23,000	26,000	48,000	—	—	—
1989	31,000	32,000	63,000	—	—	—
1990	29,000	38,000	67,000	—	—	—
1991	34,000	34,000	68,000	—	—	—
1992	32,000	29,000	61,000	—	—	—
1993	38,000	30,000	68,000	—	—	—
1994	32,000	30,000	63,000	—	—	—
1995	32,000	37,000	70,000	45,000	53,000	98,000
1996	35,000	39,000	74,000	61,000	52,000	113,000
1997	41,000	50,000	91,000	58,000	62,000	120,000
1998	43,000	55,000	98,000	51,000	67,000	118,000
1999	42,000	44,000	86,000	69,000	87,000	156,000
2000	48,000	51,000	99,000	82,000	107,000	189,000
2001	50,000	58,000	107,000	95,000	128,000	223,000
2002	54,000	56,000	110,000	82,000	124,000	206,000
2003	59,000	57,000	115,000	90,000	136,000	226,000
2004	64,000	64,000	128,000	101,000	142,000	243,000
2005	64,000	52,000	116,000	87,000	125,000	212,000

[1] Consists of people who were in full time work a year before the survey interview but were in part-time work at the time of interview.

[2] Consists of people who did not report being engaged on an educational course a year before the survey interview but were on a course at the time of interview.

Notes:

1. Information on people enrolling on educational courses is not available prior to 1995.

2. Data do not include people who enrolled on leisure courses or those who participated on short courses within the year ending before the survey interview.

3. The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey and is subject to statistical variation.

4. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source:

Labour Force Survey

Percentage of people between 50 and state pension age who reduced their working hours and number of people who have taken up educational courses since 1986

	Reduced working hours[1]			Enrolled on educational course[2]		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
1986	0.4	1.0	0.6	—	—	—
1987	0.5	0.9	0.7	—	—	—
1988	0.5	0.9	0.7	—	—	—
1989	0.7	1.1	0.9	—	—	—
1990	0.7	1.3	0.9	—	—	—
1991	0.8	1.2	1.0	—	—	—
1992	0.8	1.0	0.9	—	—	—
1993	0.9	1.0	0.9	—	—	—
1994	0.8	1.0	0.9	—	—	—
1995	0.7	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.7	1.3
1996	0.8	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.5
1997	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.9	1.5
1998	0.9	1.6	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5
1999	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.5	2.5	1.9
2000	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.7	3.0	2.3
2001	1.0	1.6	1.3	2.0	3.6	2.6
2002	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.7	3.4	2.4
2003	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.8	3.7	2.6
2004	1.3	1.7	1.5	2.0	3.8	2.8
2005	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.7	3.3	2.4

[1] Consists of people who were in full time work a year before the survey interview but were in part-time work at the time of interview.
[2] Consists of people who did not report being engaged on an educational course a year before the survey interview but were on a course at the time of interview.

Notes:
1. Information on people enrolling on educational courses is not available prior to 1995.
2. Data do not include people who enrolled on leisure courses or those who participated on short courses within the year ending before the survey interview.
3. The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey and is subject to statistical variation.

Source:
Labour Force Survey

Number of people between 50 and state pension age recorded as retiring early due to ill health and number of people recorded as retiring early for other reasons

	Number of people in work a year earlier now recorded as being inactive due to long-term sickness or disability			Number of people in work a year earlier now recorded as being inactive due to retirement or not needing/ wanting work		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
1986	39,000	12,000	51,000	76,000	49,000	125,000
1987	47,000	12,000	60,000	70,000	41,000	112,000
1988	30,000	16,000	45,000	49,000	39,000	88,000
1989	32,000	15,000	47,000	54,000	39,000	93,000
1990	30,000	14,000	44,000	58,000	43,000	101,000
1991	32,000	14,000	46,000	63,000	47,000	110,000
1992	—	18,000	—	—	28,000	—
1993	59,000	16,000	75,000	58,000	33,000	91,000
1994	48,000	22,000	70,000	43,000	32,000	75,000
1995	40,000	22,000	62,000	47,000	24,000	71,000
1996	30,000	19,000	50,000	40,000	37,000	77,000
1997	35,000	21,000	56,000	51,000	33,000	84,000
1998	23,000	21,000	44,000	61,000	39,000	100,000
1999	29,000	17,000	46,000	59,000	32,000	91,000
2000	29,000	16,000	45,000	52,000	34,000	86,000
2001	28,000	18,000	46,000	62,000	32,000	93,000
2002	33,000	18,000	50,000	63,000	28,000	91,000
2003	25,000	13,000	38,000	54,000	24,000	77,000
2004	24,000	16,000	40,000	58,000	29,000	87,000
2005	27,000	14,000	41,000	49,000	30,000	79,000

Notes:
1. Consists of individuals who recall being in work or laid off or on short-time working one year earlier, who said they were now economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability in particular year. These individuals are not necessarily 'retired' and could have subsequently returned to work.
2. Consists of individuals who recall being in work or laid off or on short-time working one year earlier, who said they were now economically inactive due to being retired or not needing or wanting work. Some of these individuals may have left their last job due to sickness or disability.
3. Information for men and for the 'All' category in1992 is not included as data are not available on the categories of economic inactivity for 60 to 64-year-old men at this point.
4. The structure of the economic activity questions on the Labour Force Survey was changed in 1992 and data may not necessarily be entirely consistent with future years.
5. The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey and is subject to statistical variation.
6. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source:
Labour Force Survey

	Percentage of people in work a year earlier now recorded as being inactive due to long-term sickness or disability			*Percentage of people in work a year earlier now recorded as being inactive due to retirement or not needing/ wanting work*		
	Male	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*
1986	0.9	0.4	0.7	1.8	1.7	1.7
1987	1.1	0.4	0.8	1.6	1.4	1.5
1988	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.1	1.3	1.2
1989	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.3	1.3	1.3
1990	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
1991	0.8	0.5	0.7	1.5	1.6	1.5
1992	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0
1993	1.4	0.5	1.0	1.4	1.1	1.3
1994	1.1	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
1995	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.0
1996	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.0
1997	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.1
1998	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.1	1.2
1999	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.2	0.9	1.1
2000	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.1	1.0	1.0
2001	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.3	0.9	1.1
2002	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.3	0.8	1.1
2003	0.5	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.6	0.9
2004	0.5	0.4	0.5	1.1	0.8	1.0
2005	0.5	0.4	0.5	1.0	0.8	0.9

Notes:

1. Consists of individuals who recall being in work or laid off or on short-time working one year earlier, who said they were now economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability in particular year. These individuals are not necessarily 'retired' and could have subsequently returned to work.
2. Consists of individuals who recall being in work or laid off or on short-time working one year earlier, who said they were now economically inactive due to being retired or not needing or wanting work. Some of these individuals may have left their last job due to sickness or disability.
3. Information for men and for the 'All' category in1992 is not included as data are not available on the categories of economic inactivity for 60 to 64-year-old men at this point.
4. The structure of the economic activity questions on the Labour Force Survey was changed in 1992 and data may not necessarily be entirely consistent with future years.
5. The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey and is subject to statistical variation.

Source:

Labour Force Survey

Pathways to Work

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what cost benefit analysis has been carried out with regard to the pathways to work pilot scheme. [40756]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in Working Paper "Incapacity Benefit Reforms—Pathways to Work Pilots performance and analysis" a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

The pathways to work districts are piloting new measures and innovative approaches to helping people with long term illnesses or a disability to return to work. As pilot schemes, they are designed to test whether alternative approaches may be more effective than existing measures.

Early results show off-flows from incapacity benefit at six months of around 48 per cent. in the pilot areas compared with around 40 per cent. nationally, an improvement of eight percentage points resulting in a reduction in the incapacity benefit caseload which more than pays for the additional costs of the pilots.

Pension Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many telephone calls to the Pension Credit Application line were *(a)* received, *(b)* answered, *(c)* engaged and *(d)* hung up on in the weeks commencing (i) 17 October, (ii) 24 October and (iii) 31 October; and if he will make a statement. [38208]

Mr. Timms: The administration of The Pension Service is a matter for the Chief Executive, Ms Alexis Cleveland. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Alexis Cleveland, dated 12 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning how many calls made to the Pension Credit Application line were *(a)* received *(b)* answered *(c)* engaged and *(d)* hung up on in the weeks commencing (i) 17 October (ii) 24 October (iii) 31 October; and if he will make a statement. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of The Pension Service.

The table shows the information, as requested. As you are aware, the number of calls received by the Pension Credit Application Line in the weeks selected was exceptionally high as a result of a new marketing approach. Even so, in the worst affected week, we were still able to answer 65 per cent. of the calls available. In addition, we have included figures for the week commencing 12 December 2005. These are indicative of our current telephony performance (calls answered were 81 per cent. of those available).

The Pension Credit Application Line uses an automated filter, the Auto Attendant, when experiencing high volumes of calls. At times when this is required, customers who wish to make a claim for Pension Credit are advised by the Auto Attendant that they will be put through to the call queue. The automated message

advises all other callers of the high call volumes and they are given the option to call again (during opening hours) or to contact their local Pension Centre, for which the correct telephone number is provided. When the auto attendant is not operating, callers receive a standard greeting message, during which they may abandon their call (for instance if they have dialled a wrong number).

	(i) Inbound calls	(ii) Receiving engaged tone	(iii) Calls available to be answered having been filtered to the queue by the auto attendant (when in use)	(iv) Of (iii), calls abandoned	(v) Of (iii) calls answered
17 October 2005	31,940	0	25,714	4,596	21,066
24 October 2005	207,346	0	53,755	18,772	34,974
31 October 2005	133,852	2	56,476	16,547	39,917
12 December 2005	30,303	0	30,303	5,831	24,467

Note

There is discrepancy in the calls answered total due to missing calls. This arises due to a small amount of calls not registering on the IT system correctly.

I hope this information is helpful

Pensioner Benefits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent *(a)* in cash terms, *(b)* at current prices and *(c)* as a share of gross domestic product on (i) the basic state pension, (ii) pension credit, minimum income guarantee or income support for the elderly and (iii) all pensioner benefits in each year since 1992–93; what the estimate is for each year to the end of the public expenditure planning period; and how many pensioners were in receipt of each benefit in each year. [33295]

Mr. Timms: The available information regarding the figures requested on pensions is in the table as follows.

1. Basic state pension

	£ million		Share of GDP
	Cash terms	Current prices	(percentage)
1992–93	25,364	34,806	4.1
1993–94	26,546	35,520	4.1
1994–95	26,859	35,395	3.9
1995–96	27,740	35,559	3.8
1996–97	29,239	36,201	3.8
1997–98	30,391	36,547	3.7
1998–99	31,914	37,408	3.7
1999–2000	33,378	38,369	3.6
2000–01	33,986	38,564	3.5
2001–02	36,565	40,490	3.6
2002–03	38,469	41,287	3.6
2003–04	39,828	41,641	3.6
2004–05	41,389	42,373	3.5
2005–06	43,055	43,055	3.5
2006–07	44,829	43,753	3.5
2007–08	46,966	44,652	3.4

2. Pension credit, minimum income guarantee or income support

	£ million		Share of GDP
	Cash terms	Current prices	(percentage)
1992–93	3,687	5,059	0.6
1993–94	3,894	5,210	0.6
1994–95	3,925	5,173	0.6
1995–96	3,841	4,924	0.5
1996–97	3,764	4,660	0.5
1997–98	3,721	4,475	0.5
1998–99	3,566	4,180	0.4
1999–2000	3,725	4,283	0.4
2000–01	4,035	4,578	0.4

2. Pension credit, minimum income guarantee or income support

	£ million		Share of GDP
	Cash terms	Current prices	(percentage)
2001–02	4,417	4,891	0.4
2002–03	4,405	4,728	0.4
2003–04	4,851	5,072	0.4
2004–05	5,997	6,140	0.5
2005–06	6,457	6,457	0.5
2006–07	7,059	6,889	0.5
2007–08	7,817	7,432	0.6

3. All pensioner benefits

	£ million		Share of GDP
	Cash terms	Current prices	(percentage)
1992–93	35,387	48,559	5.8
1993–94	37,811	50,594	5.8
1994–95	38,723	51,030	5.6
1995–96	39,919	51,170	5.5
1996–97	41,829	51,789	5.4
1997–98	43,426	52,222	5.3
1998–99	45,165	52,940	5.2
1999–2000	47,934	55,102	5.2
2000–01	50,580	57,392	5.2
2001–02	54,494	60,343	5.4
2002–03	57,437	61,644	5.4
2003–04	60,230	62,971	5.4
2004–05	64,560	66,095	5.5
2005–06	68,669	68,669	5.6
2006–07	71,400	69,686	5.5
2007–08	75,776	72,042	5.6

Notes:

1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest million pounds.

2. All figures are consistent with the pre-Budget report 2005 and are in 2005–06 prices. Figures are for GB other than the share of GDP which is a proportion of the UKGDP.

3. All pensioner benefits (table 3) includes the basic state pension (table 1) and pension credit (table 2) and the following benefits paid to pensioners: Christmas bonus-contribution based; retirement pension-non contributory; invalidity/incapacity benefit up to and including 1999–2000; widows/bereavement benefits; severe disablement allowance; winter fuel payments (from 1997–98 onwards); over- 65s payment (in 2005–06) and over-70s payment (in 2004–05 and 2005–06); over-75 TV licence (from 2000–01 onwards); housing Benefit and discretionary housing payments; community charge/council tax benefit, pensions compensation board.

Source:

Figures have been taken from the DWP Expenditure tables.

Number of pensioners in receipt of benefits

Caseload (thousand)

	Retirement pension contribution based	*Widows/ bereavement benefits*	*Invalidity/ incapacity benefit*	*Incapacity benefit- credits only*
1992–93	10,096	50	282	—
1993–94	10,103	51	298	—
1994–95	10,139	47	299	—
1995–96	10,261	47	279	6
1996–97	10,423	43	217	5
1997–98	10,574	36	154	4
1998–99	10,712	35	90	5

Number of pensioners in receipt of benefits

Caseload (thousand)

	Retirement pension contribution based	*Widows/ bereavement benefits*	*Invalidity/ incapacity benefit*	*Incapacity benefit- credits only*
1999–2000	10,851	31	29	5
2000–01	10,931	28	—	4
2001–02	11,036	28	—	—
2002–03	11,121	28	—	—
2003–04	11,250	27	—	—
2004–05	11,529	24	—	—
2005–06	11,789	21	—	—
2006–07	12,016	19	—	—
2007–08	12,275	17	—	—

Caseload (thousand)

	Retirement pension non-contributory	*Severe disablement allowance*	*Winter fuel payments*	*Over 75 TV licence*	*Income support for people over 60/ minimum income guarantee/pension credit*
1992–93	29	46	—	—	1,668
1993–94	29	49	—	—	1,789
1994–95	28	49	—	—	1,776
1995–96	29	35	—	—	1,777
1996–97	27	38	—	—	1,756
1997–98	26	39	9,759	—	1,714
1998–99	25	41	9,953	—	1,651
1999–2000	24	42	10,084	—	1,628
2000–01	23	41	11,106	3,156	1,638
2001–02	24	42	11,202	3,859	1,736
2002–03	23	43	11,358	3,778	1,760
2003–04	24	43	11,486	3,838	1,977
2004–05	25	43	11,613	3,875	2,603
2005–06	26	42	11,762	3,922	2,741
2006–07	29	42	11,959	3,970	2,878
2007–08	30	41	12,254	4,014	3,076

Caseload (thousand)

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*
1992–93	1,837	3,315
1993–94	1,914	2,719
1994–95	1,937	2,801
1995–96	1,917	2,769
1996–97	1,886	2,692
1997–98	1,844	2,623
1998–99	1,798	2,567
1999–2000	1,726	2,471
2000–01	1,664	2,387
2001–02	1,637	2,371
2002–03	1,612	2,357
2003–04	1,541	2,341
2004–05	1,554	2,467
2005–06	1,559	2,609
2006–07	1,562	2,698
2007–08	1,565	2,787

Notes.

1. Caseloads have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Pension credit, minimum income guarantee or income support:
3. Numbers from 2005–06 are forecast.
4. No payments of incapacity benefit were paid to people over state pension age from 2000–01 onwards (a small number of credits only cases are in 2000–01).
5. Winter fuel payments began in 1997–98.
6. Free TV licences for the over 75s began in 2000–01.

Source:

DWP Historic and forecast caseload information.

Special Advisers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the special advisers in post in his Department, broken down by pay band; and what the total budgeted cost to his Department of special advisers is for 2005–06. [29418]

Mrs. McGuire: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For the most recent information I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office on 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1258W.

Information relating to costs for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the current financial year.

State Pension

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value of the basic pension would have been for *(a)* individuals and *(b)* couples in (i) 1997–98 and (ii) 2006–07 if it had been increased in line with average earnings each year from April 1980. [41722]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table.

	1997–98	2006–07
Individuals	95.45	136.75
Couples	152.95	219.10

Notes:
1. All figures are in cash terms.
2. In April 1980 the rate of Basic State Pension was £23.30 (£37.30 for a couple).
3. There are no singles or couples rate as such, the basic state pension is an individual benefit; although the Category A rate is commonly referred to as the singles rate, and the combination of the Category A and Category B rate paid to married women is commonly referred to as the couples rate.
4. Figures are based on the April 1980 rate of basic state pension uprated in line with growth in the seasonally unadjusted Average Earnings Index (including bonuses) to September in each year. They take account of the convention that rates of basic state pension are rounded to the nearest 5p.
5. The actual level of the basic state pension was £62.45 (£99.80 for a couple) in 1997–98. The proposed rate is £84.25 (£134.75 for a couple) in 2006–07.

Winter Fuel Payments

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many eligible pensioners failed to claim winter fuel payments in the last three years for which figures are available. [40737]

Mr. Timms: Most people who qualify for a winter fuel payment do not need to make a claim because they are paid automatically from DWP records. Some people aged 60 or over who are not in receipt of a benefit administered by DWP do need to claim. Many men aged 60–64, for example, fall into this category and need to claim. It is, however, not possible to estimate how many eligible pensioners have not claimed.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

School Sports

12. Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to improve the teaching of physical education in schools. [41073]

Jacqui Smith: In the five years up to 2008, the Government is investing over £1.5 billion in delivering the national PE and school sport strategy. Within this strategy the PE and school sport professional development programme is raising the quality of teaching in PE by ensuring that teachers are able to deliver a broad, balanced and inclusive programme of PE and sport in schools. The programme is free to all teachers in maintained schools in England. So far this year, over 43,000 teacher places have been taken up on the programme.

Universities

13. Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government is taking to enable the most popular universities to expand. [41074]

Bill Rammell: We have increased the total annual funding for Higher Education by some £2 billion since taking office to enable institutions to educate over 250,000 more students a year over the same period. Popular institutions wishing to expand are free to submit proposals for growth to the Higher Education Funding Council for England which distributes the grant we make available for them.

Schools (Out-of-hours Facilities)

14. Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to improve out-of-hours facilities provided by schools. [41075]

Jacqui Smith: We have committed £840 million to help develop extended services, including high quality child care, study support, and before and after school clubs, so that they are accessible through all our schools by 2010. We have also appointed the National Remodelling Team to provide support to schools and local authorities in developing extended services. Good progress is being made with 4,400 schools, thus far, indicating their willingness to work on developing extended services.

Looked-after Children

15. Mrs. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to improve the life chances of looked-after children. [41076]

Maria Eagle: Since the £885 million Quality Protects initiative, we have taken further steps to improve chances for looked after children, including: investing an extra £113 million through the Choice Protects initiative to improve placement choice, particularly foster care. In addition to our wide reforms of children's services, we are seeking to improve placement stability and have introduced a duty to promote educational achievement. We will be consulting this year on further proposals for improving outcomes for Looked After Children.

Small Classes

16. David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will fund smaller classes for children who are not reaching the required educational standard; and if she will make a statement. [41077]

Jacqui Smith: The Schools White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools For All", announced our plans for personalised learning, and in particular for catch-up lessons for pupils who are falling behind. £335 million has been earmarked within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2006–08, to provide the resources secondary schools need to start delivering personalised learning for pupils in Key Stage 3, particularly for those who have fallen behind in literacy and numeracy and for those who are gifted or talented.

£230 million of DSG for 2006–08 was earmarked in the Schools Funding Announcement on 7 December 2005 to personalise learning in primary schools. This will enable schools to provide more effective small group and one-to-one tuition.

In addition, an extra £60 million in each of 2006–07 and 2007–08 will be shared among the primary and secondary sectors, targeted at schools with the largest numbers of pupils who have fallen behind in English and maths.

School Admissions

17. Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills Whether, as part of further schools reform, she intends to require all schools to follow the existing admissions code of practice; and if she will make a statement. [41078]

Jacqui Smith: All schools must have regard to the existing statutory School Admissions Code of Practice and comply with the legislation on school admissions which prevents the introduction of new selection by ability. Schools cannot introduce unlawful arrangements. If they introduce arrangements which are not in line with the good practice in the Code, their local authority should object to those arrangements to the school adjudicators. Adjudicator decisions are binding.

Special Needs

18. Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills What steps she plans to take to improve the co-ordination of services for children with special needs and their families. [41079]

Maria Eagle: The "Every Child Matters" Change for Children Programme aims to improve the coordination of services for children and families through children's trust arrangements, children's centres and extended schools. The programme will enable us to better deliver improved services for children with special needs and disabled children and their families, as set out in the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People".

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were recorded as having a requirement for *(a)* a statement of educational need, *(b)* School Action and *(c)* School Action Plus in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [40723]

Maria Eagle: The available information is given in the tables.

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) by type of school
2004 and 2005
Position in January each year
England

	2004	2005
All schools		
Pupils with statements	247,590	242,580
Pupils on roll	8,334,880	8,274,470
Incidence (Percentage)[1]	3.0	2.9
Maintained schools		
Nursery		
Pupils with statements	460	410
Pupils on roll	38,970	37,410
Incidence (percentage)[1]	1.2	1.1
Placement (percentage)[2]	0.2	0.2
Primary		
Pupils with statements	69,610	67,380
Pupils on roll	4,252,540	4,204,500
Incidence (percentage)[1]	1.6	1.6
Placement (percentage)[2]	28.1	27.8

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) by type of school
2004 and 2005
Position in January each year
England

	2004	2005
Secondary		
Pupils with statements	78,480	76,580
Pupils on roll	3,324,950	3,316,050
Incidence (percentage)[1]	2.4	2.3
Placement (percentage)[2]	31.7	31.6
Special[3,4]		
Pupils with statements	84,250	83,290
Pupils on roll	86,930	85,500
Incidence (percentage)[1]	96.9	97.4
Placement (percentage)[2]	34.0	34.3
Pupil Referral Units[4]		
Pupils with statements	2,300	2,260
Pupils on roll	13,040	14,470
Incidence (percentage)[1]	17.6	15.6
Placement (percentage)[2]	0.9	0.9
Other schools		
Independent[5]		
Pupils with statements	7,800	7,930
Pupils on roll	613,620	611,670
Incidence (percentage)[1]	1.3	1.3
Placement (percentage)[2]	3.1	3.3
Non-Maintained Special[4]		
Pupils with statements	4,700	4,740
Pupils on roll	4,840	4,870
Incidence (percentage)[1]	97.2	97.3
Placement (percentage)[2]	1.9	2.0

[1] Incidence of pupils—the number of pupils with statements expressed as a proportion of the number of pupils on roll.
[2] Placement of pupils—the number of pupils with statements expressed as a proportion of the number of pupils with statements in all schools.
[3] Including general and special hospital schools.
[4] Excluding dually registered pupils.
[5] Includes direct grant nursery schools and city technology colleges and academies.
Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) without statements by type of school
2004 and 2005
Position in January each year
England

	2004	2005
All schools[1]		
Pupils with SEN without statements	1,197,490	1,230,800
Pupils on roll	8,334,680	8,274,320
Incidence (percentage)[2]	14.4	14.9
Maintained schools		
Nursery		
Pupils with SEN without statements	4,270	4,110
Pupils on roll	38,970	37,410
Incidence (percentage)[2]	11.0	11.0
Placement (percentage)[3]	0.4	0.3
Primary		
SEN provision—school action	467,020	468,480
SEN provision—school action plus[4]	218,680	224,000
Pupils with SEN without statements	685,700	692,480

Number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) without statements by type of school
2004 and 2005
Position in January each year
England

	2004	2005
Pupils on roll	4,252,540	4,204,500
Incidence (percentage)[2]	16.1	16.5
Placement (percentage)[3]	57.3	56.3
Secondary		
SEN provision—school action	318,660	333,250
SEN provision—school action plus[4]	131,470	140,260
Pupils with SEN without statements	450,120	473,510
Pupils on roll	3,324,950	3,316,050
Incidence (percentage)[2]	13.5	14.3
Placement (percentage)[3]	37.6	38.5
Special[1,5]		
SEN provision—school action	170	230
SEN provision—school action plus[4]	1,630	1,520
Pupils with SEN without statements	1,800	1,750
Pupils on roll	86,730	85,350
Incidence (percentage)[2]	2.1	2.1
Placement (percentage)[3]	0.1	0.1
Pupil Referral Units[5,6]		
Pupils with SEN without statements	6,440	6,540
Pupils on roll	13,040	14,470
Incidence (percentage)[2]	49.4	45.2
Placement (percentage)[3]	0.5	0.5
Other schools		
Independent[7]		
Pupils with SEN without statements	49,140	52,370
Pupils on roll	613,620	611,670
Incidence (percentage)[2]	8.0	8.6
Placement (percentage)[3]	4.1	4.3
Non-Maintained Special[5]		
SEN provision—school action	[8]—	10
SEN provision—school action plus[4]	20	30
Pupils with SEN without statements	30	40
Pupils on roll	4,840	4,870
Incidence (percentage)[2]	0.5	0.8
Placement (percentage)[3]	0.0	0.0

[1] Excludes general hospital schools. Data for pupils with SEN without statements is not collected from these schools.
[2] Incidence of pupils—the number of pupils with SEN without statements expressed as a proportion of pupils on roll.
[3] Placement of pupils—the number of pupils with SEN without statements expressed as a proportion of pupils with SEN without statements in all schools.
[4] May include some pupils recorded at statutory assessment stage.
[5] Excludes dually registered pupils.
[6] Includes pupils with other providers.
[7] Includes Direct Grant Nursery schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies.
[8] Less than 5.
Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Extended Schools

19. Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills What discussions she has had with local authorities about extended schools. [41080]

Beverley Hughes: Local authorities have a vital role to play in developing extended services as part of their work on "Every Child Matters". We meet regularly with local authorities. Good progress is being made. All local authorities are establishing strategic plans within their children and young people plans. Schools will have a new legal duty to have regard to those plans when developing extended services. The national remodelling team, which is working with all local authorities, report the good progress that, thus far, 4,400 schools have expressed their willingness to develop extended services.

Carers

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to enhance the rights of carers. [37909]

Beverley Hughes: This Government are the first to recognise the contribution and concerns of all carers formally and are supporting carers on a number of fronts through the work of several departments.

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 strengthens the rights of carers to an assessment of their own needs as carers and involves a new right to a carer's assessment. It gives local councils mandatory duties to support carers by providing services to carers directly and in the provision of breaks, and as well, supporting carers by providing direct payment for carers' services. These direct payments can be made to families with disabled children and disabled young people aged 16 and 17 who have been assessed as needing services. Direct payments are cash payments made by the local authority to disabled young people or families, to enable them to purchase social care services that best meet their needs. The Health and Social Care Act 2001 made the offer of direct payments mandatory.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 builds on previous legislation and makes changes to the existing law around carers' services. There is now a duty on councils to inform carers of their right to an assessment of their needs. When assessing carers councils must also take into account whether the carer works or wishes to work, undertakes or wishes to undertake education, training or leisure activities. The Act also facilitates co-operation between authorities in relation to the provision of services that are relevant to carers. DfES worked closely with DH on this legislation.

We are increasing funding for short breaks through yearly increases in the carer's grant. This is leading to increases in services for parents of disabled children. The carers grant is worth £185 million in 2005–06. Approximately 20 per cent. is spent on children's services, including services to disabled children and children and young people under 18 who are care-givers for other members of their family. In the last local government finance settlement, we confirmed our commitment to continue the carers grant until the end of the 2007–08 financial year.

The DfES is also funding a national freephone helpline, run by Contact a Family (a national registered charity) to provide information for parents of disabled children on disability and to support them in contacting other families, developing local and national support groups and acting as a voice to raise awareness and campaign for families.

Child Disabilities

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the *(a)* feasibility and *(b)* merits of a national centre for early intervention for children with disabilities; and if she will make a statement. [40939]

Beverley Hughes: Early intervention is an important part of early years policy and my Department continues to promote the early support programme for young disabled children and their families as an ongoing, central feature of our policy in England. As part of that approach, my Department asked Mencap and other stakeholders to undertake a feasibility study to assess the viability of a National Centre for Early Intervention. I welcome their report. However, because the funding implications of a national centre are significant, I have now requested a robust business appraisal of the cost benefits of such a centre and how it might be funded. Further consideration will then be given to their report as part of the comprehensive spending review.

Childcare Bill

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate her Department has made of the cost to local authorities in *(a)* England and *(b)* Hertfordshire of fulfilling the statutory duties included in part 1 of the Childcare Bill. [33515]

Beverley Hughes: The Government have already planned to increase expenditure on early years and child care from £958 million in 2004/05 to £1.8 billion in 2007/08, an increase of 55 per cent. A total of £4.4 billion will be available in 2007/08 when funding for the free early education offer is taken into account.

This substantial increase in funding will provide the framework for support to local authorities as they take forward their responsibilities under the Bill. There is no need for additional money because:

(a) Local authorities are already funded to play a lead role in this area. The provisions of the Bill merely formalise this lead role and establish it on a more long-term and sustainable basis;

(b) Forthcoming guidance on the new duty to secure sufficient child care will indicate that ongoing subsidy of providers by local authorities is unlikely to satisfy the requirement of a "reasonably practicable" use of resources in the long-term.

(c) The duty on local authorities to secure sufficient childcare will require them to shape and support the childcare market as a whole. In those instances where councils are providers of child care themselves, they will be able to recover their costs by charging fees. A substantial portion of that fee income would come from the Government via parents through the childcare element of working tax credit.

(d) Mainstreaming of funding and the ability to link to existing performance management systems will carry a cost saving for local authorities as they will not have to report on separate targets or progress to central Government and central Government would no longer have to administer and police these targets.

The vast majority of Sure Start funding will be routed through local authorities by 2008 and funding is already in place to deliver these services through the General Sure Start Grant (GSSG).

Local authorities were advised of their funding allocation in winter 2005. This allocation will include capital and revenue for children's centres and Extended Schools, together with revenue for Sure Start Local Programmes.

Hertfordshire were allocated £38,800,000 for 2006–08 including £20,242,000 in revenue. In 2004–06, Hertfordshire received £10,916,000 in revenue, therefore revenue funding has increased by 85 per cent.

Disabled People (Services)

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the continuity in delivery provided by different models of multi-agency transition from child to adult services for disabled people; and if she will make a statement. [37348]

Maria Eagle: The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People" recommended that

> "DFES should identify, by 2006, different models of multi-agency transition co-ordination and disseminate effective practice through existing or developing mechanisms, such as the Transition Information Network (TIN) or the proposed practice development toolkit".

The Secretary of State has endorsed the report. The Department is currently finalising a contract to survey different transition models and to draw up practical guidance for professionals in the field. The work is scheduled for completion by the end of June 2006. It will take account of previous initiatives in this field, such as the Department's longitudinal study of transition planning and outcomes for young people with special educational needs, and of current work, such as the Department of Health-led work on transition to adult services for young people under long-term healthcare. The practical guidance will be disseminated widely on appropriate websites, such as the Transition Information Network.

Adult Education (Ealing)

Stephen Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to expand vocational education and training for adults in Ealing. [40703]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) London West is responsible for the planning and funding of training to raise the skills of the workforce and potential workforce. It engages throughout the year with providers and employers to ensure that provision matches employer skills demands. There has been considerable recent work in the London borough of Ealing to ensure that said demands are met. This work includes the following:

The opening, at Ealing and West London College, of the new Institute of Media. This is an £11.5 million development in central Ealing, linking directly with the BBC and other employers, providing vocational education for adults and funded by both the LSC and the college. There has also been substantial funding and redevelopment for vocational provision at the college's sites at Acton and Southall.

The work towards Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status of Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College. Interim CoVE status has been achieved in the area of Media.

and an application is being moderated currently for CoVE status in the area of Construction. Each of these will result in increased Level 2 and Level 3 vocational provision in the area.

The allocation of over £3 million, from LSC London West's recent European Social Fund round, to providers based in Ealing which are delivering vocational training. There are also a large number of other providers who are working with Ealing residents to provide vocational training as a result of this funding round.

Work with the London borough of Ealing's Adult and Community Learning team, to identify the vocational priorities within Ealing, and match the provision offered against these areas, resulting in increased opportunities in customer service and retail, among other sector areas.

The organisation and promotion of Ealing's Year of Adult Learning 2005, including the promotion of vocational opportunities both in the borough and available to residents of the borough.

Further detailed information is available from Peter Pledger, Executive Director of LSC London West.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people in Gravesham have been granted an education maintenance allowance. [32631]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, which operates education maintenance allowances for the DfES and holds the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 20 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people in Gravesham have been granted an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of October 2005, 7,872 young people in the Kent Local Education Authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far.

During the academic year 2004/05, 5,317 young people in the Kent Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or christopher.bradley@lsc.gov.uk

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people have been granted an education maintenance allowance in *(a)* Leeds, West constituency and *(b)* Leeds. [35136]

Maria Eagle: As outlined in my response to my right hon. Friend on 27 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1216–17W, in respect of a similar question about education maintenance allowance, this is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, which operates education maintenance allowances for the DfES and holds the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's Chief Executive has written to my right hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many young people have been granted an education maintenance allowance in *(a)* Leeds West constituency and *(b)* Leeds?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to academic years.

By the end of November 2005, 5,440 young people in the Leeds Local Education Authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06 so far.

During the academic year 2004/05, 5,651 young people in the Leeds Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments. During academic year 2003/04 EMA was piloted in Leeds and 4,964 young people received EMA payments.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or Christopher.Bradley@lsc.gov.uk

ERASMUS Students

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many non-UK national ERASMUS students have studied at UK institutions in each year since 1990; and what the total cost to her Department was of such students in each year. [40953]

Bill Rammell: The numbers of non-UK Erasmus students at UK institutions from 1995 onwards are provided in the following table. Data prior to 1995 are unavailable.

Incoming Erasmus Students to UK 1995–96 to 2003–04

	Number of non-UK Erasmus students
1995–96	21,073
1996–97	22,088
1997–98	20,867
1998–99	21,168
1999–2000	20,667
2000–01	19,130
2001–02	17,645
2002–03	16,976
2003–04	16,601

Source:
UK SOCRATES ERASMUS Council (UKSEC).

As Erasmus students receive funding in the form of grants from the European Commission, there is no direct cost to the Department.

Further Education (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which further education colleges in Gravesham will receive *(a)* a decrease and *(b)* an increase in their funding for adult education, not including for basic skills courses, in 2005–06 compared to the previous academic year. [28884]

Bill Rammell: The Department allocates funds for further education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector, including 16 to 18 years participation, to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working through 47 local offices. The LSC was established in 2001 bringing the planning and funding of post-16 education together under one body within a framework set by Government.

My Department does not hold figures at local or regional levels and this is a matter for the LSC. Therefore, LSC's Chief Executive, Mark Haysom has written to the hon. Member with further details and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 12 January 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills where you asked which further education colleges in Gravesham will receive *(a)* a decrease and *(b)* an increase in their funding for adult education, not including for basic skills courses, in 2005–06 compared to the previous academic year.

The only FE College funded by the LSC in Gravesham is North West Kent College of Technology. In 2005–06 this college had its funding increased to almost £19.5 million, an increase of over 12 per cent. on 2004–05. However, within this increased funding, the amount spent on adult learning fell by about 0.5 per cent. to just under £4.7 million, which includes funding for adult skills for life learning.

The overall amount of skills for life learning being funded in this FE college in 2005–06 is currently just over £0.7 million (an increase on the previous academic year of over 300 per cent.), but this learning can be in respect of either young people or adults. Therefore, whilst the majority of the £4.7 million funding for adult learning will not be skills for life learning, the precise amount will not be known until the college submits student data after the year end.

Trust this is helpful.

Parenting Support

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to increase parenting support available to vulnerable families with particular reference to those living in socio-economically deprived circumstances. [39405]

Beverley Hughes: We will increase the provision of parenting support across the country through the roll out of children's centres and extended schools. By 2008 we will have established 2,500 children's centres and, half of all secondary schools and one third of all primary schools will be providing extended services. By 2010, there will be 3,500 children's centres and pupils at all schools will be able to access extended services.

Children's centres serving the most disadvantaged communities must provide parenting support as part of their core offer.

Public Bodies

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 who have since been appointed to public bodies by her Department, broken down by party; and who was responsible for making each appointment. [36682]

Maria Eagle: Information about the political activity of appointees is recorded and publicised in accordance with the independent Commissioner for Public Appointments' code of practice. This shows that no former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 have since been appointed to public bodies sponsored by the Department.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on its location; and if she will make a statement. [39510]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, North (Dr. Gibson) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 428W.

Schools for the Hearing Impaired

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools for the hearing impaired there were in each year since 1996. [40725]

Maria Eagle: The available information is given in the table. The type of special need for which a school is formally approved to make provision is collected from special schools only.

All special schools: Number of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment[1]—1996 to 2005—position in January each year—England

	Maintained special schools		
	Number of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment	*Total number of schools*	*Percentage of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment[2]*
1996	26	1,191	2.2
1997	25	1,171	2.1
1998	40	1,164	3.4
1999	45	1,148	3.9
2000	45	1,134	4.0
2001	112	1,113	10.1
2002	134	1,098	12.2
2003	175	1,088	16.1
2004	257	1,078	23.8
2005	258	1,049	24.6

	Non-maintained special schools		
	Number of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment	*Total number of schools*	*Percentage of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment[3]*
1996	13	72	18.1
1997	11	68	16.2
1998	11	65	16.9
1999	12	61	19.7
2000	11	63	17.5
2001	11	62	17.7
2002	12	63	19.0
2003	23	72	31.9
2004	24	70	34.3
2005	24	73	32.9

	All special schools		
	Number of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment	*Total number of schools*	*Percentage of schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment*[4]
1996	39	1,263	3.1
1997	36	1,239	2.9
1998	51	1,229	4.1
1999	57	1,209	4.7
2000	56	1,197	4.7
2001	123	1,175	10.5
2002	146	1,161	12.6
2003	198	1,160	17.1
2004	281	1,148	24.5
2005	282	1,122	25.1

[1] Information is as reported by schools. Schools may be approved to make provision for more than one type of special educational need.
[2] Number of maintained special schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment expressed as a percentage of all maintained special schools.
[3] Number of non-maintained special schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment expressed as a percentage of all non-maintained special schools.
[4] Number of special schools formally approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment expressed as a percentage of all special schools.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Sure Start

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are participating in the Sure Start programme in Coventry, South. [39739]

Beverley Hughes: There are two Sure Start Children's Centres in Coventry South, Barley Lea Children's Centre, designated as such in June 2003 and Middleride Early Years Centre, designated in August 2005. Both these children's centres are based on parts of the catchment area of the Sure Start local programme in Coventry, South-East. Together they serve children under the age of 5 and their families living in Binley and Ernesford Grange, Willenhall, and Stoke Aldermoor and deliver seamless, integrated services to a population of 1,028 children under five and their families.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in *(a)* Hillingdon and *(b)* each police division in Hillingdon in each of the last five years; [39457]

(2) how many prosecutions for breaches of antisocial behaviour orders the Crown Prosecution Service has brought in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon. [40247]

Hazel Blears: Data held centrally on the number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued are not available below local authority area (LAA) level. A table is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk giving the number of ASBOs issued in England and Wales where restrictions have been imposed in LAAs.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction. These data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many antisocial behaviour orders had been issued by each local authority area by the latest date for which figures are available; [39896]

(2) what percentage of antisocial behaviour orders have been breached in each local authority area; [39897]

(3) what percentage of antisocial behaviour orders that have been breached by those aged *(a)* over 21 and *(b)* 20 years and under resulted in the imposition of a term of imprisonment. [39898]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available).

ASBO breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. Age data are for those aged 10 to 17 and 18 and over. During this period 46 per cent. of persons aged 10 to 17 received a custodial sentence for breaching their ASBO. The corresponding percentage for those aged 18 and over is 64 per cent.

ASBO breach data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

Crimes Against Young People

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the most common forms of crime committed against young people of school age were in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each of the last five years. [40713]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. Apart from specific sexual offences, it is not possible to identify the age of the victim in the recorded crime statistics.

Criminal Records Bureau

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to minimise processing times for Criminal Records Bureau checks. [39550]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) assesses its performance continually against published service standards and remains committed to improving the overall efficiency of its service. The Bureau's performance for Standard Disclosures has consistently exceeded the target of 93 per cent. issued within two weeks: this has been achieved largely through greater automation of its internal processes.

For Enhanced CRB checks, an additional search is made against information held by police forces and the CRB is reliant on forces completing their work efficiently. A new service level agreement is now being reviewed by the 43 police forces which contains improved clearance times and aims to provide greater certainty on volumes, thus enabling more informed demand planning and a clearer framework under which police performance can be monitored. The new agreement should be in place by April 2006.

An Interim Police Local Cross Checking (I-PLX) system was launched in February 2005 and delivered ahead of schedule in August. Work is now in hand to enhance the database further and by 2007–08 CRB's processing times will reduce even further by removing the CRB's reliance on applicants' previous addresses.

The CRB has commenced a review of the Disclosure application form. A new prototype of the form has been produced in consultation with a number of their customers and a cross section of Registered Bodies has agreed to take part in a pilot study. This review is expected to reach its conclusion early in 2006. The changes proposed should reduce customer errors and the resulting double handling of those applications.

As part of a broader strategy of making all of its services available electronically, the CRB is also developing an electronic application form that will capture accurate data first time, minimising customer error and speeding up processing times.

In the longer term the CRB is working with the Home Office to see how ID cards can improve the CRB's processes and further significantly reduce turnaround times.

Deportations

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reconsider his decision to deport Eleonora Suhoviy. [40719]

Mr. McNulty: It is not appropriate to deal with an individual case in this manner; I will write to the hon. member separately.

DNA Database

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have refused to give police DNA samples for use in the national police DNA database in each year since 2000. [41669]

Andy Burnham: The Home Office does not hold statistics on the number of refusals made to requests for DNA samples.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place to remove a DNA sample given *(a)* following an arrest and *(b)* following voluntary consent from the National DNA Database. [41701]

Andy Burnham: The decision to remove from the National DNA Database a DNA profile taken following arrest is an operational matter for the Chief Officer of the police force which took the DNA sample. When such a decision is taken, the Chief Officer will instruct the Custodian of the National DNA Database to remove the profile. A DNA profile obtained from a volunteer can be loaded onto the National DNA database only if the volunteer has given his/her written consent.

Elderly People (Fraud)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government have taken to protect the elderly from fraud; and what recent discussions he has had on this issue. [41689]

Paul Goggins: A large amount of fraud can be prevented if people take simple precautions to protect themselves. Government therefore takes an active role in improving public awareness of fraud and how to avoid becoming a victim. These measures are targeted at all members of the community.

The Government publishes fraud prevention advice on the Home Office, Department of Trade and Industry and crime reduction websites and the Home Office published (jointly with the banking industry) a card fraud prevention leaflet that contains useful advice for members of the public. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and Financial Services Authority (FSA) websites also contain material on common scams and how to avoid them.

The Government recently launched Get Safe Online, the UK's first national internet and computer security awareness campaign. The campaign is a joint public and private sector initiative, primarily targeted at consumers and micro-businesses, which aims to raise awareness of internet security threats (including online fraud) and help users to protect themselves.

The Government have also set up, in conjunction with the private sector, a consumer website where people can get advice on protecting their identity. This has been followed up by a leaflet and poster campaign, with material distributed to consumers by police stations, libraries, Citizens' Advice Bureaux and Passport and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) offices.

To improve the law enforcement response to fraud, the Government have made available additional funding for the City of London police force, matched by funding from the Corporation of London, to enable it to take a lead role in fraud investigation not just in the City but across London and the south east. The Fraud Bill, introduced in the House of Lords in May, seeks to clarify and simplify the laws on fraud to better equip police and prosecutors to deal with modern crimes and keep up with new and inventive frauds.

Home Office Ministers and officials hold regular discussions with law enforcement and industry bodies about a number of fraud-related issues.

Eurojust

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Eurojust conference held in London in October. [40653]

Paul Goggins: The Eurojust conference on trafficking in human beings, held in London on 24 and 25 October last year under the UK presidency of the EU, was attended by investigators and prosecutors from across

the EU. It provided an opportunity to share and exchange experience on national legislation, different investigative and prosecuting approaches and the sharing of information on trafficking networks. The conference also demonstrated the roles of Eurojust and Europol in improving co-operation and co-ordination between member states and raised awareness of other international measures to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, including specialist training programmes supported by the EU.

The effectiveness of a co-ordinated response to trafficking was demonstrated in an operation facilitated by Eurojust on 14 December last year when authorities conducted simultaneous houses searches and arrests in Turkey, Greece, Italy, France and the United Kingdom against a network trafficking human beings into the UK and other member states.

The UK made action against trafficking a priority during its presidency of the EU and the adoption of an EU Action Plan by the Council of Ministers in December last year was a major achievement of our presidency. The plan aims to tackle trafficking at all stages of the process, focusing on priority areas where the EU, acting collectively, can make a real impact. Trafficking continues to be one of the Government's priorities. On 5 January 2006, we launched a public consultation document "Tackling Human Trafficking-Consultation on Proposals for a UK Action Plan". The consultation period runs until 5 April 2005.

Murder

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the recent Law Commission recommendation concerning the reclassification of the offence of murder. [41666]

Hazel Blears: The Law Commission's consultation is the first part of the Government's review of the law of murder and is the start of a wider consultative process. The Government welcome the detailed analysis that the Law Commission has done and hope that a wide range of organisations and individuals will respond to the consultation so that their views can be fully taken into account during this initial stage of the review.

Offenders (Prison Recalls)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders were recalled to prison as a result of breach of a post-custody licence in each of the last five years; and what proportion in each year was recalled for *(a)* violations of their licence and *(b)* fresh offences. [15361]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of offenders sentenced to four years or more who were recalled to prison as a result of a breach of post custody licence in each of the last five years can be found in tables 10.8 and 10.9 of the Home Office Statistical Bulletin: Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004. Information on the number of offenders sentenced to less than four years who were recalled to prison in 2004-05 is provided at paragraph 10.12 of the same publication. Copies of this publication are available in the House of Commons Library.

All offenders who have been recalled to prison have violated at least one of the conditions of their licence. Specific information on the reasons for the recall in each of the last five years of those released on parole is provided in the attached table. Data held centrally on non-parole cases recalled for further offences are not sufficiently complete or reliable for publication.

Proportion of persons recalled from parole by reason for recall

Reason for recall	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Further offences	40	27	45	42	37
Being out of touch	32	23	26	29	28
Hostel: failure to reside/ comply	15	9	9	8	10
Other reasons	13	41	21	21	25
Total number recalled	267	329	420	601	712

Organised Crime

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the finding of the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary report closing the gap that organised crime is widespread, vibrant and growing. [27096]

Hazel Blears: By looking at organised crime utilising additional data sets to those traditionally used to examine "criminal markets" such as counterfeit, contraband, illicit goods and immigration crime, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) came to the conclusion that the complexity, resilience and reach of organised crime was growing.

The closing the gap report provides a detailed and convincing case as part of the wider grounds for reconfiguring police service provision effectively to tackle all criminal and anti social threats. The issues in relation to organised crime were key drivers to the creation of the multi-disciplinary Serious and Organised Crime Agency that will come into existence in April 2006.

This body will bring together the National Crime Squad, the National Criminal Intelligence Service and elements of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Immigration Service to develop an improved knowledge and understanding of the way criminal enterprises operate, and will intervene in a way that achieves a real and lasting impact.

It will also work to share intelligence with, and offer support to, others engaged in law enforcement at home and overseas to foster a holistic approach to harm reduction. The creation of strategic forces will give the police service and partner agencies the capability and resilience to tackle organised crime cross-force or cross-basic command unit without impacting on neighbourhood policing: indeed it is the information and intelligence that flows from effective neighbourhood policing that will enable success at this level.

Police

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact on the individual and local identity of

local policing of merging predominantly rural police authorities with authorities that are predominantly urban. [31529]

Hazel Blears: Analysis of responses received in December 2005 from Cumbria Police Force and Police Authority to the recommendations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)'s report "Closing the Gap" is currently under way. Assessment of the implications for the balance between urban and rural areas will be part of that analysis. It would not be appropriate to comment in detail on the proposals for a particular area until that analysis is complete.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend the consultation period on the proposed merger of police authorities in England beyond 23 December. [31530]

Hazel Blears: We acknowledge that the timetable set for this review is tight. Given the stark findings of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report, "Closing the Gap" it would have been negligent not to have responded quickly. The consultation process did not end with the submission of proposals on 23 December. Police forces and authorities will continue to consult locally with their communities and stakeholders on the best options for their areas. Similarly, no decisions will be made nationally without proper consultation across Government and with stakeholders at national level.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that Cumbria retains a minimum number of police officers not less than its current staffing level in the event of Cumbria Police Authority merging with one or more other authorities. [31531]

Hazel Blears: Analysis of responses received in December 2005 from Cumbria Police Force and Police Authority to the recommendations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)'s report "Closing the Gap" is currently under way. It would not be appropriate to comment in detail on the proposals for a particular area until that analysis is complete. Nonetheless, our commitment to ensure that every neighbourhood has a dedicated neighbourhood policing team by 2008 remains absolute. The creation of strategic forces is complimentary to that commitment and intended to reduce abstractions of neighbourhood officers to deal with major incidents or investigations elsewhere.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact on Cumbria Police Authority's excellent rating for citizen-focused policing of a merger of the authority with other more urban police authorities. [31532]

Hazel Blears: Analysis of responses received in December 2005 from Cumbria Police Force and Police Authority to the recommendations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)'s report "Closing the Gap" is currently under way. Assessment of the implications for citizen focused policing and the balance between urban and rural areas will be part of that analysis. It would not be appropriate to comment in detail on the proposals for a particular area until that analysis is complete.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many support staff are employed by each police force in the West Midlands Region. [40682]

Hazel Blears: The breakdown of police service strength for 31 March 2005 was published on 25 July 2005 and is available in the Library of the House and on:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1205.pdf

Within this publication, figures for the breakdown of police staff in all police forces are available in Table 8a and 8b.

Prisoners

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 57W, on prisoners, if he will provide a breakdown of the *(a)* offences and *(b)* number of each offence committed included in the 'Other' category. [31119]

Fiona Mactaggart: The types of offence included in the category of "other" are:

Criminal damage
Affray
Violent disorder
Threatening/disorderly behaviour
Arson
Cruelty to children
Abduction
Blackmail
Kidnapping
Perjury, libel,
Breach of court order
False imprisonment
Bail Act Offences
Assisting illegal immigrant
Minor firearm offences
Vagrancy Act offences
Cruelty to animals
Escaping lawful custody
Making off without payment
Criminal attempts
Other indictable offences
Held under Immigration Act 1971
Other non criminal offences
Offence not recorded

The number of each offence committed and included in the "other" category is not readily available and it would incur disproportionate cost to provide it.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 57W, on prisoners, if he will break down the information provided in the category of violence against the person by specific offence. [31252]

Fiona Mactaggart: From the start of the home detention curfew (HDC) scheme in January 1999, to 31 October 2005.119,000 offenders have been released onto the HDC scheme. The number of offences of

violence against the person offences which offenders have committed during the HDC period, as reported to the Home Office, is 886.

The total has been adjusted to incorporate additional information received since the answer given on 7 November.

The following table breaks down this figure by specific offences.

Breakdown of violence against the person offences committed whilst subject to HOC up to the 31 October 2005

	Number
Assault occasioning ABH	146
Arson Endangering life	3
Assault	7
Assault on a PC	133
Assault with intent to cause GBH	2
Assault with intent to resist arrest	1
Assault on a PC occasioning ABH	1
Attempted murder	1
GBH	1
Making threats to kill	31
Manslaughter	3
Manslaughter with a mechanical vehicle	1
Murder	1
Obstructing Resisting Constable	87
Other assault	322
Other violence against the person	11
Possession of firearms with intent	9
Possession of offensive weapon	76
Wounding	50
TOTAL	88

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what criteria are used to determine the use of *(a)* protective shields and *(b)* body armour in prisons; when these criteria were last reviewed; and if he will make a statement; [40017]

(2) under what circumstances an inmate is designated suitable for *(a)* a three-man unlock and *(b)* a six-man unlock; and if he will make a statement; [40018]

(3) what the criteria are for prisoners to be admitted to a witness protection unit; who authorises detention in such a unit; where these units are located; and if he will make a statement; [40019]

(4) when *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Prison Service last issued guidance regarding the handling of contraband smuggled into the prison estate; on what basis this new guidance was issued; when its effects will be reviewed; and if he will make a statement; [40026]

(5) what the risk assessment required is for the use of protective shields for inmates on suicide watch in prison; and if he will make a statement. [40027]

Fiona Mactaggart: When a prisoner is armed, or suspected of being armed, or is violent and has access to weapons, approved protective personal equipment including protective shields, leg guards and helmets must be worn and/or used by staff attending an incident. The assessment as to whether personal protective equipment is necessary is made by the supervisor of the control and restraint team responding to the incident. In the case of a prisoner identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm, the prisoner's care plan would be available for the supervisor to consult to determine how such action would affect the individual.

National Control and Restraint instructors, who are required to attend incidents such as a hostage situation, are equipped with body armour that provides stab and ballistic protection. The use of personal protective equipment was last reviewed in preparation for the publication of Prison Service Order 1600 'Use Of Force' in July 2005.

The deployment of a three-officer team is the approved method of dealing with a violent or uncooperative prisoner. It is only used as a last resort after other methods, for example, by persuasion or negotiation, have been exhausted. There may be occasions when local risk assessment, based on the prisoner's recent history of behaviour, requires that more than one three-officer team is necessary to meet the threat of violence posed by a prisoner.

Not everyone who acts as a protected witness needs to be admitted to a protected witness unit (PWU). Other methods can be used to protect such people, such as being located in a vulnerable prisoner or other secure unit. An allocation to a PWU is made after completion of a risk assessment and at the direction of the Prison Service in accordance with the Prison Act 1952. The prisoner has usually been an active participant in a serious crime and has elected to identify, provide information, or give evidence against others involved in serious crime, thus placing himself at risk. The Service does not openly disclose where PWU are located for security reasons and will write separately on this matter.

The most recent guidance on the handling and preservation of illicit items found in prisons, such as drugs, weapons etc., was published in the Prison Service's National Security Framework (NSF) in 2003. The current guidance will be reviewed in line with the next review of the NSF in September 2006. The document is reviewed on an 18 monthly basis.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* the total value and *(b)* value per head of relevant population was of assets seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 by each police force in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available, ranked in descending order. [40826]

Paul Goggins: Police force performance on recovering the proceeds of crime is measured by the value of cash forfeiture orders and confiscation orders obtained by a force. The total value of orders obtained by each police force in England and Wales in 2004–05 under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation is shown in table A. The total value of orders obtained by each police force in England and Wales in 2004–05 per 100,000 of relevant population is shown in table B.

Table A: Value of orders by police force in England and Wales

Police Force	Total value of cash forfeitures and confiscation orders obtain by the police service in 2004-05 £
Metropolitan Police Service	26,426,648.39
Lancashire Constabulary	3,743,146.94
Greater Manchester Police	3,453,431.70
Merseyside Police	2,908,711.21
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	2,695,434.41
Derbyshire Constabulary	2,540,453.70
West Yorkshire Police	2,265,457.57
City of London Police	2,211,123.08
West Midlands Police	2,053,433.63
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	1,959,930.23
Kent Police	1,926,936.62
Nottinghamshire Police	1,336,612.41
South Yorkshire Police	1,330,077.48
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	1,182,881.95
Cumbria Constabulary	1,124,156.05
Northamptonshire Police	1,063,417.47
Dorset Police	1,050,401.06
Sussex Police	1,002,181.72
West Mercia Constabulary	999,467.06
Norfolk Constabulary	911,868.06
Northumbria Police	909,645.62
Leicestershire Constabulary	891,588.29
Thames Valley Police	750,663.61
Surrey Police	648,947.84
Cheshire Constabulary	541,557.19
Wiltshire Constabulary	482,559.71
Durham Constabulary	477,399.45
Gwent Police	442,673.90
Hertfordshire Constabulary	440,353.93
Suffolk Constabulary	430,715.69
South Wales Police	400,577.52
Gloucestershire Constabulary	390,468.23
Hampshire Constabulary	333,792.86
Lincolnshire Police	307,912.23
Staffordshire Police	260,405.82
Humberside Police	255,656.67
Cleveland Police	230,220.07
North Yorkshire Police	205,081.94
Dyfed-Powys Police	201,061.20
Essex Police	192,804.57
Bedfordshire Police	154,828.69
North Wales Police	109,758.12
Warwickshire Police	57,357.29
Total value of orders	71,301,801.18

Table B: value of orders by police force per 100,000 population in England and Wales

Police Force	Total value of cash forfeitures and confiscation orders per 100,000 population in England and Wales £
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	369,333.72
Metropolitan Police Service	358,092.92
Lancashire Constabulary	261,903.22
Derbyshire Constabulary	260,236.39
Cumbria Constabulary	229,499.22
Merseyside Police	213,215.80
Northamptonshire Police	165,458.37
Dorset Police	150,179.58
Greater Manchester Police	136,447.50
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	129,954.20
Nottinghamshire Police	129,857.71
Kent Police	120,441.07
Norfolk Constabulary	112,479.10
West Yorkshire Police	108,088.42
South Yorkshire Police	104,519.82
Leicestershire Constabulary	94,970.05
West Mercia Constabulary	85,189.35
Durham Constabulary	80,591.43
Gwent Police	79,717.97
West Midlands Police	79,637.06

Table B: value of orders by police force per 100,000 population in England and Wales

Police Force	Total value of cash forfeitures and confiscation orders per 100,000 population in England and Wales £
Wiltshire Constabulary	77,581.95
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	73,873.79
Gloucestershire Constabulary	68,689.99
Sussex Police	66,537.54
Northumbria Police	65,326.99
Suffolk Constabulary	63,520.83
Surrey Police	60,958.11
Cheshire Constabulary	54,685.07
Lincolnshire Police	46,283.80
Hertfordshire Constabulary	42,303.89
Cleveland Police	41,514.75
Dyfed-Powys Police	40,317.06
Thames Valley Police	35,533.70
South Wales Police	33,018.53
Humberside Police	28,997.52
North Yorkshire Police	27,013.61
Bedfordshire Police	26,984.45
Staffordshire Police	24,824.91
Hampshire Constabulary	18,574.39
North Wales Police	16,362.03
Essex Police	11,831.04
Warwickshire Police	11,045.12
City of London Police[1]	275,015.31

[1] Calculated per 1000 as deputation is under 100,000

Ricin

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date his Department was informed that the substance thought to be ricin discovered in an incident in 2003 was not ricin. [21890]

Hazel Blears: An initial test conducted by Defence Science and Technology Laboratory Porton Down on 6 January 2003 on an exhibit taken by police from the flat occupied by Kamal Bourgass gave an apparent positive result for ricin. However, confirmatory tests which were conducted throughout the period from 7 January 2003 to 28 January 2003 failed to detect the presence of ricin.

Ricin was identified and confirmed on 7 January, 2003 in a second exhibit, consisting of 22 castor beans seized from the flat. Nicotine poison was also identified and confirmed. Other materials, specifically mentioned in the poison recipes recovered from the flat were also found including acetone and isopropyl alcohol.

The Prosecuting Counsel (Mr. Sweeney QC), Crown Prosecution Service, was verbally informed of the ricin test result at a case conference on 20 March 2003, by Defence Science and Technology Laboratory. The Metropolitan Police Anti-Terrorist Branch was also represented at the meeting where the information was provided. The result was also provided in a written statement which was made available to the Crown Prosecution Service and the Metropolitan police at that time.

Further tests on the first exhibit on 27/28 April 2003 also did not detect ricin.

We do not have a record of the date this information was passed from the police to the Home Office and subsequently to Ministers.

Traffic Wardens

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will amend the Functions of Traffic Wardens (Amendment) Order 2002 to allow police and community support officers to enforce section *(a)* 14(3), *(b)* 15(2) and *(c)* 15(4) of the Road Traffic Act 1988; and if he will make a statement. [40976]

Paul Goggins: Under the provisions of Sections 14 and 15 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 it is an offence for persons who are driving or riding in motor vehicles on a road not to wear seat belts or to convey children who are not wearing seat belts. Police officers can already take enforcement action as appropriate against persons they see breaking the law in this way.

The Functions of Traffic Wardens Order 1970, as amended by the 2002 (and other) Amendment Orders relates only to traffic wardens and cannot be amended in the way suggested.

The powers with which Community Support Officers (CSO) can be designated are as set in Schedule four of the Police Reform Act 2002 as amended. There are no plans to increase the number of traffic powers available to CSOs. Our concern is that CSO powers should focus on issues around neighbourhood policing.

UK Passport Service (Fraud)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many officials employed by the United Kingdom Passport Service have been *(a)* investigated, *(b)* prosecuted and *(c)* convicted of fraudulent issuing of passports in each passport office in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [40792]

Andy Burnham: The information requested on the number of people employed by the UK Passport Service (UKPS) who have been investigated, prosecuted and convicted of fraudulently issuing passports is given in the following table.

The UK Passport Service takes very seriously any allegations or suspicions of fraud among members of staff. All such allegations or suspicions are investigated thoroughly and appropriate legal and disciplinary action taken where there are sound grounds to do so.

	Investigated	*Prosecuted*	*Convicted*
1995–96	1	1	[1]1
1996–97	0	0	0
1997–98	3	3	[2]3
1998–99	4	1	[3]1
1999–2000	2	0	0
2000–01	4	0	0
2001–02	4	1	[4]1
2002–03	6	1	[4]1
2003–04	16	0	0
2004–05	9	0	0
Total	49	7	7

[1] Glasgow
[2] All London
[3] Newport
[4] London

Notes:
1. Prosecutions and convictions did not necessarily take place in the year an investigation commenced.
2. These figures do not include any ongoing and current investigations which UKPS may be conducting.

Victim Support

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Victim Support will be allowed to run the new victim care units. [37285]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have been working with Victim Support and will continue to do so to develop the models for victim care units. Through the green paper Rebuilding Lives; supporting victims of crime we are consulting widely on how to deliver our proposals.

We are making £1 million available in 2006–07 to pilot the models for victim care units in a number of areas. We will be working with the voluntary sector, particularly Victim Support to deliver these.

Visas

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of visa applicants were fingerprinted in November 2005. [40355]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The total number of visa applications received at our visa issuing missions overseas in November 2005 was 172,588. Of these, approximately 5,933 applicants were fingerprinted. This represents a figure of 3.44 per cent.

Fingerprinting of applicants is currently undertaken for applications received in Kinshasa, Addis Ababa, Djibouti, Kampala, Kigali, Asmara, Dar Es Salaam, Nairobi, Amsterdam, Colombo, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh.

War Crimes

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is a maximum level of estimated costs for the investigation of alleged war crimes under the Geneva Convention beyond which action is deemed disproportionate to pursue. [40800]

Andy Burnham: There is no maximum level of estimated costs for the investigation of alleged war crimes under the Geneva Convention beyond which action is deemed disproportionate to pursue.

A decision to investigate is considered on a 'case-by-case' basis and resource issues may be taken into account among other factors, including the likelihood of a successful prosecution.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used by the police in deciding whether to make arrests of individuals *(a)* upon whom warrants for war crimes under the Geneva Conventions have been served and *(b)* against whom allegations of war crimes have been made. [40802]

Andy Burnham: There are no set criteria used by police in deciding whether or not to arrest individuals. In respect of the two situations mentioned in the Question :

(a) in cases where arrest warrants have been issued by a court, police should take reasonable steps to execute the warrant;

(b) in the case of persons against whom allegations have been made arrest is an operational decision and dependent upon the circumstances of that particular case.

Window Breakages (Cautions)

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what cautioning policy has been issued by his Department for breaking *(a)* a domestic property window and *(b)* a commercial property window. [24825]

Hazel Blears: General guidance on the cautioning of adult offenders is contained in the Cautioning of Adult Offenders circular 30/2005 issued by the Home Office. The circular offers a framework to help police officers exercise their discretion and professional judgment, but does not provide guidance in relation to specific offences. The questions to consider in each case are whether a caution is appropriate to the offence and the offender, and whether a caution is likely to be effective in the circumstances.

Broadly the criteria for cautioning are that there should be sufficient evidence of guilt and a clear and reliable admission of the offence, that it is in the public interest to use a caution as the appropriate means of disposal, and that the suspect should be 18 years or over. Indictable only cases must be referred to the Crown Prosecution Service.

If all the above requirements are met, the police officer must consider whether the seriousness of the offence makes it appropriate for disposal by a caution. In order to assist with this decision, officers have been provided with a Gravity Factors Matrix, which is available on the Police National Legal Database.

Young Offenders

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people of school age *(a)* found guilty of a crime and *(b)* placed in custody had a previous history of being in care in (i) Ruislip-Northwood constituency, (ii) the London borough of Hillingdon, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England in each year since 1997. [40710]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not collected centrally.

HEALTH

Alcohol Misuse

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the adequacy of treatment services for alcoholics in Aylesbury Vale; [39661]

(2) what steps she is taking to tackle health inequalities in the area covered by the Aylesbury Vale Primary Care Trust. [39674]

Caroline Flint: I announced the launch of "Alcohol Misuse Interventions: Guidance on developing a local programme of improvement" as part of my keynote speech at Alcohol Concern's annual conference on 1 November 2005. The outcomes of this programme will enable local health organisations to focus on their decision-making on alcohol services at a local level. This will include identifying gaps in treatment pathways and mapping the best possible care pathways suited to need.

Local recommendations regarding tackling health inequalities have been reviewed in the report of Director of Public Health for Vale of Aylesbury Primary Care Trust in November 2005.

Abortion

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed in *(a)* Northampton Primary Care Trust, *(b)* Daventry and South Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust and *(c)* Northamptonshire Heartland Primary Care Trust in each of the last 10 years, broken down by the (i) reason for the procedure and (ii) age of the patient. [36421]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the table.

Number of abortions to women resident in (a) Northampton, (b) Daventry and South Northamptonshire and (c) Northamptonshire Heartlands PCTs by age and reason for procedure, in 2002–04[1]

	Age								Reason for procedure	
	< 16	*16–17*	*18–19*	*20–24*	*25–29*	*30–34*	*30–39*	*40 and over*	*Total*	*Section 1(1)(a)*[2]	*Other*[3]
(a) Northampton PCT											
2004	[4]—	69(1)	103	261	179	115	82	26	835	835(2)	[4]—
2003	[4]—	86(1)	94	242	154	101	79	36	772	772(2)	[4]—
2002	10	68	88	227	143	117	64	25	742	729	13
(b) Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT											
2004	12	23	33	61	40	38	39	14	260	260(2)	[4]—
2003	[4]—	29(1)	20	65	44	36	44	19	257	242	15
2002	10	16	26	49	39	33	34	16	223	210	13
(c) Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT											
2004	19	77	96	229	158	126	82	31	818	805	13
2003	30	70	103	236	156	142	89	32	858	834	24
2002	21	89	93	198	173	136	102	35	847	830	17

[1] Prior to 2002 information was published by health authority and not directly comparable with PCTs

[2] Section 1(1)(a) of the Abortion Act—that the pregnancy has not exceeded its twenty-fourth week and that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or any existing children of her family.

[3] Other includes Sections 1(1)(b)-(d) and Section 1(4) of the Act as set out below.

Section 1(1)(b)—that the termination is necessary to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman

Section 1(1)(c)—that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated

Section 1(1)(d)—that there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped

Section 1(4)—that the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant women

[4] suppressed value where the totals are between 0 and 9. For confidentiality reasons totals less than 10 are not released

Notes:

Total includes women age under 16 where total < 16 is fewer than 10 cases and therefore not available for release.

Total includes cases of 'other' where the total is fewer than 10 cases and therefore not available for release.

Accident and Emergency Services

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target is for accident and emergency waiting times; and what percentage of patients has been seen within these targets in each hospital in Devon since 1997. [38480]

Caroline Flint: The accident and emergency (A&E) four-hour waiting time target is now an ongoing operational standard. national health service trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) are required to ensure that at least 98 percent., of patients in all their A&Es, combined with any associated minor injuries units or walk-in-centres, are seen, treated and admitted or discharged within four hours of arrival. The Healthcare Commission measures PCT and trust performance annually against this standard. The table shows annual data held for trusts in Devon.

Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in A&E from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge, 2002–03 to 2005–06

Org code	Organisation	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
5FT	East Devon PCT	—	—	100.0	100.0
5FR	Exeter PCT	—	—	100.0	100.0
5FV	Mid Devon PCT	—	—	100.0	100.0
5FQ	North Devon PCT	—	99.7	100.0	100.0
5CV	South Hams and West Devon PCT	—	99.9	100.0	100.0
5FY	Teignbridge PCT	—	100.0	100.0	100.0
5CW	Torbay PCT	—	100.0	100.0	100.0
RWV	Devon Partnership NHS Trust				
RBZ	Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	94.1	95.1	95.1	97.0
RH8	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust	88.9	91.0	96.7	98.6
RA9	South Devon Health Care NHS Trust	87.2	91.4	95.2	97.7

Notes:
1. Data are not available prior to 2002–03.
2. 2002–03 data do not include Q1.
3. 2002–03 data are for major A&E departments only.
4. East Devon PCT and Mid Devon PCT did not monitor A&E performance in 2003–04.
5. East Devon PCT, Mid Devon PCT and North Devon PCT did not monitor A&E performance in Q1 2004–05, therefore, their 2004–05 data is for Q2-Q4.
6. Exeter PCT did not provide any data in Q1 2004–05. Therefore, their 2004–05 data is for Q2-Q4.
7. 2005–06 data are for the first two quarters of the year.

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE

Acute Trusts

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what volume of work for the private sector each acute trust in deficit in the 2004–05 financial year undertook in that year. [34253]

Mr. Byrne: The value of private patient income for national health service trusts in deficit in 2004–05 is shown in the table.

Private patient income for NHS trusts in deficit in 2004–05

£000

	2004–05	
	Deficit	Private patient income
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	30,657	868
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	21,656	2,409
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	19,876	222
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	17,819	16,658
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust	15,483	2,529
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	11,744	6,609
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	11,579	3,400
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	10,217	10,129
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust	10,115	2,813
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	10,035	4,556
West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust	9,978	3,723
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	9,186	403
Royal Wolverhampton Hospital NHS Trust	9,016	506
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust	8,898	2,355
South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	8,783	291
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust	8,557	2,432
The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn NHS Trust	8,499	10
Bedford Hospital NHS Trust	8,480	990
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	8,317	3,703
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust	7,806	172
Cent Manchester/Manchester Child NHS Trust	7,727	2,179
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	7,638	737
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	7,505	456
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust	6,443	1,963
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	5,461	1,135
Weston Area Health NHS Trust	5,154	1,687
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust	4,983	3,696
University College London Hospital NHS Found Trust	4,930	3,360
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	4,913	2,552
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	4,608	87
Scarborough and N.E. Yorks NHS Trust	4,506	1,571
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust	4,186	2,465
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	4,106	420

Private patient income for NHS trusts in deficit in 2004–05

£000

	2004–05	
	Deficit	Private patient income
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	4,025	739
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	3,991	214
Royal Nat Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	3,793	4,095
Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust	3,576	108
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust	3,490	57
Airedale NHS Trust	3,288	1,238
St. Mary's NHS Trust	3,219	10,675
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	3,217	15,772
Lancashire Teaching Hospital NHS Found Trust	2,882	1,138
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	2,734	9,661
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	2,706	308
Hampshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	2,537	11
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	2,507	2,457
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	2,299	1,513
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals Trust	2,158	1,122
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	1,845	103
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	1,721	601
Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust	1,566	1,033
Morecambe Bay Hospitals NHS Trust	1,548	183
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	1,189	427
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	1,146	208
Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust	1,049	0
Cambridge University Hospital NHS Found Trust	995	1,175
Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	991	1,099
Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust	946	1,114
George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust	786	424
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	743	3,092
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	557	12,496
Devon Partnership NHS Trust	535	0
West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust	448	411
Cambs and Peterborough MH Partnership Trust	348	0
Medway NHS Trust	279	134
Birmingham Women's Healthcare NHS Trust	264	1,355
Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Found Trust	250	908
West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust	203	6
Total	382,692	160,963

Note:
These figures do not include foundation trusts.

Source:
Audited NHS trust summarisation schedules 2004–05.

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in her Department is located in each region; what the average salary is for each grade; and if she will make a statement. [35903]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Department of Health staff are based in England only.

Table A: Number of Department of Health staff by region

Full-time equivalent

Government office	*Administrative assistant*	*Administrative officer*	*Executive officer*	*Higher executive officer*	*Senior executive officer*
East Midlands	3.7	7	6.15	3.86	1
Eastern GOR	0	3	1.53	2	1
London GOR	5	178.81	285.14	218.03	231.79
North East GOR	0	1	4	5.19	4
North West GOR	0.48	2	2.72	5	2
South East GOR	0	1	1	0	1
South West	0	0	3	0	3.61
West Midlands	1	0	7	2	4
Yorks and Humbs	5.4	59.41	134.24	123.37	112.28
Total	15.58	252.22	444.78	359.45	360.68

Government office	*Grade 7*	*Grade 6*	*Senior civil servant level*	*Grand total*
East Midlands	5	0.87	0.7	28.28
Eastern COR	2	2	4	15.53
London GOR	239.89	113.95	194.22	1,466.83
North East GOR	4	0	3	21.19
North West GOR	4.63	1	3	20.83
South East GOR	1	0	1	5
South West	3.67	0	7.83	18.11
West Midlands	1	0	4	19
Yorks and Humbs	151.52	63.31	53.71	703.24
Total	412.71	181.13	271.46	2,298.01

Table B: Proportion of Department of Health staff by region (percentage)

Full-time equivalent

Government office	*Administrative assistant*	*Administrative officer*	*Executive officer*	*Higher executive officer*	*Senior executive officer*
East Midlands	0.16	0.30	0.27	0.17	0.04
Eastern GOR	0	0.13	0.07	0.09	0.04
London GOR	0.22	7.78	12.41	9.49	10.09
North East GOR	0	0.04	0.17	0.23	0.17
North West GOR	0.02	0.09	0.12	0.22	0.09
South East GOR	0	0.04	0.04	0	0.04
South West	0	0	0.13	0	0.16
West Midlands	0.04	0	0.30	0.09	0.17
Yorks and Humbs	0.23	2.59	5.84	5.37	4.89
Total	0.68	10.98	19.36	15.64	15.70

Government office	*Grade 7*	*Grade 6*	*Senior civil servant level*	*Grand total*
East Midlands	0.22	0.04	0.03	1.23
Eastern GOR	0.09	0.09	0.17	0.68
London GOR	10.40	4.96	8.45	63.83
North East GOR	0.17	0	0.13	0.92
North West GOR	0.20	0.04	0.13	0.91
South East GOR	0.04	0	0.04	0.22
South West	0.16	0	0.34	0.79
West Midlands	0.04	0	0.17	0.83
Yorks and Humbs	6.59	2.75	2.34	30.60
Total	17.96	7.88	11.81	100

Table C: Median salary for each grade

Grade	*Salary (£)*
Administrative assistant	12,732
Administrative officer	16,559
Executive officer	22,344
Higher executive officer	27,410
Senior executive officer	33,906
Grade 7	44,854
Grade 6	56,333
Senior civil servant level	75,190

Note:
The data shown in all tables are at 1 April 2005.

Consultants

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what rules apply to the length of time that should elapse before a consultant employed by her Department, involved in awarding a contract to a company, can work for that company or receive payment from it; and how such rules are enforced; [34855]

(2) what mechanisms are in place to monitor possible conflicts of interest when commissioning is carried out by a private sector organisation appointed by a tendering mechanism; [34856]

(3) what criteria are used to judge potential conflicts of interest when a company bidding for an NHS contract has an employee who has been engaged or employed by her Department within the past two years; and if she will make a statement. [34857]

Jane Kennedy: The period that should elapse before a consultant previously employed by the Department may work or receive payment from a company that has been awarded a contract is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Departmental staff are required to obtain Government approval before taking up any form of full-time, part-time, fee-paid employment in the United Kingdom, or overseas in a public or private company or in the service of a foreign government or its agencies. For the most senior grades, the Prime Minister, on advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, decides whether conditions should be applied to business appointments and, if so, what they should be.

Public procurement regulations require that the range of organisations involved in the procurement process disclose potential conflicts of interest. This covers: civil servants, contractors engaged by the Department, bidders, and employees and contractors engaged by the national health service.

Dentistry

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the locations of the dental access centres operating in England, broken down by primary care trust. [33413]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The locations of the 53 dental access centres in England, which provide access to national health service dentistry across 85 sites, are shown in the table.

Strategic health authority	*Primary care trust*	*Address*
Kent and Medway	Ashford	Ashford Dental Access Centre, Vicarage Lane Clinic, Vicarage Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1NJ
North Central London	Barnet	Dental Access Centre, Edgware Community Hospital, Burnt Oak Broadway, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 0AD
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Bath and North East Somerset	Bath Dental Access Centre, Bluecoat House, Sawclose, Bath, BA1 1EY
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Bath and North East Somerset	Rush Hill Dental Access Centre, Lower Ground Floor, 20 Rush Hill, Bath, BA2 2QH
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Bath and North East Somerset	Radstock Dental Access Centre, Leigh House, 1 Wells Road, Radstock, BA3 3RN
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Bedford	The Dental Access Centre, 3 Kimbolton Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK40 2NT
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Bristol North	Dental Access Centre, Charlotte Keel Health Clinic, Seymour Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0UA
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Bristol South and West	Bristol City Gate, Dental Access Centre, 33 Broad Street, Bristol, BS1 2EZ
South East London	Bromley	Bromley Access Centre, The White House, 52 High Street, Pence, London, SE20 7HB
Greater Manchester	Bury	Bury Dental Access Centre, 18 Parsons Lane, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 0JZ
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Cambridge City	Cambridge Dental Access Centre, Chesterton Medical Centre, Union Lane, Cambridge, CB4 1PX
Kent and Medway	Canterbury and Coastal	Herne Bay Dental Access Centre, Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, King Edward Avenue, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6EB
Cheshire and Merseyside	Central Cheshire	Winsford Dental Access Centre, Winsford Health Centre, High Street, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2AS
Cheshire and Merseyside	Central Cheshire	Northwich Dental Access Centre, Victoria Infirmary, Winnington Hill, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 1AN
Cheshire and Merseyside	Central Liverpool	Old Swan Dental Access Centre, Old Swan Health Centre, Crystal Close, Liverpool, L13 2GA
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Daventry and South Northamptonshire	Towcester Dental Access Centre, Towcester Health Centre, Swinneyford Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 6HD
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	East Cambridgeshire	Dental Access Centre PDS, 1-2 Church Mews, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 1HL

Strategic health authority	Primary care trust	Address
Kent and Medway	East Kent Coastal	Ramsgate Dental Access Centre, Newington Road Clinic, Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 OQU
Kent and Medway	East Kent Coastal	Dental Access Centre, Dover Health Centre, Maison Dieu Road, Dover, Kent, CT16 1RH
Trent	East Lincolnshire	Mablethorpe Dental Access Centre, The Health Centre, 97 Victoria Road, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire, LN12 2AL
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	East Yorkshire	Dental Access Centre, Goole Health Clinic, Bartholomew Avenue, Goole, DN14 6AW
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	East Yorkshire	Cottingham Dental Access Centre, King Street, Cottingham, North Humberside, HU16 5OJ
Cheshire and Merseyside	Eastern Cheshire	Eastern Cheshire Pct, Dental Access Centre, 89 Churchill Way, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6AT
North Central London	Enfield	Dental Access Centre, North Middlesex Hospital, Sterling Way, Edmonton, London, N18 1QX
South West Peninsula	Exeter	Exeter Dental Access Centre, Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital, Gladstone Road, Exeter, EX1 2ED
Surrey and Sussex	Guildford and Waverley	Dental Access Centre, Buryfields Dental Clinic ,61 Buryfields, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4AX
Cheshire and Merseyside	Halton	Runcorn Dental Access Centre, 67—68 Town Walk, Halton Lea, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GY
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Gaol Street Clinic, Gaol Street, Hereford, HR1 2HU
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Mobile Unit, Dental Access Centre, Gaol Street Clinic, Gaol Street ,Hereford, HR1 2HU
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Old Bakery, Ewyas Harold, Hereford, HR2 OEX
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Ross Road Health Clinic, Ross Road, Hereford, HR2 7RL
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Kington Court, Community Care Centre, Victoria Road, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3BX
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Leominster Community Hospital, South Street, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8JH
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Ledbury Community Health Centre, Market Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2AO
West Midlands South	Herefordshire	Dental Access Centre, Ross-On-Wye Community Hospital, Alton Street, Ross-On-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5AD
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Huntingdonshire	Huntingdon Dental Access Centre, Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust, Hinchingbrooke Parke, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 6NT
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Kennet and North Wiltshire	Dental Access Centre, Chippenham Community Hospital, Rowden Hill, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 2AJ
West Yorkshire	Leeds North West	Leeds Dental Access Centre, Lexicon House, Wilmington Grove, Leeds, LS7 2BQ
Dorset and Somerset	Mendip	Dental Access Centre, Chantry House, Park Road, Frome, BA11 1EY
Dorset and Somerset	Mendip	Glastonbury Dental Access Centre, The Health Centre, Wells Road, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9DD
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	Dental Access Centre, Shipley Court, Marsh End Road, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, MK16 8EA
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	Westcroft Dental Access Centre, 16 Barnsdale Drive, Westcroft, Milton Keynes, MK4 4DD
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes NHS Dental Access Centre, Eaglestone Health Centre, Standing Way, Eaglestone, Milton Keynes, MK6 5AZ
Cumbria and Lancashire	Morecambe Bay	Barrow Dental Access Centre, Unit 5, Old Fire Station, Abbey Road, Barrow-In-Furness, Cumbria LA14 1XH
Cumbria and Lancashire	Morecambe Bay	Dental Access Centre, Abbey Road Clinic, Abbey Road, Barrow-In-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1XH
Cumbria and Lancashire	Morecambe Bay	Morecambe Dental Access Centre, The Queen Victoria Centre, Thornton Road, Morecambe, LA4 5NN
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle	Dental Access Centre, Benton House, Sandyford Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 1DD
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle	Dental Access Centre, Benton House, Sandyford Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 1D
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle	Dental Access Centre, Arthurs Hill Clinic, Douglas Terrace, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 6BT
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle	Dental Access Centre, Geoffrey Rhodes Centre, Algernon Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 2UZ
Thames Valley	North East Oxfordshire	Dental Access Centre, Kidlington Health Centre, Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1AP
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Northampton	Northampton Dental Access Centre, 22—26 St. Leonards Road, Far Cotton, Northampton, NN4 8DP
Thames Valley	Oxford City	East Oxford Dental Access Centre, Raglan House, 23 Between Towns Road, Oxford, OX4 3JH
South West Peninsula	Plymouth	The Dental Access Centre, 1a Baring Street, Plymouth, PL4 8NF

Strategic health authority	Primary care trust	Address
South West Peninsula	Plymouth	Dental Access Centre, Nuffield Clinic, Baring Street, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 8NQ
Thames Valley	Reading	Dental Access Centre, Welfare Clinic, School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AS
Greater Manchester	Rochdale	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust, Dental Access Centre, 90 Whitehall Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 0ND
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Shropshire County	Dental Access Centre, Shropshire Area Health Authority, Health Centre, Victoria Road, Oswestry, SY11 2PQ
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Shropshire County	Dental Access Centre, Tenbury and District Hospital, Worcester Road, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, WR15 8AP
Thames Valley	Slough	Dental Access Centre, NHS Walk-In Centre, Upton Hospital, Albert Street, Slough, SL1 2BJ
Dorset and Somerset	Somerset Coast	Bridgwater Dental Access Centre, Bridgwater Dental Clinic, Bridgwater Community Hospital, Salmon Parade, Bridgwater, TA6 5AH
Dorset and Somerset	Somerset Coast	Burnham Dental Access Centre, War Memorial Hospital, Love Lane, Burnham-On-Sea, Somerset, TA8 1ED
Dorset and Somerset	South Somerset	Dental Access Centre, Yeovil Dental Clinic, Summerlands Hospital Site, Preston Road Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2BX
West Midlands South	South Warwickshire	Dental Access Centre, Royal Leamington Spa Rehabilitation Hospital, Heathcote Lane, Warwick, CV34 6SR
Thames Valley	South West Oxfordshire	Didcot Dental Access Centre, Didcot Hospital, Wantage Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 0AG
West Midlands South	South Worcestershire	Dental Access Centre, Osbourne Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 1JE
West Midlands South	South Worcestershire	Dental Access Centre, Malvern Health Centre (Mobile), Victoria Park Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2JY
West Midlands South	South Worcestershire	Dental Access Centre, Victoria Health Centre, Victoria Park Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2JY
Hampshire and Isle Of Wight	Southampton City	Southampton Dental Access Centre, 31 University Road, Highfield, Southampton, S017 1TL
Cheshire and Merseyside	St Helens	Dental Access Centre, Central Dental Clinic, College Street, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1UH
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Swindon	Dental Access Centre, Swindon Health Centre, Carfax Street, Swindon, SN1 1ED
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Swindon	Swindon Dental Access Centre, West Swindon Health Centre, Link Avenue, Swindon,SN5 7DL
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Telford and Wrekin	Telford Dental Access Centre, Doseley Road North, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 3AL
Birmingham and The Black Country	Walsall Teaching	Dental Access Centre, NHS Walk-In Health Centre, 19–21 Digbeth, Walsall, WS1 1QZ
Cheshire and Merseyside	Warrington	Warrington Dental Access Centre, Unit 7–8 The Mall, Cockhedge Shopping Centre, Warrington, WA1 1QE
Cumbria and Lancashire	West Cumbria	Egremont Dental Access Centre, St. Bridgets Lane, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2BD
Cumbria and Lancashire	West Cumbria	Egremont Dental Access Centre, 55 Main Street, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2DB
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	West Hull	Hull NHS Dental Access Centre, 71–75 Jameson Street, Hull, East Yorkshire, HU1 3JF
Trent	West Lincolnshire	Lincoln Dental Access Centre, 134 Dixon Street, Lincoln, LN6 7TU
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	West Norfolk	Dental Access Centre, 6 King Street, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1ES
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	West Wiltshire	Westbury Dental Access Centre, Westbury and District Hospital, The Butts, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3EL
Surrey and Sussex	Woking Area	Bournewood Community NHS Trust, Woking NHS Dental Access Centre, Woking Community Hospital, Heathside Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7HS
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	Withernsea Dental Access Centre, Withernsea Hospital, Queen Street, Withernsea, HU19 2OB
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	Driffield Dental Access Centre, 8 Market Place, Driffield, North Humberside, YO25 6AP
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	Pocklington Dental Access Centre, 14 Market Place, Pocklington, York, YO42 2AR

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental access centres there are in England; and where they are situated. [32070]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Leicestershire (David Taylor) today.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make a statement on access to NHS dental treatment in the Chorley and South Ribble primary care trust area; [35488]

(2) what steps she is taking to increase the number of dentists accepting patients on the NHS in the Chorley and South Ribble primary care trust area. [35489]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of dental practices in Chorley and South Ribble primary care trust (PCT) area is 30, of which 11 have open personal dental service (PDS) contracts.

Access has improved in 2005 and it is estimated that 51 per cent. of the local population are registered with a national health service dentist.

The Government is reforming NHS dentistry to create a locally focussed service which people can access where and when they need to. Major changes to improve access include:

A new contractual framework for dentists to be introduced in April 2006, based on PDS pilots that better promote oral health, improve access to services and improve the quality of dentists' working lives;

a programme which recruited the equivalent of 1,000 dentists by the end of October 2005 with the capacity to treat some 2 million people in areas of the country where access to dentistry needs improving;

53 dental access centres across the country where people can be treated without an appointment and without needing to be registered;

an advice service from NHS Direct to help people find a dentist who will provide NHS treatment.

These major changes have been supported by an unprecedented level of Government investment which is set to increase by 19 per cent. over two years (2005–06 over 2003–04). This will result in an extra spend of over £250 million a year in primary care dentistry.

From April 2006 under the new national contract, the PCT will be responsible for the commissioning of all dental services. Over the next two years (2006–07 and 2007–08) Chorley and South Ribble PCT will receive a cash increase of over £44.3 million (19.9 per cent.)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were employed in the public sector in each of the last 30 years. [37029]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested in shown in the following table.

The numbers of dentists employed in the hospital and community health service (HCHS), in England at 30 September each year

	All HCHS dental staff	*Hospital dental staff*	*Community health service dental staff*
1975	3,792	1,673	2,119
1976	3,782	1,709	2,073
1977	3,739	1,784	1,955
1978	3,860	1,847	2,013
1979	3,888	1,893	1,995
1980	3,867	1,931	1,936
1981	3,867	1,934	1,933
1982	3,894	1,959	1,935
1983	3,876	1,937	1,939
1984	3,880	2,025	1,855
1985	3,907	2,043	1,864
1986	3,892	2,056	1,836
1987	3,711	1,950	1,761
1988	3,652	1,990	1,662
1989	3,655	2,010	1,645
1990	3,629	2,052	1,577
1991	3,479	2,010	1,469
1992	3,493	2,076	1,417
1993	3,462	2,070	1,392
1994	3,372	2,067	1,305
1995	3,456	2,139	1,317
1996	3,490	2,113	1,377
1997	3,567	2,188	1,379
1998	3,610	2,225	1,385
1999	3,616	2,248	1,368
2000	3,530	2,187	1,343
2001	3,532	2,184	1,348
2002	3,654	2,223	1,431
2003	3,763	2,245	1,518
2004	3,852	2,279	1,573

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census

The vast majority of general dental services and personal dental services dentists are self-employed contractors who provide services to patients on behalf of the national health service but are remunerated through public funds.

Departmental Assets

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement clarifying what the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by her Department are. [36306]

Mr. Byrne: The following table lists the top ten moveable and top ten immoveable fixed assets in the books of the Department of Health.

Description of asset	£
Immoveable fixed assets	
Harperbury Hospital, Radlett	76,700,608
Richmond House, London	39,441,362
St. James Hospital, Portsmouth	37,082,361
West Park Hospital, Epsom	34,300,000
Land-Warneford Hospital, Oxford	30,900,000
Runwell Hospital, Wickford	24,459,790
St Ebbas Hospital, Epsom	23,283,855
Wellington House, London	18,677,010
Little Plumstead Hospital, Little Plumstead	14,844,777
Clamp Hill Hospital, Harrow, London	14,500,000
Moveable fixed assets	
Electronic Staff Records 2004–05-Country-wide-Asset Under Construction	79,852,333
Software Licences from Microsoft	75,583,418
Local Service Provider North West	57,310,442

Description of asset	£
Spine Project-the core NHS Care Records Service to ensure highly available and highly resilient live Systems delivered in several phases	44,835,458
Spine Project-the core NHS Care Records Service to ensure highly available and highly resilient live Systems delivered in several phases	21,250,000
Software Licences-Oracle-National Programme For Information Technology	21,197,152
Spine Project-the core NHS Care Records Service to ensure highly available and highly resilient live Systems delivered in several phases	20,887,632
National Software Licences from Microsoft	17,290,037
Picture Archive Communication System (PACS)-Assets Under Construction	10,127,000
Connecting for Health-Electronic Booking-Assets Under Construction	8,000,000

Notes:
1. Immoveable assets are land and buildings and any plant and machinery that form an integral part of the land and buildings (such as central heating and air conditioning systems, for example)
2. Moveable assets are any asset that is not an immoveable asset.
3. The amounts are stated at net current cost adjusted to net current replacement cost as at 31 October 2005.

Source:
Department of Health Fixed Assets Register

I regret the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2272W was incorrect.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which her Department is responsible are located in (A) England, excluding Greater London, and (B) Greater London. [39809]

Jane Kennedy: The figures are published in table D of Civil Service Statistics, which covers permanent staff numbers (full time equivalent). This information is available at the following address on the Cabinet Office's statistics website at:www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/index.asp.

The total number of staff employed by executive non-Departmental public bodies sponsored by the Department as at 31 March 2005 is recorded in table two of Public Bodies 2005, a copy of which is available in the Library and is also available on the Cabinet Office's website at www.knowledgenetwork.gov.uk/ndpb/ndpb.nsf. However, *Public Bodies* does not give the regional breakdowns sought and those data are not held by the Department. They could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The number of staff employed in the Department's executive agencies as at 1 April 2004, including a regional analysis, is available in Civil Service Statistics 2004, published in February 2005. A copy is available in the Library and is also available on the Cabinet Office's website at: www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_servicestatistics/index.asp and www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2004_report/index.asp

Diabetes

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress with the national service framework for diabetes. [39678]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A full report on progress of the implementation of the national service framework for diabetes will be published in the spring.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the extent of screening for diabetes. [39679]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework for diabetes states that there is emerging evidence to suggest that it may be clinically and cost effective to offer screening for diabetes to those sub-groups of the population at increased risk of developing the condition. The United Kingdom National Screening Committee considered screening for type two diabetes at its meeting on 29 November 2005 and I expect to receive its advice on the next steps shortly.

Information is not held centrally about screening currently undertaken in primary care locally.

Electronic Patient Records

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* timescale is for and *(b)* estimated cost is of implementation of NHS electronic patient records. [33946]

Mr. Byrne: Initial implementation of the national health service care records service (NHS CRS) began in the summer of 2004 with the introduction of a personal demographic service containing personal identity details of patients; access controls to ensure secure service system access via Smartcard; a messaging service with the standard messaging protocols; and a spine directory service containing reference file information. Over time each person's NHS care record will build into a comprehensive patient history with a summary of patient information available at the point of need anywhere in the NHS in England. The final phase of the NHS CRS, by 2010, will be the full integration of health and social care information systems across England.

A contract to the value of £620 million was awarded in 2003 from central expenditure for the creation of the national database of key information about patients' health and care, which is the core component of the NHS CRS. The contract covers on-going funding of core deliverables and the connection of existing systems to national applications. However, it does not include

all the costs of implementation at local level, such as training national health service staff or local change management costs, which are planned to be borne by individual NHS organisations out of baseline budgets.

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions were issued for emergency contraception in *(a)* Northampton primary care trust, *(b)* Daventry and South Northamptonshire primary care trust and *(c)* Northamptonshire Heartlands primary care trust, in the last 12 months. [36420]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Prescriptions issued for emergency hormonal contraception for the period October 2004 to September 2005

Primary care trust	*Number of prescriptions*
Daventry and South Northamptonshire	964
Northampton	1666
Northamptonshire Heartlands	2186

Emergency contraception is also available through community contraception clinics, and can be purchased 'over the counter' by those aged over 16. The Department does not hold data centrally on the latter.

Community contraceptive clinic services in these localities are provided by Northamptonshire Healthcare national health service trust. That trust reported prescribing hormonal post-coital contraceptives on 1,023 occasions in 2004–05.

Ethnicity Guidance

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued on recording of ethnicity in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary care. [39402]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The use of appropriate ethnic and other equality data is very important to the National Health Service. Without recording ethnicity, the NHS would not be able to check that its access and treatments are equitable to all communities.

Revised guidance on ethnicity monitoring of NHS patients and social care users was published in July 2005. This guidance applies to primary and secondary care settings and confirms the use of Office for National Statistics codes for ethnic groups as the NHS standard.

EU Directives

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market on *(a)* the national health service and *(b)* privately-owned care homes owned by an identity based in another EU member state. [35745]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since the replies I gave on 12 September, 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2685–6W, to similar questions tabled by my hon. Friend, the situation remains that negotiations on the draft European Union directive on services in the internal market are on-going. Until the text is finalised it is difficult to assess its precise effects on particular sectors.

A number of general impact assessments are available. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has performed a partial regulatory impact assessment for the proposal, which indicates that the general benefits are likely to be substantial. This is available on DTI's website at www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics2/pdf2/servicesria.pdf. An independent consultancy, Copenhagen Economics, has also assessed the general economic impact of the directive. They predicted that the services directive would add £25 billion to the EU economy, create an extra 600,000 jobs, boost EU gross domestic product by 0.6 per cent., and lead to an increase in real wages of 0.4 per cent.

In addition to these general impact assessments, the Department has held informal consultations and taken the views of relevant parties concerning the possible impact of the services directive on the national health service and on social care providers. No economic analysis has been carried out to date.

The United Kingdom Government's position is to seek an exclusion for publicly-funded healthcare from the scope of the Directive, plus a derogation for all healthcare from the country of origin principle, and the deletion of Article 23 on the assumption of healthcare costs.

Food Supplements Directive

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on what date *(a)* the Food Standards Agency adopted formal advice to Ministers in relation to proposed objectives for the finalisation of the provisions of the Food Supplements Directive and *(b)* she reached a conclusion on that advice; what that conclusion was; what steps have been taken since within the EU by (i) her Department and (ii) the Food Standards Agency to further her objectives for further negotiations on the Directive; and if she will make a statement; [39448]

(2) when she next plans to meet consumer and industry stakeholders to discuss progress on the interpretation and implementation of the Food Supplements Directive. [39449]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) board discussed proposed objectives for the finalisation of the provisions of the food supplements directive, in terms of the setting of maximum levels for vitamins and minerals in food supplements on 15 September 2005. Ministers were advised of the FSA board's position on 11 October. I accepted this advice on 22 November 2005. FSA officials have had a preliminary discussion with the European Commission on the issue of setting maximum safe levels of vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

I met FSA officials on 19 December 2005 to agree further action in Europe to be taken in early 2006. I plan to meet consumer and industry stakeholders to discuss the
progress and implementation of the food supplements directive in early 2006

General Ophthalmic Service

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will undertake the review of the General Ophthalmic Service announced on 29 August. [34198]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The review of general ophthalmic services is currently underway.

When we announced the review in August 2005, we indicated that we expected the review to report in early 2006. It is now likely that the review will report later in 2006. This takes into account arguments put forward by the main representative bodies for extending the time scale to ensure full consideration of the issues. It will also ensure that the review is able to reflect the forthcoming White Paper on services outside hospital.

Gershon Review

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what savings were identified in her Department as a result of the Gershon Review; and what progress has been made towards making these savings to date. [35365]

Mr. Byrne: The Gershon Review required the Department to achieve £6.5 billion of annual efficiency gains by March 2008.

We have achieved £1.7 billion of this total up to September 2005. Details of these savings have been provided in our autumn performance report published on 7 December.

Heroin Addicts

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the use of Suboxone in treating heroin addicts. [40791]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 January 2006]*: Suboxone does not currently have marketing authorisation in the United Kingdom.

The Department has assessed the evidence for use of buprenorphine, the active ingredient of Suboxone, and has actively supported its increasing use, working with the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA), and by pursuing a number of measures:

Regulations were amended by the Department in 2001 to ensure buprenorphine could be prescribed using instalment dispensing, to make it easier to use in the management of drug addiction

In 2003, clinical guidance referring to the key research evidence on buprenorphine was published in the NTA document, *Prescribing services for drug misuse*, which supported its use as a treatment alongside other treatments such as methadone prescribing.

The Department has subsequently asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to carry out a technology appraisal on methadone and buprenorphine as opiate substitutes. That is currently under way and due to report in March 2007.

The Department's *Clinical Guidelines* (1999)[1] promote the use of supervised consumption. That NTA has also promoted the availability of pharmacy supervised consumption schemes. Supervised consumption—in order to minimise the risk of inappropriate injecting of prescribed buprenorphine—is feasible in the UK context. With careful selection for its suitable use, it does provide an additional option to the pharmacological approach that Suboxone might offer in this regard.

Source:

[1] Drug misuse and dependence—guidelines on clinical management (HMSO, 1999)

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children in England under the age of 16 years are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS; and if she will make a statement. [38282]

Caroline Flint: 903 children under the age of 16 are currently reported to be living with a diagnosis of HIV infection in England.

Notes:

1. Data received and processed by 16 December 2005.
2. These data do not include diagnosed children who are known to have died or left the country.

Source:

National Study of HIV in Pregnancy and Childhood, Institute of Child Health, London.

Hospices

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate her Department has made of the effect on costs to the NHS of the contribution of the hospice movement. [35607]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We acknowledge the valuable contribution the voluntary sector makes to the provision of palliative and specialist palliative care services. We have not made any estimate of the effect on costs to the national health service of the contribution of the hospice movement. However, data from the voluntary organisation Help the Hospices show that the total expenditure from all adult voluntary hospices in England in 2004 was £286 million, of which £97.8 million was from national health service funding, an average of 34 per cent. of hospices' expenditure.

Hospital Admissions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of *(a)* the percentage of hospital admissions which are due to adverse drug reactions and *(b)* the resultant cost to the public purse. [39367]

Jane Kennedy: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Commission for Human Medicines (CHM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the Yellow Card Scheme. Approximately 20,000 reports of ADRs are reported to the MHRA/CHM through this scheme each year. Between 1 December 2004 and 30 November 2005, 18,482 reports were received. Of these 4,018 (28 per cent.) reported that the suspected ADR involved or prolonged in-patient hospitalisation. It is not possible to estimate from the Yellow Card Scheme the number of people who suffer adverse reactions to drugs since the scheme is associated with an unknown level of under-reporting.

Addressing the impact of adverse drug reactions on public health is a key concern for the MHRA. A study funded by the MHRA and published in the *British Medical Journal* on 2 July 2004, was conducted in two large hospitals in Merseyside in order to ascertain the current burden of ADRs in the NHS. The study found that of 18,820 patients aged over 16 years admitted to hospital over a six month period, there were 1,225 admissions judged to be related to an adverse drug

reaction (ADR), giving a prevalence of 6.5 per cent. Of these 1,225, the ADR was judged to lead directly to the admission in 80 per cent. of cases. The median bed stay was eight days, accounting for 4 per cent. of the hospital bed capacity. The projected annual cost of such admissions to the NHS is £466 million.

Hospital Facilities

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of NHS in-patients shared a mixed sex sleeping area at some point during their hospital stay in the last year for which figures are available. [35194]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The proportion of national health service in-patients reporting sharing a room or bay with members of the opposite sex was measured through the 2004 acute adult in-patient survey, administered by the Healthcare Commission. This was conducted in 169 acute and specialist NHS trusts in England that care for adult patients. The response rate to this survey was 63 per cent.

The results of this survey showed that on average, 22 per cent. of patients shared a room or bay while in hospital. This is a fall of 4 percentage points from the previous survey conducted in 2002, and reflects the progress made by the NHS in eliminating mixed-sex accommodation. Results at national and individual trust level are published on the Healthcare Commission website at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk.

The Department has set clear standards for the provision of single-sex accommodation in the NHS. in 2005, 97 per cent. of NHS trusts met these standards, which cover a broader range of issues than the Healthcare Commission's survey, including the provision of separate sanitary facilities for men and women, issues of privacy, dignity and respect and criteria to ensure the safety of patients in mental health settings.

Hospital Hygiene

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the merits of *(a)* compulsory wearing of facemasks by staff dealing directly with patients, *(b)* compulsory routine testing of all hospital staff for infections and *(c)* prohibition of hospital uniforms being worn offsite. [35447]

Jane Kennedy: National evidence based guidelines[1,2] do not identify any clinical benefit from wearing facemasks to protect patients during routine ward procedures such as wound dressing or invasive medical procedures.

Screening for healthcare associated infections is not routinely recommended for staff.

It is for individual trusts to determine their own policies on the wearing of uniforms in and around the workplace.

Many trusts have uniform policies in place for all staff stating that staff should not wear uniforms outside of the work place, unless working in the community or on official hospital business. Many also state that uniforms worn outside of the workplace should be covered with a full-length coat.

Source:

[1] The epic project: developing national evidence-based guidelines for preventing healthcare association infections phase 1: guidelines for preventing hospital-acquired infections J Hosp Infect; 2001, 47(suppl) S3-S82

[2] "The epic project. Updating the evidence-base for national evidence-based guidelines for preventing healthcare associated infections in NHS hospitals in England: a report with recommendations". British Journal of Infection Control December 2004 Vol. 5 No. 6 Pellowe CM, Pratt RJ, Loveday HP, Harper P, Robinson M, Hones SRLJ

Hospital-acquired Infection

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* incidents of hospital-acquired infection (HAI) and *(b)* deaths due to HAI there have been in the national health service in each year since 1996. [8713]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 5 July 2005]:* Information on the number of cases of all hospital acquired infection is not available.

The best available information is on meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) blood stream infections from mandatory surveillance system at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/40/15/04114015.pdf which was introduced in April 2001. National totals for the first four years are shown in the table.

Reports under the mandatory MRSA bacteraemia surveillance system (acute national health service trust, England)

	Number MRSA bacteraemia
April 2001 to March 2002	7,249
April 2002 to March 2003	7,373
April 2003 to March 2004	7,684
April 2004 to March 2004	7,212

Source:

Health Protection Agency

It is not possible to give reliable figures on the number of deaths involving hospital-acquired infections from routinely collected mortality data, as information on whether the infection was acquired in hospital or elsewhere may not be available to the doctor certifying the death.

Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 666W, on influenza, whether she has plans to vaccinate poultry handlers against influenza of subtype A/H5N1 should a vaccine become available; and what plans she has to vaccinate poultry handlers against other forms of highly pathogenic avian influenza. [39312]

Caroline Flint: The Government have already announced their plans to purchase a small stockpile of new A/H5N1 vaccine that is currently being developed. Though it is intended that this will initially be used for research purposes, its use for poultry workers and others at serious risk of exposure to infection will be considered in the event of an outbreak of H5N1 in poultry flocks.

There are no plans to vaccinate poultry handlers against other forms of avian influenza as there are no suitable vaccines available.

In the event of an outbreak of avian influenza in poultry, seasonal human influenza vaccine will be offered to all those considered to be at risk of exposure to infection in addition to antiviral therapy.

Isolation Units

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many isolation units there are in each region; and where each is located; [35790]

(2) how many positive-negative pressure isolation rooms exist within the NHS; and where they are located. [36703]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not collect information on isolation facilities but has issued guidance that trusts should ensure adequate provision.

Health Service Circular 2000/2002 on the Management and control of hospital infection required trusts to undertake a risk assessment to determine appropriate provision of isolation facilities within each trust. Winning Ways (December 2003) states that national health service trust chief executives will ensure over time that there is appropriate provision of isolation facilities within their healthcare facilities.

Medical Equipment (Supply Contracts)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with which companies based in the UK her Department has contracts for the supply of medical equipment. [39692]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Medical Staff (Attacks)

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases were recorded of attacks on *(a)* ambulance crews and *(b)* nurses in each year since 2003–04; how many there were in 2005–06; how many prosecutions were pursued in each case; and what sentences were imposed on those found guilty in each case where all proceedings are complete. [36012]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally in the format requested. The national health service security management service (NHS SMS) is currently in the process of compiling and validating the first ever accurate figures for the levels of physical assault on NHS staff in 2004–05 for the acute, primary care and ambulance services; these will be released in the near future.

Information relating to the number of physical assaults on staff working in NHS mental health and learning disability environments was released on 19 October 2005; these totalled 43,301 for the period 2004–05. In 2002–03 there were 59,992 violent incidents in these settings.

The number of successful prosecutions involving physical assaults on NHS staff for 2004–05 was 759; a 15 fold rise over the 51 such prosecutions identified in 2002–03. In 2004–05 there were 100 successful prosecutions involving assaults on ambulance staff.

No information on sentences imposed on offenders was collated for this period.

Mental Health

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which 50 areas have the highest proportion of registered mentally ill people per 10,000 head of population. [39291]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The 50 primary care trusts (PCTs) with the highest number of admissions of patients with a mental illness per 10,000 of population in England in 2003–04 is shown in table 1.

Table 2 shows the number of formal admissions of patients detained under the 1983 Mental Health Act among all national health service care providers in England. There is a direct relationship between the number of admissions and the size of a trust's work force and the capacity of a unit.

Table 1: Admission rates, per 10,000 population, to NHS hospitals under mental illness specialities by PCT of residence, 2003–04

PCT code	*PCT name*	*Rate per 10,000 population*
5GR	Basildon PCT	99
5GQ	Thurrock PCT	73
5ME	North Stoke PCT	68
5AK	Southend on Sea PCT	66
5LJ	Southampton City PCT	66
5EJ	Leicester City West PCT	62
5FT	East Devon PCT	57
5JE	Barnsley PCT	57
5GH	North Hertfordshire and Stevenage PCT	57
5M1	South Birmingham PCT	54
5FJ	Hastings and St. Leonards PCT	54
5GP	Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford PCT	54
5MF	South Stoke PCT	52
5HL	South Leeds PCT	51
5LW	Northampton PCT	50
5AL	Central Derby PCT	50
5NC	Waltham Forest PCT	50
5CE	Bournemouth Teaching PCT	50
5C9	Haringey Teaching PCT	50
5J4	Knowsley PCT	49
5CK	Doncaster Central PCT	49
5LD	Lambeth PCT	48
5A2	Norwich PCT	48
5LR	Eastbourne Downs PCT	48
5AW	Airedale PCT	48
5LJ	Huddersfield Central PCT	47
5EY	Eastern Leicester PCT	47
5E8	Wakefield West PCT	47
5KJ	Craven, Harrogate and Rural District PCT	47
5FA	Ashfield PCT	46
5DR	Wyre Forest PCT	46
5E7	Eastern Wakefield PCT	46
5A1	New Forest PCT	46
5KG	South Tyneside PCT	45
5LQ	Brighton and Hove City PCT	45
5H1	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	45
5HA	Central Liverpool PCT	44
5FQ	North Devon PCT	44
5G9	North Liverpool PCT	44
5A8	Greenwich PCT	44
5L9	Western Sussex PCT	44
5K8	Islington PCT	43
5FV	Mid Devon PCT	43
5C5	Newham PCT	43
5HY	Hounslow PCT	43
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	43
5FR	Exeter PCT	43
5A5	Kingston PCT	43
5HW	Newcastle-upder-Lyme PCT	43
5J1	Halton PCT	43

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Table 2: Admissions to NHS hospitals under the Mental Health Act 1983 by care provider, England, 2003-04

	Number
England	24,832
North East	1,170
County Durham and Darlington Priority Services	229
Gateshead Health	53
Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals	2
Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland Mental Health	339
Northgate and Prudhoe	59
Northumbria Health Care	11
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health	202
Tees and North East Yorkshire	275
North West	3,299
5 Boroughs Partnership	285
Bolton, Salford and Trafford Mental Health	464
Calderstones	18
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership	329
Lancashire Care	616
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care	488
Mersey Care	366
Morecambe Bay PCT	155
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals	4
North Cumbria Mental Health and Learning Disabilities	113
Pennine Care	461
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital	—
Yorkshire and The Humber	1,857
Barnsley PCT	69
Bradford District Care	266
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District PCT	37
Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare	196
Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT	36
Harrogate Health Care	2
Hull and East Riding Community Health	209
Leeds Mental Health Teaching	348
Leeds Teaching Hospitals	—
Rotherham PCT	—
Selby and York PCT	89
Sheffield Care Trust	231
Sheffield Childrens	3
South West Yorkshire Mental Health	371
York Hospitals	—
East Midlands	1,705
Chesterfield PCT	33
Derbyshire Mental Health Services	357
High Peak and Dales PCT	13
Leicestershire Partnership	368
Lincolnshire Partnership	183
North Eastern Derbyshire PCT	5
Northampton General Hospital	—
Northamptonshire Healthcare	268
Nottinghamshire Healthcare	478
West Midlands	2,697
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health	765
Birmingham Children's Hospital	10
Coventry PCT	211
Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	95
Dudley South PCT	2
Herefordshire PCT	65
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare	216
North Warwickshire PCT	92
Royal Shrewsbury Hospitals	4
Sandwell Mental Health and Social Care	137
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals	4
Shropshire County PCT	313
South Birmingham PCT	10
South Staffordshire Healthcare	183
South Warwickshire PCT	82
Walsall Hospitals	12
Walsall PCT	168
Wolverhampton City PCT	120
Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership	208

Table 2: Admissions to NHS hospitals under the Mental Health Act 1983 by care provider, England, 2003-04

	Number
East of England	2,275
Bedfordshire and Luton Community	329
Cambridge and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership	245
Colchester PCT	7
Hertfordshire Partnership	428
James Paget Healthcare	1
Local Health Partnerships	237
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital	—
Norfolk Mental Health Care	388
North Essex Mental Health Partnership	337
Norwich PCT	9
South Essex Partnership	234
West Norfolk PCT	60
London	5,695
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health	696
Barts and The London	2
Brent PCT	3
Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care	548
Central and North West London Mental Health	595
East London and The City Mental Health	629
King's College Hospital	7
Kingston Hospital	—
North East London Mental Health	368
Oxleas	314
South London and Maudsley	1160
South West London and St George's Mental Health	539
The Hillingdon Hospital	106
University College London Hospital	—
West London Mental Health	728
South East	3,737
Berkshire Healthcare	411
Buckinghamshire Hospitals	—
Buckinghamshire Mental Health	196
East Hampshire PCT	51
East Kent and Social Care Partnership	224
East Sussex County Healthcare	252
Isle of Wight Healthcare	135
Milton Keynes PCT	84
North West Surrey Mental Health Partnership	74
Oxford Learning Disability	4
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals	2
Oxfordshire Mental Healthcare	356
Portsmouth City PCT	97
South Downs Health	277
Southampton University Hospitals	2
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	—
Surrey Hampshire Borders	170
Surrey Oaklands	157
West Hampshire	398
West Kent and Social Care Trust	436
West Sussex Health and Social Care	409
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Care	2
South West	2,397
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership	731
Bath and North East Somerset PCT	4
Cornwall Partnership	238
Devon Partnership	413
Dorset Health Care	247
Gloucestershire Partnership	230
North Bristol	3
North Dorset PCT	77
Plymouth Hospitals	5
Plymouth PCT	175
Royal Cornwall Hospitals	9
Salisbury Healthcare	4
Somerset Partnership NHS and Social Care	261
Swindon and Marlborough	—

Source:
KP90

MRSA

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have *(a)* successfully claimed and *(b)* tried to claim compensation (i) having contracted MRSA and (ii) having had a member of their family contract MRSA at an NHS hospital in each of the last five years. [34518]

Jane Kennedy: The information available is shown in the table.

Notification year	*(A) Number of successful claims made (i.e. damages paid)*	*(B) Number of attempted claims made*
2000–01	11	19
2001–02	21	50
2002–03	33	91
2003–04	30	104
2004–05	16	109

Notes:
1. Column (A) shows the number of successful claims and column (B) shows the total number of attempted claims. It is not possible however, to provide a breakdown of the data into the question's categories (i) and (ii)—as centrally held data do not differentiate between a patient and a member of their family claiming for negligence.
2. The figures provided are in respect of all claims where MRSA is stated as an element of the claim—it could be a "cause" or an "injury". The contraction of the MRSA could be a non-negligent consequence of the negligent act.
3. The number of claims are shown by notification year i.e. the financial year in which the Trust was first notified that a claim was going to be made. Because the notification date can be up to three years after the incident, the information in the table is subject to updates that might place additional claims in certain years.

Source:
NHS Litigation Authority

NHS Finance

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cumulative break-even position as reported in the final accounts of *(a)* strategic health authorities, *(b)* primary care trusts, *(c)* NHS trusts and *(d)* other care trusts was in each of the last five years, broken down by Government Office region. [29928]

Mr. Byrne: The break even cumulative position for national health service trusts for the period 2000–01 to 2004–05 is provided by Government Office region, in table one.

Table 1: Cumulative position for NHS trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05

£000

Government Office Region	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
North East	10,773	10,705	11,478	9,559	3,279
North West	35,571	35,568	17,035	-38	-23,279
Yorkshire and the Humber	7,996	-4,318	2,988	-18,667	-51,214
East Midlands	11,429	8,228	8,413	3,210	-2,653
West Midlands	1,618	1,650	-15,740	-42,748	-85,820
East	-5,203	-23,657	1,268	-9,168	-69,817
London	-32,632	-3,012	-13,433	-12,826	-92,213
South East	-23,453	-42,084	-58,557	-89,708	-160,376
South West	2,662	-16,180	-100,355	-115,333	-115,934

Notes:
1. For accounting purposes, the figures include data for the five care trusts.
2. The figures exclude NHS Foundation Trust data in 2004–05.

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the NHS trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05.

The term cumulative break even does not apply to strategic health authorities (SHAs) and primary care trusts (PCTs).

If a SHA or PCT reports a deficit position in one year, that deficit is recovered by deducting it from the resources available to them in the subsequent year, therefore their current performance represents their cumulative position.

The final audited financial position for health authorities (HA) for the period 2000–01 to 2001–02 and for SHAs, formed in 2002–03, for the period 2002–03 to 2004–05, aggregated by Government office region is provided in table two.

Table 2: Financial position of HAs and SHAs

£000

Government Office Region	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
North East	1,984	2,347	12,831	14,585	25,558
North West	8,634	1,678	334	24,785	55,582
Yorkshire and the Humber	6,681	13,213	6,841	26,681	72,134
East Midlands	3,135	9,927	13,948	11,001	23,203
West Midlands	11,648	18,667	20,864	27,966	30,663
East	37	20,836	10,147	26,684	19,273
London	7,976	3,985	20,265	31,352	60,997
South East	6,452	20,233	3,303	26,265	53,772
South West	3,844	857	7,859	16,951	31,554

Note:
SHAs came into existence in 2002–03. For 2000–01 and 2001–02 figures shown are for HAs.

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the health authorities 2000–01 and 2001–02 and audited summarisation schedules of the strategic health authorities 2002–03 to 2004–05.

The final audited financial position for PCTs for the period 2000–01 to 2004–05, aggregated by Government office region is provided in table three.

Table 3: Financial positions of PCTs, 2000–01 to 2004–05

£000

Government Office Region	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
North East	0	352	7,191	-3,851	2,147
North West	0	108	2,569	10,306	12,817
Yorkshire and the Humber	710	1,865	12,870	8,196	-5,427
East Midlands	43	2,999	14,923	9,897	-2,338
West Midlands	-217	2,638	18,237	11,619	-5,216
East	58	1,242	17,195	-18,153	-114,669
London	220	788	10,639	-6,557	-53,502
South East	310	4,232	15,494	4,091	-61,362
South West	2,779	470	-6,334	-11,679	-44,842

Note:
Primary Care Trusts came into existence in 2000–01, however Revenue Allocations were not made directly to them until 2003–04.
Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* terms of reference, *(b)* powers and *(c)* costs are of the turnaround teams she is sending into NHS organisations in deficit. [35367]

Mr. Byrne: The turnaround teams will support the national health service in identifying opportunities to deliver services with greater cost-effectiveness and to make financial savings. They will help the local NHS ensure that the NHS delivers both its key targets and financial balance.

An initial assessment to ensure that the 63 organisations, that are forecasting the most significant deficits, have financial control and there are an agreed set of actions to restore financial balance began on 7 December.

Following the initial assessment the teams will agree a tailored package of turnaround support with each organisation and the strategic health authority. The teams will then support the chief executive of the organisations in delivering turnaround. The type and length of engagement will be tailored to the needs of specific organisations. The chief executives will remain responsible for delivery in their organisations.

The contract for this work was awarded in accordance with Department tendering arrangements. The amount of the contract is commercial in confidence.

NHS Interpreting Service

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ensure provision of a comprehensive 24-hour interpreting service within the national health service. [39403]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Direct provides a 24-hour telephone service and there is full 24-hour availability of interpretation for all callers to the service. Other national health service trusts and bodies provide interpreting services on a local basis, and their availability in general reflects the opening hours of the services provided.

NHS Loans

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what amount of interest is paid by NHS trusts on NHS loans; [33996]

(2) if she will list NHS acute trusts which borrowed money from the NHS to remain in balance in the 2004–05 financial year; and how much interest each was charged. [34254]

Mr. Byrne: No national health service organisation has the legal power to make loans to any other NHS organisation or any other body.

As NHS trusts do not have the power to lend money to other NHS organisations, there was no interest charged in respect of borrowings from the NHS.

However, strategic health authorities (SHAs) can provide planned financial support. The recovery of this support is managed locally by the SHAs.

The following table shows the planned support required by NHS trusts to achieve financial balance or better in 2004–05.

NHS trusts requiring planned support in 2004–05 to achieve financial balance

£000

	2004–05	
	Surplus/ (deficit)	Planned support
Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust	13,581	26,377
North Bristol NHS Trust	2,402	20,026
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	1,580	18,700
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	293	13,972
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust	61	13,000
St. Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	9	12,000
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	0	11,200
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	87	9,700
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	178	8,800
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	84	7,931
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust	262	6,540
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	66	6,500
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust	89	6,322
East Cheshire NHS Trust	24	6,000
The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	1,998	6,000
Rob Jones and A Hunt Orthopaedic NHS Trust	0	5,581
Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust	12	5,400

NHS trusts requiring planned support in 2004–05 to achieve financial balance

£000

	2004–05	
	Surplus/ (deficit)	*Planned support*
Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	25	5,400
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	2	5,000
Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	588	4,600
West Yorkshire Ambulance Service Trust	20	4,127
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey MH NHS Trust	849	4,100
Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	156	3,970
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	13	3,829
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,398	3,500
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	7	3,200
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	192	3,000
Milton Keynes General Hospital NHS Trust	943	2,900
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	151	2,700
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	76	2,678
Royal Liverpool Broadgreen University Hospital Trust	0	2,643
Tees East and North Yorkshre Ambulance Service NHS Trust	0	2,600
North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust	94	2,575
The Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	31	2,100
Birmingham and Solihull MH NHS Trust	0	2,000
Worthing and Southlands Hospitals Trust	51	2,000
North West Surrey MH NHS Partnership Trust	7	1,614
Worcestershire MH Partnership NHS Trust	243	1,450
Avon and Wiltshire MHP NHS Trust	43	1,200
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	453	1,200
Five Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	38	1,153
Camden and Islington MH and Social Care Trust	494	1,000
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	882	1,000
Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust	116	700
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	7	568
Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust	35	468
East Sussex County Healthcare NHS Trust	9	273
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	7	209
Total	27,656	257,806

Note:

These figures do not include NHS foundation trusts.

Source:

Audited NHS trust summarisation schedules 2004–05.

NHS Staff Costs

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what overall NHS staff costs were in each year since 1997. [35468]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Overall national health service staff costs since 1997–98 to 2004–05

	English total (£)
2004–05	29,974,339,000
2003–04	28,529,703,305
2002–03	25,871,029,531
2001–02	23,211,677,814
2000–01	20,531,877,107
1999–2000	18,708,225,971
1998–99	17,081,105,039
1997–98	16,098,946,558

Source:

Annual Financial Returns for Strategic Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts and NHS Trusts 1997–98 to 2004–05.

NHS Trusts

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* total capital revenue expenditure and *(b)* capital and revenue IT expenditure was for NHS trusts in England in the last year for which figures are available. [35197]

Mr. Byrne: The information is given as follows. Figures do not include expenditure on the national programme for information technology funded centrally by the Department.

National health service trust expenditure in England 2004–05

	£000
Total capital expenditure	2,008,839
Total revenue expenditure	36,033,813
Total capital expenditure on information technology (IT)	130,037
Total revenue expenditure on IT	[1]Not yet available

[1] Revenue expenditure on IT is reported through an annual national survey of NHS bodies. Collation and analysis of survey returns has not yet been finalised. The equivalent figure for 2003–04 was 567,017.

Note:

Data for NHS foundation trusts are not included in 2004–05.

Source:

Audited NHS trust summarisation schedules 2004–05.

NICE Guidance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total estimated cost has been of issuing National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance; and how much of that figure is accounted for by the cost of issuing *(a)* clinical guidelines and *(b)* technology appraisals. [36428]

Jane Kennedy: The cost to the national health service of implementing National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) technology appraisal guidance up to July 2005 is estimated to be £838 million. There are no data available for the cost of implementing NICE clinical guidelines.

It is not possible to disaggregate accurately the cost of producing NICE appraisals and clinical guidelines. NICE'S total budget for 2005–06 is £29.3 million.

Nurses

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent nurses have been employed in the NHS in each of the last five years, broken down by region; and if she will make a statement. [35519]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information is shown in the table.

The number of full-time equivalent qualified nurses has increased by 48,453 (18 per cent.) since 2000.

All NHS qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, including practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1], in England by Government office region and strategic health authority area as at 30 September each year

Full-time equivalent

GOR code	*GOR name strategic health authority*	*SHA code*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
	England	—	266,987	277,334	291,285	304,892	315,440
A	North east total	—	16,702	17,326	17,853	18,374	18,995
	County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	7,000	7,136	7,278	7,642	7,896
	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	9,702	10,190	10,574	10,733	11,099
B	North west total	—	41,404	42,436	45,230	46,837	49,534
	Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	13,853	14,556	16,120	16,837	17,462
	Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	10,867	11,031	11,766	11,981	13,590
	Greater Manchester	Q14	16,684	16,849	17,344	18,019	18,481
D	Yorkshire and the Humber total	—	28,436	29,089	30,822	32,763	32 739
	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	7,172	7,251	8,094	8,381	8,706
	South Yorkshire	Q23	8,431	8,655	9,204	9,541	9,858
	West Yorkshire	Q12	12,833	13,183	13,523	14,840	14,175
E	East Midlands total	—	20,379	21,086	21,935	22,747	23,819
	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	7,242	7,321	7,520	7,650	8,166
	Trent	Q24	13,137	13,766	14,415	15,097	15,654
F	West Midlands total	—	28,032	29,469	31,121	32,137	33,322
	Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	13,691	14,337	15,428	15,909	16,591
	Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	7,247	7,825	8,102	8,376	8,438
	Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	Q28	7,095	7,308	7,590	7,852	8,293
G	East of England total	—	23,758	25,214	26,479	27,382	29,485
	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	6,074	6,680	7,010	7,165	7,439
	Essex	Q03	6,464	6,703	7,140	7,267	7,635
	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	11,219	11,830	12,329	12,950	14,410
H	London total	—	44,727	46,870	49,344	52,825	54,406
	North Central London	Q05	9,366	9,991	10,052	10,796	11,106
	North East London	Q06	7,554	8,072	8,407	9,740	9,975
	North West London	Q04	10,889	11,944	12,857	13,120	13,375
	South East London	Q07	9,790	9,758	10,600	11,336	11,777
	South West London	Q08	7,129	7,105	7,428	7,833	8,173
J	South east total	—	36,238	38,248	40,048	42,121	42,446
	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	8,154	8,712	9,090	9,893	9,885
	Kent and Medway	Q18	6,664	6,806	7,100	7,448	7,617
	Surrey and Sussex	Q19	11,968	12,627	13,351	13,691	13,780
	Thames Valley	Q16	9,452	10,103	10,506	11,089	11,164
K	South west total	—	25,531	26,630	28,008	29,118	29,277
	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	11,419	11,800	12,521	13,228	13,434
	Dorset and Somerset	Q22	5,578	5,877	6,216	6,515	6,532
	South West Peninsula	Q21	8,535	8,953	9,272	9,375	9,311
	Special health authorities and other statutory bodies	—	1,779	966	444	588	1,419

[1] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs. 2000–2001 data are estimated based on 2002 organisational structure.

Sources:

Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census

Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Obesity

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many weight management clinics there were in England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [39566]

Caroline Flint: Figures on the number of weight management clinics in England are not available for the last five years. There are, at present, weight management clinics. Six of these are for children and seven for adults.

Pandemic Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her letter to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire dated 8 December, on pandemic influenza, what representations she has received from interested parties regarding the purchase of Relenza as an adjunct to the existing antiviral strategy; and when she expects to take a decision as to whether Relenza will be purchased. [39349]

Caroline Flint: The Department has been approached by the manufacturer of Relenza in relation to supply of

that product for pandemic preparedness. There are practical issues to consider concerning use of Relenza during a pandemic, notably that the product is not licensed for prevention of influenza, it is not licensed for use in children and has to be administered via inhalation. No decision has been made on whether to stockpile Relenza, however the Department is keeping its pandemic antiviral strategy under constant review and this remains an option.

Penserver Software

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases were cleared on average per month by the NHS Pension Agency *(a)* before the introduction of the new penserver software, *(b)* after the introduction of penserver phase 1 and *(c)* after the introduction of pensaver phase 2. [35881]

Mr. Byrne: The average monthly case clearance pre Penserver Phase 1 (April 2001 to July 2003) was 17,528 transactions per month.

The average monthly case clearance between phase one and up to phase two implementation was 18,854 transactions per month, an increase of 7.6 per cent.

Penserver Phase 2 went live on 3 October 2005. There is insufficient information to assess the average monthly transactions since that date.

Primary Care Trust (Resource Allocation)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the extent to which the additional needs element of the weighted capitation formula for primary care trust (PCT) resource allocation reflects the degree of health inequality in the PCT's locality; and if she will make a statement. [35692]

Mr. Byrne: When making revenue allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs) the aim is to support the objective of equal access to equal need. We believe the weighted-capitation formula is the best mechanism available to enable this objective to be met.

The development of the formula is continuously overseen by the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA). ACRA is an independent body, made up of national health service managers, academics and general practitioners.

Primary Eye Care

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* the Association of British Dispensing Opticians, *(b)* the Association of Optometrists and *(c)* the Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians on the future of primary eye care in England. [38384]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I met with the Association of British Dispensing Opticians, the Association of Optometrists and the Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians on 27 October to discuss the ophthalmic clauses in the Health Bill and the review of General Ophthalmic Services.

We anticipate valuable contributions from stakeholders, including the optical representative bodies, to the review of the General Ophthalmic Services. The review provides an opportunity to consider how we can build on the success of current arrangements.

Prostate Cancer

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will launch a national screening programme for prostate cancer. [39680]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Screening and treatment techniques are not sufficiently well developed for the introduction of a national screening programme. The national screening committee is advising Government on this issue and is keeping screening for prostate cancer under review.

Public Appointments

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 who have since been appointed to public bodies by her Department, broken down by party; and who was responsible for making each appointment. [36685]

Jane Kennedy: Information about the political activity of appointees is recorded and publicised in accordance with the independent Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. This shows that the Department has appointed no former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 to public bodies.

Purified Protein Derivative

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with solicitors regarding the administration of the unlicensed Mantoux strength purified protein derivative by nurses, as stated in the Minutes of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's meeting of 14 July; what the content of these discussions was; what advice she has received as a result of these discussions; and whether this advice has been made available to the nursing and medical professions. [39324]

Jane Kennedy: The Statens Serum Insitut (SSI) Tuberculin PPD (Purified Protein Derivative) used routinely in the Mantoux test is a prescription only medicine (POM) and unlicensed. Such products may only be prescribed by an appropriate practitioner, such as a doctor or extended formulary nurse prescriber (EFNP). EFNPs can prescribe, administer (and direct others to administer) licensed and unlicensed Tuberculin PPD (and BCG vaccine) as listed in schedule 3A of the Medicines Act, 1968.

This information was issued to the nursing and medical professions on 19 July 2005 and is available on the Department's website at:

http://www.doh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/80/17/04118017.pdf

Skipton House Refit

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2272W, on departmental assets, if she will break down the expenditure on the Skipton

House refit by category listed; and if she will make a statement on the purchase of computers in Quarry House. [33751]

Mr. Byrne: The breakdown of the expenditure on the Skipton House refit by category is shown in the following table.

£

	Net current replacement cost
General enhancement expenditure	3,504,096.00
Blinds	26,957.00
Carpets	24,165.00
Signage	19,857.00
Catering/servery equipment	75,183.00
Total net current replacement cost	3,650,258.00

Source:
The detail of the Skipton House refit asset was obtained from Strategy and Business Development, Group Business Team, Estate Services section of the Department, at Skipton House.

The Department's policy is to refresh personal computers (PCs) on a rolling basis and the PCs in Quarry House referenced in the reply on 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2272W were included in a scheduled refresh programme. PCs are replaced when they are at least three years old and unable to meet the needs of the business.

Smallpox Vaccination

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she has collated on whether there is a relationship between smallpox vaccinations and ill health involving seizures. [39419]

Caroline Flint: Historical evidence of the possible adverse effects that can result from smallpox vaccination is summarised in Appendix 9 of the United Kingdom's 'Smallpox Plan (Guidelines for Smallpox Response and Management in the Post-eradication Era)' published in December 2003.

Recent evidence of adverse effects, including evidence of seizures, has been gathered from two studies of adverse effects in those people who received smallpox vaccination under government contingency planning arrangements in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America (USA). During the 2002–2004, the USA's smallpox vaccination programme, 665,000 people received smallpox vaccine and eight seizures were reported amongst those in receipt of vaccine. The full report of all adverse effects was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in December 2005.

In the UK, in a study of 232 people vaccinated, there were no seizures reported. The full account of all side effects reported was published in the journal Vaccine in July 2005.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1578–9W, on tuberculosis, what steps she is taking to ensure nurses are familiar with the need for a patient group direction to administer Mantoux-strength purified protein derivative. [39311]

Jane Kennedy: The Statens Serum Insitut (SSI) Tuberculin PPD (Purified Protein Derivative) used routinely in the Mantoux test is a prescription only medicine (POM) and unlicensed. Such products may only be prescribed by an appropriate practitioner, such as a doctor or extended formulary nurse prescriber (EFNP). EFNPs can prescribe, administer (and direct others to administer) licensed and unlicensed Tuberculin PPD (and BCG vaccine) as listed in Schedule 3A of the Medicines Act, 1968.

This information was issued to the nursing and medical professions on 19 July 2005 and is available on the Department's website at:

http://www.doh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/80/17/04118017.pdf.

Waiting Times

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* target waiting times to see a (i) consultant psychiatrist and (ii) psychologist were in (A) Blackpool, (B) the North West and (C) England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [37656]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect information on waiting times for appointments with psychologists as waiting time targets apply to consultant-led services only.

The maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a psychiatry consultant is 17 weeks. From the end of 2005, the target will reduce to 13 weeks. The maximum waiting time for in-patient treatment under the care of a psychiatry consultant is nine months. From the end of 2005, the target will reduce to six months.

Information on the estimated average waiting time from general practitioner written referral to first out-patient appointment with a psychiatry consultant in Blackpool primary care trust (PCT), Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority (SHA) and England is shown in the following table. This information is not being captured at regional level. Therefore, such information for the North West is not available.

Estimated average waiting time from general practitioner written referral to first out-patient appointment, September 2001 to September 2005. Commissioner based

	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)					
Quarter	*0<4*	*4<13*	*13<17*	*17<21*	*21 plus*	*Median wait*
Blackpool PCT						
September 2002	93	44	12	1	0	3.2
September 2003	89	49	4	5	0	3.3
September 2004	62	46	-0	1	0	3.5
September 2005	18	32	15	0	0	8.2

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Quarter	*0<4*	*4<13*	*13<26*	*26 plus*	*Median wait*
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA					
September 2001	683	533	139	34	4.2

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Quarter	0<4	4<13	13<17	17<21	21 plus	Median wait
September 2002	546	402	46	25	35	3.9
September 2003	547	700	43	29	0	5.5
September 2004	670	485	75	20	0	3.7
September 2005	105	91	27	3	0	4.8

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Quarter	0<4	4<13	13<26	26 plus	Median wait
England					
September 2001	14,590	11,443	2,067	579	3.9

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Quarter	0<4	4<13	13<17	17<21	21 plus	Median wait
September 2002	11,052	8,174	1,122	607	450	3.9
September 2003	12,204	9,562	695	261	13	3.7
September 2004	10,454	7,813	833	78	2	3.7
September 2005	4,170	2,174	1,064	38	0	3.6

Notes:
1. Due to small numbers, the calculation of the median wait is prone to fluctuation at PCT and SHA level.
2. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures.
3. Waiting times apply to consultant-led appointments only. Services in many areas are now run by multi-disciplinary teams.
4. PCTs came into existence from April 2002.

Source:
Department of Health form QM08R

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 16 January 2006

PRIME MINISTER

2012 Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) when the Cabinet Committee overseeing the London 2012 Olympics is next due to meet; who will attend; and what the agenda is; [41883]

(2) whether the minutes of the Cabinet Committee overseeing the London 2012 Olympics will be made public. [41887]

The Prime Minister: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice and the proceedings of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees is generally not disclosed, as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Details of the membership and terms of reference of the Committee are available in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Cabinet Office website.

Defence Decisions (Military Officers)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to allow the most senior serving military officers to express their views publicly on whether the country should go to war; and if he will make a statement. [41972]

The Prime Minister: The policy for serving military officers publicly expressing their views on matters of Government policy is set out in the Defence Council Instruction "Contact with the media and writing or speaking in public". This is available in the Libraries of the House and is reflected in each service's Queen's Regulations.

Downing Street Tours

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Prime Minister if he will invite a group of children from Shrewsbury with special needs to visit No. 10 Downing Street for a tour. [41559]

The Prime Minister: Hon. Members from all parties are invited on a rolling programme to nominate and accompany a small group of children from their constituencies to have tea at No.10 Downing Street. Hon. Members are invited to select, in a fair and open way, children and adults who have a particular interest in visiting No. 10 Downing Street. Since 1998 approximately 424 MPs have accepted invitations for children to come for tea.

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Michael Gove: To ask the Prime Minister what was agreed at the Warwick National Policy Forum in regard to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. [40960]

The Prime Minister: The National Policy Forum in Warwick was a Labour Party event.

Homeland Security

Mr. Bone: To ask the Prime Minister if he will take steps to establish a separate Department with responsibility for homeland security. [42469]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the right hon. and learned Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard), at Prime Minister's questions on 8 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 711.

Iraq

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with General Sir Michael Rose concerning Iraq and the situation in the Middle East; and if he will make a statement. [41939]

The Prime Minister: None.

Little Haven Children's Hospice

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister if he will visit Little Haven Children's Hospice in Castle Point to review the work of the hospice and its funding levels. [42219]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so. However, I appreciate and fully support the excellent work that children's hospices do for children and their families.

Terrorism Victims (Compensation)

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Prime Minister whether he plans to establish a scheme to provide compensation to British citizens who are the victims of terrorist acts abroad; and if he will make a statement. [42178]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick) at Prime Minister's Questions on 19 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 838–39.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crime Clear-up Rates

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1W, on crime clear-up rates, how many offenders went before the courts in each area listed in the table in each year between 2000 and 2005; how many *(a)* pleaded guilty and *(b)* were found guilty in each year; how many (i) cases and (ii) charges were discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service in each year; and on how many occasions the Crown Prosecution Service dropped a charge in favour of a less serious charge. [42758]

The Solicitor-General: I have placed tables in the Library of the House that show the number of defendants whose case was completed in magistrates courts and in the Crown court, in each Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Area, in each of the years in question; the number resulting in guilty plea; the

number found guilty after trial; the number whose case was discontinued; and, for completeness, the number resulting in other outcomes. The tables also express each outcome as a proportion of the total.

"Other outcomes" comprise cases in which the defendant was found not guilty after trial; cases discharged in the course of committal proceedings; and cases which could not proceed because the defendant could not be traced by the police, or had died, or been found unfit to plead.

The CPS reports case outcomes at defendant level, and holds no central information on the outcome of specific charges. This information is held on individual case files, and could be retrieved only by examining every file in each CPS office. It is therefore not possible to provide figures for the number of charges discontinued, nor on the number of occasions on which a charge was dropped in favour of a less serious charge.

Figures for 2005 are provisional, and may be subject to revision.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Solicitor-General how much was spent by the Law Officers on plants in each year since 1997. [41193]

The Solicitor-General: I am informed that the Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate have not incurred costs on plants since 1997. The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers spent £40 in 2005. The Crown Prosecution Service and Serious Fraud Office do incur expenditure on plants for its offices but no central records are kept of such expenditure specifically on plants. It would incur disproportionate cost to identify the figures.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Administration Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39821]

Jim Knight: Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) is published annually by HM Treasury. It includes various analyses of public expenditure including Country and Regional Analysis in chapter 8, the data for which are obtained from Departments each year as part of the Country and Regional Analysis exercise (CRA). Treasury does not, however, monitor country or regional administration costs separately. The information is available at the following address on Treasury's website:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/172/83/pesa2005_chapter8.pdf

Provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn are set out in Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639), which is available in the Library.

Defra's Departmental Report 2005 (CMD 6537) gives an overview of Defra's activities over 2004–05, and includes some tables of expenditure on services by function, country and region. The information is available at the following address on Defra's website:

http://defraweb/corporate/deprep/default.htm

This report is also available in the Library, or can be obtained in hard copy from The Stationery Office (ISO), ISBN 0101653727.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the administrative costs were of each agency for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39849]

Jim Knight: Costs for each of the Defra executive agencies for 2004–05 are in their annual reports with accounts, copies of which are placed in the Library of the House. In the reports these are not further classified as "identifiable" or "non-identifiable", i.e. whether or not they benefit particular individuals, enterprises or communities within particular regions. Administrative costs for 2004–05 are set out in the following table.

£000

Agency	*Administrative costs for 2004–05*
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)	37,300
Central Science Laboratory (CSL)	43,000
Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD)	9,161
Rural Payments Agency (RPA)	249,208
Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA)	99,081
Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)	8,304
Government Decontamination Service (CDS)	[1]—
Marine Fisheries Agency (MFA)	[1]—
State Veterinary Service (SVS)	[1]—
Total	446,054

[1] New agency in 2005—data not available.

Information on the precise apportionment of individual Defra executive agency administration costs to the "identifiable" and "non-identifiable" categories for the purpose of the Country and Regional Analyses exercise is available only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39947]

Jim Knight: Provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn are set out in Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639), which is available in the Library. The administration budgets regime Treasury oversees is for Whitehall Departments only. How running costs are controlled in the devolved Administrations is a matter for them.

Defra's Departmental Report 2005 (CMD 6537) gives an overview of Defra's activities over 2004–05, and includes some tables of expenditure on services by function, country and region. The information is available at the following address on Defra's website:

http://defraweb/corporate/deprep/default.htm

This report is also available in the Library, or can be obtained in hard copy from The Stationery Office (TSO), ISBN 0101653727.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40058]

Jim Knight: Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA), which is published annually by HM Treasury, includes various analyses of public expenditure. However, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), apart from ACAS and HSE, are not covered by the Treasury's administration budgets regime.

Information on NDPBs' administrative costs is not collected centrally in Defra and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the animal welfare units at Aston Down and Polwhele have been closed; and if she will make a statement. [41513]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Wildlife Units at Aston Down and Polwhele have not been closed. Staff are still working to conclude the final surveying element of the randomised badger culling trial (RBCT).

Decisions about the future of these units will be taken after the consultation on badger culling as a means of controlling bovine tuberculosis in cattle in England has ended. The cost benefit analysis which supports our consultation shows that state operated culling could lead to higher costs and slower delivery compared with other options. So our intention is to redeploy or release workers who have carried out cage trapping at the end of the RBCT. Remaining staff, who could be used to support any future culling policy, will be retained.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991; [42302]

(2) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999; [42303]

(3) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968; [42305]

(4) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act 1962; [42307]

(5) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963; [42308]

(6) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970; [42309]

(7) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 1954; [42310]

(8) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960; [42312]

(9) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Docking and Nicking of Horses Act 1949; [42313]

(10) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Protection of Animals Act 1911; [42314]

(11) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925; [42315]

(12) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Protection of Animals Act 1934; [42316]

(13) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Pet Animals Act 1951; [42418]

(14) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Cockfighting Act 1952. [42419]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have looked at all these Acts as part of the review of animal welfare legislation that informed the drafting of the Animal Welfare Bill. While much of this legislation still provides valuable protection for animals there is scope, in some areas, for updating, simplifying and improvement.

Avian Influenza

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how often rural workers are being kept informed of precautions to take with regard to the H5N1 influenza strain; and by what methods. [41681]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has distributed guidance materials on avian influenza to a range of industry groups, including the British Poultry Council, the British Egg Industry Council and the National Farmers Union and these stakeholders are helping to distribute information to their members. A simple one-page leaflet on biosecurity and surveillance for smaller businesses and back yard keepers has been produced as well. This has been widely circulated, including to all veterinary practices. The leaflet has also been placed in the trade and specialist press to help with targeting the same audience.

Specific guidance on worker protection has been issued by an industry and cross-departmental working group. This is also available on the avian influenza pages of the Defra website.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many wild birds have been tested for avian influenza in each of the last six months; whether each bird was *(a)* found dead, *(b)* shot and *(c)* trapped alive; whether each bird was (i) wildfowl and (ii) other species; in which country each was taken; and what the results were of the test on each. [42140]

Mr. Bradshaw: To date approximately 3,179 wild birds have been tested for avian influenza viruses as part of surveillance activities across the UK.

Of these 131 were found dead, 326 were shot as part of legal wildfowling activities and 2,722 were caught and sampled live. 239 were sampled in Scotland, 2,621 in England and Wales and 319 in Northern Ireland. 3,078 were wildfowl and 101 were other species

Two birds tested positive for low pathogenic avian influenza viruses. A mallard shot in Scotland tested positive for the subtype H6N2 and a shelduck that was caught live in England tested positive for the subtype H2.

All other results to date have been negative.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many poultry flocks have been registered under the Avian Influenza (Preventative Measures) (No 2) Regulations 2005. [42141]

Mr. Bradshaw: As of midnight on 10 January 2005, 1,677 eligible poultry premises have been registered on the GB poultry register under the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No 2) Regulations 2005 and the equivalent regulations for Scotland and Wales. All eligible premises are required to register by 28 February 2006.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to raise awareness among poultry keepers of the requirements of the Avian Influenza (Preventative Measures) (No 2) Regulations 2005. [42142]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA has distributed guidance materials to a range of industry groups, including the British Poultry Council, the British Egg Industry Council and the National Farmers Union. These stakeholders are helping to distribute information to their members. We have also provided leaflets and posters to farmers and to many other people, including local veterinary surgeons and placed advertisements in poultry hobby magazines. Guidance is also available on the avian influenza pages of the DEFRA website.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications for the release of gamebirds during 2006 of an outbreak of avian influenza. [42143]

Mr. Bradshaw: Restrictions on the movement of poultry in the event of an outbreak are contained within the Diseases of Poultry Order 2003. Gamebirds fall within the definition of poultry within this order if they are reared or kept in captivity and there are no plans to treat gamebird activity any differently from the remainder of the poultry industry.

Gamebird shooting parties are allowed provided birds are not brought together for the shoot from different premises and the event organiser advises the local animal health office that the event is taking place.

The provisions of the Diseases of Poultry Order 2003 include the imposition of movement controls on suspicion of disease, and where disease is confirmed, the imposition of a protection zone and a surveillance zone around the infected premises by declaratory order. These measures would prohibit the release of gamebirds in those zones. The order also allows the elimination of the disease by slaughter of infected and contact animals.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she has prepared for game farmers and gamekeepers regarding the release of game birds during 2006 in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza. [42061]

Mr. Bradshaw: Working closely with industry Defra has issued guidance for all bird keepers, including those involved with the release of game birds. A leaflet on improving biosecurity and surveillance has been circulated to smaller businesses. We have also placed information in the trade and specialist press and on the Defra website. An industry and cross-Department working group has issued specific guidance on worker protection.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to prepare for the isolation of free range poultry flocks in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza in the UK. [42062]

Mr. Bradshaw: As part of the Government's current programme to reduce the risks posed by avian influenza bird owners would be required, wherever practicable, to move their birds indoors as soon as possible if a case of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza were found in Great Britain. In cases where housing is not practicable, the keeper will be required to take all reasonable measures to minimise contact with wild birds.

These requirements would be invoked as a precautionary measure to avoid spread of the disease while an outbreak is investigated. As information about the source and nature of any outbreak became available, the Government's strategy would be to lift or reduce the requirements as soon as appropriate.

Guidance on separating domestic poultry flocks from wild birds has been issued to a wide range of industry groups and bird keepers. We have also issued advice for poultry keepers on how to improve biosecurity.

We have also established the Great Britain Poultry Register to gather essential information about certain species of birds held on commercial premises in Great Britain. This will help reduce the impact of an outbreak of avian influenza by enabling rapid communication with keepers, and help in targeting resources where they are needed most.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 November to question 27526, when she expects to present the outcome of the consideration to the House; in what form; and whether legislative changes are being considered. [30756]

Mr. Bradshaw: I assume the hon. Member means the answer to question 27525 regarding financial resources being made available to publicise the procedures that should be followed by local authorities who suspect the presence of avian influenza. I apologise for the delay in replying.

My officials are in regular contact with the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), representing local authorities, who have produced a template for local authority contingency plans for animal disease control. Consideration of funding arrangements for local authorities for work following an outbreak of avian influenza is ongoing. It will not lead to a need for legislative changes.

Badgers

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons gassing has been ruled out as a method of culling badgers. [41551]

Mr. Bradshaw: Gassing has not been ruled out as a method of culling badgers. We are currently consulting on both the principle and method of a badger culling policy.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the compatibility with the Berne Convention of the practice of licensing individual farmers to cull badgers. [42255]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently consulting on both the principle and method of a badger culling policy. Any new culling policy would have to be sustainable and take account of legislation protecting the welfare of badgers. But no decisions have yet been made.

Badgers are listed as a protected species under Appendix III of the Berne Convention, but they are not an endangered species. The Berne Convention allows regulated management of a protected species as long as this is not

"detrimental to the survival of the population concerned".

Avian Quarantine

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the quarantine system since the testing of the sentinel birds in the quarantine centre in Farmbridge. [42139]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are carefully considering the recommendations of the Independent Review of Avian Quarantine in close consultation with EU partners and stakeholders. We will implement any essential recommendations as quickly as possible, before imports of captive birds resume.

Bonfires

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to reduce the frequency of bonfires in rural areas. [40405]

Mr. Bradshaw: Bonfires on domestic and business premises, including those in rural areas, are already regulated under the statutory nuisance provisions in sections 79 to 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This means that local authorities have a duty to investigate complaints of smoke from premises which are prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and if satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists an abatement notice must be served requiring the abatement of the nuisance or the restriction of its occurrence or recurrence. Failure to comply with the terms of an abatement notice will, upon summary conviction, result in a fine of up to £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for business premises. In addition, Section 2 of the Clean Air Act 1993 prohibits emissions of dark smoke from industrial and trade premises, which can include agricultural and horticultural premises.

The Government are taking further steps to regulate bonfires. The proposed Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 would stop the unregulated burning of waste from any mine, quarry or agricultural premises.

CAP Payments

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of Common Agricultural Policy payments were allocated to small farmers in the UK in 2004–05. [40598]

Jim Knight: Taking the definition of a small farmer to be one who receives less than £10,000 in CAP aid per year, 58 per cent. of claimants in 2004–05 European agriculture guidance and guarantee fund year (16 October 2004 to 15 October 2005) could be described as small farmers and received 9 per cent. of the total aid paid.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry regarding the proposed closure of the Natural Environment Research Council's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Monks Wood; and if she will make a statement. [39545]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The Department has had no discussions with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry regarding the closure of the Natural Environment Research Council's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Monks Wood. The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology is a wholly-owned Research Centre of the Natural Environment Research Council which provides independent research and training in the environmental sciences. The future shape of the Centre for Ecology has been informed by a strategic review that involved extensive consultation with stakeholders including DEFRA.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact on environmental research of the proposed closure of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Monks Wood; and if she will make a statement. [39546]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is currently consulting on a proposed restructuring of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH). The proposals include the potential closure of the site at Monks Wood. The aim of the restructuring proposal is to ensure the long term sustainability of CEH which will

ensure continued capacity for environmental research in the UK into the future. NERC has confirmed that the scientific programmes for the restructured CEH will be:

Biodiversity

Water

Biogeochemistry

Climate Change

Sustainable Economics

Environmental Informatics

The proposed closure of specific sites does not imply that the research carried out at those sites will be discontinued.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of sections *(a)* 3 to 9, *(b)* 10 to 14 and *(c)* 28 to 32 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. [40995]

Mr. Bradshaw: Sections 3 to 9 deal with the nuisance to local residents caused by the sale and repair of vehicles on the road.

These sections:

Make it an offence to leave or cause to leave two or more vehicles on a road within 500 metres of each other where they are exposed for sale. The offence will not be committed if the sale is not for the purpose of a business of selling motor vehicles.

Make it an offence to carry out restricted works on a motor vehicle on a road. The offence is not committed if the works are legitimately needed due to a breakdown or are not for the purposes of a business. However, the business defence does not apply if the works give reasonable cause for annoyance to persons in the vicinity.

Allow for the issue of a £100 fixed penalty for the above offences.

Create an offence to give false information to a local authority officer.

Are enforceable by the local authority.

Interim guidance on these sections was issued to local authorities on 3 June 2005 and will be updated as part of the Act's full guidance issued in March 2006.

Sections 10–14 deal with the enforcement, removal, and disposal of abandoned vehicles and amend the Refuse Disposal Amenity Act 1978. These sections:

Allow for the issue of a £200 fixed penalty notice for the offence of abandonment.

Create an offence to give false information to a local authority officer.

Removes the requirement to give notice before removing a vehicle from occupied land where the land is on a 'road'. This will include roads running through housing estates.

Removes the requirement to give 24 hours notice before the removal of a vehicle that ought to be destroyed.

Allow for the immediate disposal of abandoned vehicles that do not display a valid tax disc and a registration plate.

Remove the requirement to wait for the expiration of a valid tax disc before disposal.

Gives the Government the power to issue statutory guidance that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their abandoned vehicle functions.

Are enforceable by the local authority.

Interim guidance on these sections was issued to local authorities on 18 October 2005 and will be updated as part of the Act's full guidance issued in March 2006.

Sections 28–30 make changes to fixed penalty notices for graffiti and flyposting, by amending section 43 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. This will allow local authorities to specify the level of penalty themselves within a range that will be set out by the Secretary of State in regulations. If they do not choose to specify their own level, a default amount of £75 will apply. It also widens the range of officers who will be able to issue fixed penalties for graffiti and fly-posting offences by enabling local authorities to authorise officers other than their own employees to issue them, as well as giving the power of issue to parish councils. A new section 43B will also be inserted into the 2003 Act, making it an offence for someone to fail to provide their name and address details when requested to do so by an authorised officer.

These sections will help encourage more effective enforcement by increasing the number of officers with the power to address minor acts of graffiti and fly-posting, and by giving local authorities flexibility in setting the penalties that will apply.

Section 31 of the Act will enable local authorities to require the removal of both graffiti and fly-posting where this is defacing street furniture and other relevant surfaces belonging to statutory undertakers. Currently this power is available for graffiti in 12 pilot authority areas under section 48 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The 2005 Act extends these provisions so that 'defacement removal notices' will be available for dealing with fly-posting as well as graffiti, thus allowing more co-ordinated removal from affected surfaces.

Under the Act it is an offence for anyone to sell aerosol paint to anyone under the age of 16. From 1 July 2005, this provision has been supplemented by a requirement under section 32 which places a duty on local trading standards to carry out a review of underage sales once every 12 months and take enforcement action where necessary. Guidance for the operation of section 32 and for test purchasing aerosol paints can be found on the TOGETHER website (http://www.together.gov.uk/article.asp?aid=3435).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects each section of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 to come into force. [40996]

Mr. Bradshaw: The current timetable for commencement is as follows:

Section	*Date to be commenced*	
1	Crime and disorder reduction strategies	To be confirmed
2	Gating orders	By spring 2006
3–5	Nuisance parking offences	7 June 2005
6–9	Nuisance Parking Offences: fixed penalty notices	Planned for 6 April 2006
10–14	Abandoned vehicles	18 October 2005

Section	Date to be commenced	
15–17	Illegally parked vehicles	18 October 2005
18	Offence of dropping litter	7 June 2005
19	Litter offence: fixed penalty notice	Planned for 6 April 2006
20–22	Litter and refuse—local authority notices	Planned for 6 April 2006
23	Free distribution of printed matter	Planned for 6 April 2006
24–26	Litter and refuse—general	Planned for 6 April 2006
27	"Litter"	7 June 2005
28–31	Graffiti and flyposting	Planned for 6 April 2006
32	Sale of aerosol paint to children	—
33	Unlawful display of advertisements: defences	7 June 2005
34	Removal of placards and posters	Planned for 6 April 2006
35	Unregistered transport: defence of acting under employer's instructions	7 June 2005
36	Registration requirements and conditions	7 June 2005
37	Transport of waste: enforcement powers	Planned for spring 2007
38–39	Failure to produce authority: fixed penalty notices	Planned for 6 April 2006
40	Defence of acting under employer's instructions	7 June 2005
41	Penalties on conviction	7 June 2005
42	Investigation and enforcement costs	18 October 2005
43	Clean up costs	18 October 2005
44	Forfeiture of vehicles	18 October 2005
45	Failure to furnish documentation: fixed penalty notices	Planned for 6 April 2006
46	Power to search and seize vehicles	Planned for spring 2007
47	Abolition of requirement to contract out waste disposal functions	18 October 2005
48–50	Local authority waste collection and disposal	Planned for 6 April 2006
51–52	Appropriate person and use of fixed penalty receipts	Planned for 6 April 2006
53	Supplementary enforcement powers	18 October 2005
54	Site waste management plans	7 June 2005
55–58	Dog control orders	Planned for 6 April 2006
59–62	Fixed penalty notices	Planned for 6 April 2006
63–65	Supplementary	Planned for 6 April 2006
66–67	General	Planned for 6 April 2006
68	Termination of police responsibility for stray dogs	Date still to be decided
69–76	Alarm notification areas	Planned for 6 April 2006
77–79	Powers in relation to alarms	Planned for 6 April 2006
80–81	Supplementary	Planned for 6 April 2006
82, 84, 85	Noise from premises	Planned for 6 April 2006
83	Noise offences: use of fixed penalty notices	7 June 2005
86	Deferral of duty to serve abatement notice	Planned for 6 April 2006
87–95	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	1 January 2006
96–98	Miscellaneous—use of fixed penalty receipts	Planned for 6 April 2006
99–100	Shopping and luggage trolleys	Planned for 6 April 2006
101–103	Statutory nuisances	Planned for 6 April 2006
104	Contaminated land: appeals against remediation notices	Planned for spring 2006
105	Offences relating to pollution etc: penalties on conviction	7 June 2005

Climate Change

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what data the Government have concerning changes in any international comparisons with similar or greater changes in rain and snowfall; and with changes in peak flows and flooding in river catchment areas in North West Europe or elsewhere; [39264]

(2) what data the Government holds concerning changes in the intensity of rain and snowfall measured by meteorological stations in the United Kingdom; what recent trends have been observed in such intensity; and whether there have been associated changes in *(a)* peak flows and *(b)* flooding in river catchment areas. [39242]

Mr. Morley: Defra has policy responsibility for flood risk management in England. The Met Office is a Trading Fund within the Ministry of Defence and one of the world's leading providers of environmental and weather-related services. The Environment Agency is a Non-Departmental Public Body of Defra and is the principal operating authority with responsibility for flood risk management in England.

I understand the Met Office has analysed data relating to changes in the intensity of rain in the UK and also data relating to changes in the intensity of rain in North West Europe and countries elsewhere in the world but has not specifically compared the changes in the UK with the changes in these other regions.

The Met Office has looked at trends in annual average precipitation intensity in the UK over the period 1961–2004. Their assessment is that precipitation intensity has increased since 1961 by 5–10 per cent. in most parts of the UK apart from north-west England. This increase is statistically significant for East Anglia, the Midlands, south-west England, and most of Scotland. Trends in snowfall intensity have not been specifically studied but there has been a decreasing trend in days of snow cover for all parts of the UK since 1981.

I understand from the Environment Agency that measurement of change in peak flows and flood risk over time is difficult and not helped by the brevity of historical records and large year-on-year variations in precipitation and peak river flows.

The Agency is collecting high-flow data to undertake the necessary analysis in future. Recent reviews of seasonal mean river flows do show some evidence of autumn and winter increases since the 1970s.

Coastal Access

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to publish new guidance on access to coastal countryside areas. [40691]

Jim Knight: We are talking to a range of interested parties to inform the development of detailed options for improving access to coastal land. We then plan to consult publicly in October 2006.

Coastal Erosion

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her latest assessment is of the rate of coastal erosion. [38899]

Mr. Morley: Defra has overall policy responsibility for coastal erosion risk in England and grant aids local authority improvement projects to reduce this risk but does not build defences, nor direct the authorities on which specific projects to undertake. Management of coastal erosion risk and associated monitoring is the responsibility of the relevant local authority in each area.

Erosion risk will vary around the coastline depending on local conditions and defences in place. Defra has encouraged the relevant authorities to produce Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) which provide large-scale assessments of the risks associated with coastal processes and present long term policy frameworks to manage these risks in a sustainable manner. In 2001 Defra funded a national study of information on long term coastal processes and evolution over the next century (Futurecoast). This is designed to be used by coastal authorities to inform their current revisions of SMPs.

The Office of Science and Technology's Foresight Future Flooding report, published in 2004, also considered possible rates of coastal erosion under different scenarios over the next 80 years.

Constituency Dispute (Leominster)

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps her Department is taking to investigate the dispute between Mr. Gilgan, Ms Quershi and Mrs. Booton, constituents of the hon. Member for Leominster; [41234]

(2) when she will reply to the letter of 5 December from the hon. Member for Leominster about the treatment of his constituents Ms Qureshi and Mrs. Booton by officials in her Department. [41190]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letter, which deals with the dispute involving his constituents. I will reply shortly.

Departmental Property

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was paid by her Department in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and what the total paid in *(a)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* London was in that year. [35992]

Mr. Bradshaw: The amounts paid by the Department in rates in 2004–05 are summarised on spreadsheets by local authority, by nation and region of the UK and in London made available in the Library of the House.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on the Financial instrument for the Environment, *(b)* Committee for the application of the Regulation authorising voluntary participation by undertakings in the industrial sector in a Community eco-management and audit scheme and *(c)* Committee for the implementation of the Directive on the incineration of hazardous waste have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39009]

Mr. Morley: During the UK presidency there was one meeting of the Committee on the Financial instrument for the Environment (the LIFE-Committee), which was held in July 2005 and was chaired by the European Commission. Two officials from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) attended the meeting.

There was also one meeting of the Committee for the application of the Regulation allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS). The European Commission presided over the meeting. The two UK representatives at the meeting were from Defra and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, the UK competent body for EMAS.

No Committees were held during this period for the implementation of the Directive on the incineration of hazardous waste.

The devolved administrations are routinely asked to represent their views.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Madagascar), *(b)* Standing Committee for implementation of the Directive on the marketing of biological products, *(c)* Committee on evaluation and control of the risks of existing products and *(d)* Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of the provisions on the removal of technical barriers to trade in the sector of dangerous substances and preparations have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39013]

(2) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Comoros), *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Côte d'Ivoire) and *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Estonia) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39015]

(3) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Gambia), *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Greenland) and *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Guinea) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39016]

(5) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-São Tome and Principe), *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Senegal) and *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Seychelles) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39018]

(4) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Guinea Bissau), *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Equatorial Guinea) and *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Mauritius) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39017]

(6) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on supply of agricultural products to the population of the former Soviet Union, *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Angola), *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Argentina) and *(d)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Cape Verde) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement; [39019]

(7) how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Morocco), *(b)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EEC-Mauritania and *(c)* Fisheries Joint Committee (EC-Russia) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39022]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK did not attend any of the Joint Committees (except that for EU/Greenland) listed in these questions as we have no fishing interests in these waters. Records about these meetings are not held by my Department. The meeting of the EU/Greenland Joint Committee took place on 12 December 2005. The UK was represented by DEFRA officials. UK officials also attended negotiations of the EU/Morocco and EU/Senegal agreements during our presidency of the EU.

EU Packaging Directive

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the UK packaging business recovery and recycling targets for all materials were achieved in 2004; whether she expects the UK to meet EU packaging directive targets for 2008; and if she will make a statement. [40462]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK met the glass, paper and wood interim business recycling targets in 2004, but narrowly missed the metals (by 0.1 per cent. each) and plastic (by 0.7 per cent.) targets.

The level of achievement attained in 2004 demonstrates that the UK is making good progress towards meeting the next packaging directive targets in 2008 and while the targets are challenging for the UK they are achievable.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps she is taking to increase the collection of packaging waste from households to meet the EU packaging directive targets for 2008; [40463]

(2) whether *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* producers are responsible for the collection and recovery of packaging within household waste. [40468]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities have a duty to collect any household waste and to meet individual Statutory Performance Standards for recycling and composting of household waste. Each authority is free to choose the range of materials it collects to meet its target.

In addition, the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 requires waste collection authorities-subject to certain exemptions-to provide a kerbside collection service of at least two recyclable materials by 2010.

However, the Department has also put in place the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2005, "the Packaging Regulations" which place obligations on businesses to recover and recycle packaging waste. As the packaging waste recycling targets, set in the regulations, increase between now and 2008 it is expected that producers will have to ensure that more packaging waste is extracted from the household waste stream for recycling. Producers will therefore need to work with local authorities e.g. through their packaging compliance schemes and/or accredited reprocessors/exporters, to ensure that packaging materials can be collected by local authorities for recycling, e.g. by co-financing such collections. This is particularly so where producers' needs extend beyond the local authorities' own recycling obligations.

Fisheries

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she expects the Agriculture and Fisheries Council will take at the meeting on 19 December to support the European

Commission's proposed emergency measures to close the deep water gill net fishery off the west coast of Scotland. [38660]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Agriculture and Fisheries Council agreed to ban the use of fixed netting in deep waters to the west of the British Isles in 2006 with effect from 1 February. The Council also agreed on the need to improve knowledge of the effects of these fisheries and agree that measures to regulate these fisheries should be considered in the light of further scientific advice from the Commission's Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries.

Fixed Penalty Notices

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many fixed penalty notices have been issued for *(a)* graffiti, *(b)* fly-posting and *(c)* dog fouling in each of the last four years. [42154]

Mr. Bradshaw: The power to issue fixed penalties for both graffiti and fly-posting offences commenced in April 2004.

	Graffiti	*Fly-posting*	*Dog fouling*
2001–02	—	—	2,461
2002–03	—	—	2,036
2003–04	—	—	2,742
2004–05	19	57	2,329

Home Inspection Packs (Contaminated Land)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the note produced by her Department's Contaminated Land branch on the Council of Property Search Organisations' proposals for a contaminated land report to be included in home inspection packs. [39501]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2380W.

Fly-tipping

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* incidents of fly-tipping were reported and *(b)* prosecutions were made as a result in (i) the Ruislip-Northwood constituency and (ii) the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [41827]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has worked with the Environment Agency to establish Flycapture, the national database on fly-tipping, which has been operational since April 2004. No national data were previously available on illegal waste disposal or fly-tipping.

Flycapture collects data at local authority level only. The data are probably also an underestimate and are likely to increase as local authorities improve their collection and reporting of the data.

The London borough of Hillingdon and the Environment Agency have reported the following data to Flycapture:

Number of incidents	*London borough of Hillingdon*	*Environment agency*
April 2004 to March 2005	[1]2,128	11
April 2005 to November 2005	[2]1,673	4
Number of prosecutions[3]		
April 2004 to March 2005	11	2
April 2005 to March 2006	[4]6	[4]2

[1] Average 177 per month.
[2] Average 209 per month.
[3] Data are incomplete.
[4] To date.

Greenhouse Gases

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures the UK Government have proposed to help developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. [39728]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 10 January 2006]:* The United Kingdom Government has proposed to help developing countries to reduce emissions through a number of different activities. Highlights so far include:

Consolidated support for the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). Defra will be providing a further £2.5 million pounds per year in 2006–07 and 2007–08. In addition, the FCO will be providing funding of £1 million in 2006–07 and 2007–08 giving a total of £6 million from the UK over the coming two years.

Dialogues with Latin America and China on low carbon investment strategies are under way.

The UK is at the fore of the EU-China Partnership on Climate Change and is leading the near-Zero Emissions Coal (nZEC) project with China. The nZEC proposal was announced at the EU-China Summit on 5 September.

The nZEC project aims to demonstrate coal-fired power generation with carbon capture and storage technology in China by 2020. The technology has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by some 90 per cent. This is in recognition that carbon dioxide emissions from China's increasing coal use are set to double by 2030.

We have just signed an agreement with the Chinese Government to take this work forward (21 December 2005). The signing of the UK-China MoU is a significant milestone under the EU-China Partnership on Climate Change and a high profile achievement for the UK's Presidency of the EU.

The UK actively promotes use of the Clean Development Mechanisms (COM) and COM related investments:

The UK in its capacity of Presidency of the EU negotiated a package of measures for strengthened COM in Montreal; these include significant institutional and financial measures to improve the transparency and efficiency of the approval process. In particular following COP11 and COP/MOP1 some $8.8 million in additional funding has been agreed for administrative expenses of the Clean Development Mechanism (COM) in 2006—more this year than in the previous four years of operation. The UK is a major contributor, and will contribute $740,000 this coming year.

The United Kingdom is also at the fore of the EU-India Initiative on Clean Development and Climate Change, with the aim of promoting cleaner technologies and their use.

During the early part of 2006 we are aiming to agree the Terms of Reference for the Technology Development and Transfer Study and we are hopeful that my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, may be able to formally launch the project on her visit in March.

Elsewhere, the UK supports research, which will help developing countries deal with climate change. Current research includes an assessment of how to improve climate modelling and monitoring for Africa, and two separate investigations into the impacts of climate change on Chinese and Indian agriculture.

Illegal Trade (Wildlife)

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) with which internet service providers the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit has held discussions on the illegal trade in wildlife; when these discussions took place; and what assessment she has made of the steps taken by internet service providers to combat such trades; [40745]

(2) which internet service providers have made commitments to the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit to combat the illegal trade in endangered species; [41139]

(3) what commitment the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit has received from e-Bay about combating the illegal trade in endangered species on its website. [41140]

Jim Knight: Details of the relationships between the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit and internet service providers (including individual websites such as e-Bay) are confidential and I am unable to provide any detailed information. I agree with the hon. Member that this is an important issue. But discussions are taking place, and progress is being made.

Live Animal Exports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the *(a)* National Farmers Union, *(b)* Farmers Union of Wales and *(c)* National Sheep Association on re-started live exports of sheep and cattle. [41512]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra Ministers have had a number of discussions with various organisations on this subject.

Nappies

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental effects of disposing of disposable nappies in landfill. [39555]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency's recently published 'Life Cycle Assessment' has helped to provide an understanding of the environmental impact of disposables and the traditional type of re-usable nappy. The main conclusion of the study is that the overall environmental impact of disposable and reusable nappies is similar.

From a waste management perspective, Government's view is that a reduction in the use of disposable nappies is one of many ways, which will help the UK to meet tough EU landfill directive targets.

Open Country

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to amend the definition of open country in section 1(2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to include coastal land. [42539]

Jim Knight: We are aiming for public consultation on this issue in October 2006.

Pet Fairs

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to ban pet fairs. [40732]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have been in contact with interested parties, both for and against the banning of pet fairs, in order to prepare proposals in relation to these events. We have now had an opportunity to consider the responses to this first consultation and our proposal to license pet fairs is detailed in a Regulatory Impact Assessment which DEFRA published alongside the Animal Welfare Bill. We also intend to undertake a wider public consultation before any legislation in this area is finally introduced.

Piers and Harbour Order (Bembridge Harbour) Confirmation Act 1963

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what decisions have been *(a)* sought and *(b)* obtained from her Department and its predecessors since 1997 under the Piers and Harbour Order (Bembridge Harbour) Confirmation Act 1963. [40459]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* As the reply given by my hon. Friend the Minster of State for the Department of Transport on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2315W, explained, responsibility for granting consents under various local harbours legislation where the approval of the Secretary of State is required, was transferred to this Department with effect from 1 October 2004.

The Department's Marine Consents and Environment Unit has no record of any application for consent, or of any approvals being given, under the Piers and Harbour Order (Bembridge Harbour) Confirmation Act 1963 since that date.

Racehorses

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has held with *(a)* animal welfare organisations, *(b)* the Jockey Club and *(c)* others, about the whipping of racehorses. [40733]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not held any recent discussions with animal welfare organisations, the Jockey Club or others about the whipping of racehorses.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the animal welfare implications of the whipping of racehorses; and if she will make a statement. [40734]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not evaluated or commissioned any studies on the animal welfare implications of the whipping of racehorses.

Any person or organisation may initiate proceedings under the Protection of Animals Act 1911, where there is reason to believe that unnecessary suffering has been caused to a racehorse.

Ragwort Control Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the Ragwort Control Act 2003. [40998]

Jim Knight: The central part of the Ragwort Control Act is the publication of a code of practice on how to prevent the spread of ragwort. The code was published in July 2004 and provides comprehensive guidance on how to develop a cost-effective and strategic approach to weed control. It includes advice on the identification of Common Ragwort, risk assessment and priorities for control, the suitability and efficacy of control methods, environmental considerations and health and safety issues. The code of practice aims to reduce the risk of ragwort poisoning in horses and other livestock. It has been made widely available to individual land managers and also land owning institutions, such as local authorities.

The code of practice provides a yardstick against which compliance with an enforcement notice served under the Weeds Act 1959 can be measured. Together with Defra's revised procedures for investigating complaints about injurious weeds, the code of practice has enable Defra to make better use of the statutory measures available under the Weeds Act. In 2005, 69 enforcement notices were issued. Prior to the introduction of the code and the revised procedures, enforcement notices were rarely issued, if ever.

Sustainable Development

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken to ensure maximum recycling of *(a)* Christmas wrapping paper and *(b)* Christmas trees. [41540]

Mr. Bradshaw: Support for local authorities who wish to run a Christmas recycling scheme is provided through the Waste and Resources Action programme's (WRAP) 'Recycle Now' campaign, funded by Defra. The support includes the use of artwork, advertising templates and PR materials.

The WRAP website also provides advice to members of the public on how to reduce/recycle waste, including cards, wrapping paper, trees and food, arising from Christmas.

Tuberculosis Test

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what appeal procedures are in place against the results of the tuberculosis test when a vet makes an error in administering the test. [R] [41181]

Mr. Bradshaw: Testing, techniques and methods of interpretation are tightly prescribed in EU law. To prevent errors, rigorous training procedures are in place for those authorised to carry out bovine tuberculosis testing work. Any errors in administering the test would be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in what circumstances her Department would not approve the use of a private tuberculin test; and in how many cases the use of such a test has been refused in the last two years. [41231]

Mr. Bradshaw: In the case of statutory tuberculin testing of cattle, any request to release tuberculin for a further private test will always be declined by the Department. Approval for private tests is generally granted in the context of a test for purchaser assurance, or as a condition for cattle export in herds not subjected to tuberculosis restrictions.

Information on the number of applications for private tests rejected by the state veterinary service is not held by the Department.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to introduce polymerase chain reaction testing to reinforce the tuberculosis test in cases where reactors are found. [41233]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are continuing to fund projects at the Veterinary Laboratories Agency to develop methods (including polymerase chain reaction-PCR) for detecting *Mycobacterium bovis* in clinical samples. PCR methods potentially offer extra flexibility and speed in confirming *M. Bovis* in post-mortem cattle samples. So far, however, PCR has not shown itself to be superior in terms of sensitivity, specificity or overall reliability to conventional culture.

At present it is unrealistic to consider PCR methods as a viable alternative to the existing primary surveillance tool for TB in live cattle (i.e. the tuberculin skin test) or to other ancillary ante-mortem tests that are used when skin test reactors are found.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons her Department does not use the gamma interferon test to support tuberculosis tests. [41235]

Mr. Bradshaw: The use of the tuberculin skin test and the gamma interferon blood test in parallel has the potential to significantly increase the detection of infected cattle in herds where TB has been confirmed. Defra does use the gamma interferon test in identified problem TB herds at a rate of about 6,000 animal tests a year. EU legislation allows the blood test only to be used to supplement the skin test.

Preparations are now being made for wider use of the gamma interferon test, in prescribed circumstances. A working group has been established to prepare and deliver a policy for increased use of the test.

Waste Management

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will exclude tallow from the waste incineration directive. [41304]

Mr. Bradshaw: If the tallow concerned is waste as defined by the waste framework directive, it does not lie within the competence of any member state of the European Union unilaterally to exclude its incineration or co-incineration from the scope of the waste incineration directive.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of household charges for waste collection as a method of increasing participation in recycling. [40465]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department's work on variable household charging and household incentives for waste recycling and reduction is based on the body of existing, publicly available, research, supplemented by investigation into specific examples of such activity and by specially commissioned research and pilot schemes on household incentives in England.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she will be taking to ensure *(a)* packaging producers and *(b)* compliance schemes contribute appropriately to meeting UK packaging waste recycling targets each year. [40469]

Mr. Bradshaw: Packaging producers already have legal obligations under the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2005 to recover and recycle specified tonnages of packaging waste each year based on the amount of packaging that goes through their business. A producer will be committing an offence if he fails to discharge his obligations under these regulations. However, producers may join compliance schemes, which take on the producers' legal obligations to recover and recycle packaging waste.

Water Consumption

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the changes have been in water consumption since 1980, broken down by sewerage company service areas. [38972]

Mr. Morley: The earliest figures we hold for average household water consumption are for 1995–96. The following table shows water company estimates of average daily household consumption in litres per head per day for 1995–96 and 2004–05. Further details are contained in the Ofwat 'Security of supply, leakage and the efficient use of water' report, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

	1995–96	*2004–05*
Anglian	152	143
Bournemouth and West Hants	178	167
Bristol	160	153
Cambridge	152	148
Dee Valley	160	145
Dwr Cymru	150	151
Folkestone and Dover	167	159
Mid Kent	166	167
Northumbrian North	148	146
Northumbrian South	171	158
Portsmouth	170	159
Severn Trent	140	132
South East	181	173
South Staffordshire	146	146
South West	161	161
Southern	160	157
Sutton and East Surrey	183	173
Tendring Hundred	148	125
Thames	158	159
Three Valleys	177	178
United Utilities	142	142
Wessex	148	146
Yorkshire	137	145
Industry average	152	150

Whaling (Japan)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps have been taken to ensure that Japan is aware of the UK's views on its increased scientific whaling within the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary; and if she will make a statement. [41470]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK Government, in common with those of a majority of International Whaling Commission (IWC) members, has regularly criticised Japanese scientific whaling programmes in both the North Pacific (JARPN) and the Southern Ocean (JARPA) as being of little scientific value and urged Japan to terminate them forthwith.

Prior to last year's annual meeting of the IWC (IWC57), the UK participated in an Australian led demarche of 18 countries objecting to Japan's proposed expansion of JARPA. This drew attention to a draft IWC Resolution Proposed by Australia and co-sponsored by the UK, which was subsequently adopted during IWC57; this resolution urges the Government of Japan to revise its JARPA II scientific whaling programme so that any information needed to meet scientific objectives is obtained using non-lethal means.

I issued a press notice on 11 November urging Japan not to proceed with their JARPA II programme. The statement condemned the Japanese plans in the Antarctic stating that

"Japan is flying in the face of world opinion"

and that

"This slaughter has little or no basis in science".

Later this month the UK and a number of other countries will take high level diplomatic action in Tokyo protesting in the strongest possible terms our objection to the continuation of their whaling activities.

Wildlife Rescue Centres

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what support her Department makes available to wildlife rescue centres. [41516]

Jim Knight: Defra does not fund individual wildlife rescue centres.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Archiving

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) if the Commission will take steps to establish a searchable archive on the parliamentary *(a)* intranet and *(b)* internet of the (i) meetings of (A) Standing Committees and (B) Select Committees and (ii) Sittings of the House that were webcast in each of the last three sessions of Parliament; and if he will make a statement; [41732]

(2) if he will list the meetings of *(a)* standing and *(b)* Select Committees that were webcast in the last session of Parliament for which information is available. [41766]

Nick Harvey: Since January 2004 the webcasting service has provided audio-coverage of all Select and Standing Committee meetings which are not televised but which are being held in public, as well as of televised meetings. Ignoring the period between the general election and the summer recess, an average of 26 Commons Committees, five Lords Committees and two Joint Committees have been webcast each week in the current session. Of these, an average of 10 Commons Committees and one Lords Committee are webcast as "television"; the rest are webcast as audio. A full list could be compiled only at disproportionate expense.

www.parliamentlive.tv offers an online, on-demand searchable archive of coverage of all meetings which have been "webcast" over the internet and intranet for two weeks following transmission. Webcast committee coverage which has been televised is then held by the Parliamentary Recording Unit indefinitely and can be made available on request in a number of modern formats, including online. The business case currently being prepared for a radical redesign of the parliamentary website will include options for improvements to the accessibility of audio and video material.

E-mail

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) what restrictions apply to *(a)* individuals and *(b)* pressure groups and other organisations e-mailing hon. Members at their parliamentary e-mail accounts; and if he will make a statement; [41638]

(2) whether the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (SI 2426) will apply to pressure groups wishing to e-mail all hon. Members at their parliamentary e-mail accounts; and if he will make a statement. [41639]

Nick Harvey: PICT delete all known "SPAM e-mail" from incoming messages and known "scams" directed at Members. No attempt is made to filter e-mail beyond this. Members can make local arrangements to identify and block known senders of unwanted e-mail on an individual basis.

The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 prohibit use of unsolicited electronic mail for the purposes of direct marketing, except when it is with the recipient's consent. The remedies for those in receipt of such electronic mail are set out in the regulations.

Medical Facilities

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what medical facilities are available in the Palace of Westminster for *(a)* hon. Members' staff, *(b)* hon. Members and *(c)* visitors to the Palace; and if he will make a statement. [41733]

Nick Harvey: Within the Palace of Westminster itself, a practice nurse is available from 9 am to 5 pm at the medical suite located in the lower waiting hall, offering health advice and a minor treatment service. These services are available to all passholders. The practice nurse also assists with medical emergencies and cases of ill health whether they involve passholders or visitors to the Palace.

There are approximately 180 qualified first aiders across the parliamentary estate (including security personnel and staff from both Houses), of whom around 80 are trained defibrillator operators. Appropriately trained staff have access to an Epipen for emergency use in cases of anaphylactic shock.

The parliamentary Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Service (OHSWS) offers a range of services, including medical screening for Members. Further details can be found on the parliamentary intranet at http://dfaweb.parliament.uk/members/medservs/medical.htm.Information, brochures and leaflets are available from OHSWS and information packs were distributed to all Members and Peers following the 2005 summer recess.

Parliamentary Book Shop

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission whether it is possible for members of the public to order non-parliamentary publications from the Parliamentary Book Shop; and if he will make a statement. [41765]

Nick Harvey: Non-parliamentary publications published by the official publisher, The Stationery Office Limited, are available for sale from the Parliamentary Bookshop, or can be ordered if not in stock. But those documents classified as non-parliamentary publications which are items available free of charge from originating Government Departments and agencies or solely via download from their websites are not sold in the Parliamentary Bookshop.

Parliamentary Information Management System

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on the progress of the Parliamentary Information Management System project. [41734]

Nick Harvey: The PIMS project's aims were to provide easy access to parliamentary information for all users of the parliamentary intranet, by creating a new infrastructure for the storage, search, retrieval and management of parliamentary information held in the two Libraries. This would replace and extend the POLIS databases that had been used by the two Libraries for over 20 years, and provide a platform on which the services available to Members of both Houses of Parliament and the public might be developed further.

The first services went live in December 2004 supporting Commons Library inquiry handling. The main services came on stream in April 2005 with facilities for search and retrieval of material and content management. There were some initial difficulties with maintaining the currency of information in the system, and a programme of technical changes designed to improve performance was put in place and completed in November 2005. Further enhancements are to be made over the next few months before the project concludes in the spring of 2006.

A separate project is also under way to develop the parliamentary intranet building on the PIMS technology infrastructure. In addition, a business case is being prepared for a radical redesign of the Parliament website.

Postage Costs

Sarah Teather: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many hon. Members have had to pay back postage costs to the House in each of the last five years. [41161]

Nick Harvey: It is not possible to separate the figures for postage and stationery, as repayments may cover both. The number of Members repaying the House, either on their own initiative or following a request from the House authorities, for the use of either stationery or postage in each of the past four years for which there are reliable records is as follows:

	Number of Members
2002	29
2003	30
2004	34
2005	34

Strategic Plan

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) when the Strategic Plan for the House of Commons Administration was last updated; and if he will make a statement; [41735]

(2) if he will make a statement on the progress of each of the four core tasks set out on page 61 of HC 65; what discussions he has had with stakeholders about implementation of each of the four core tasks; and if he will make a statement; [41763]

(3) what discussions he has had with stakeholders about implementation of Objective *(a)* 1, *(b)* 2 and *(c)* 3 in the Corporate Business Plan; and if he will make a statement. [41767]

Nick Harvey: A new outline Strategic Plan, covering the period 2006 to 2011 was agreed by the Commission in July 2005. The text is available via the Commission's intranet and internet pages. This new plan confirms that the primary purpose of the House Service is to enable the House and its Members to perform their parliamentary duties effectively. Beyond this it has a duty to promote public understanding of Parliament's work and role through the provision of information and access. The plan also sets out six priority areas for the period 2006 to 2011: accommodation and works, human resources, information for the public, information management and ICT, planning and management and security. For each of these areas the board of management has developed a detailed statement of its aims for the planning period. These have been incorporated in the 2006 Corporate Business Plan.

The previous strategic plan identified four on-going core tasks and eight developmental objectives for the period covered by the plan: 2001–02 to 2005–06. Pages 15–48 of the 2004–05 Commission Annual Report [HC65 2005–06] provide a description of performance against each of the core tasks. A further statement on performance will be provided in the 2005–06 Annual Report. The views of Members and other stakeholders on the implementation of elements of both the core tasks and the development objectives have been expressed in a number of ways, including reports and advice from the Administration Committee and its predecessors in the last Parliament and the Modernisation Committee, and the 2003 Survey of Services. It is anticipated that a further survey of services will be conducted during the current Parliament.

Furthermore, there have been three hour debates in Westminster Hall on each of the two most recent annual reports, in December 2004 and November 2005, and the Commission hopes that this pattern of annual debate will continue.

Vote Bundle

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how *(a)* members of the public and *(b)* public libraries may purchase the vote bundle; and if he will make a statement. [41764]

Nick Harvey: Members of the public and public libraries may purchase the vote bundle from the official distributor of parliamentary and Government publications, The Stationery Office Ltd., or from the Parliamentary Bookshop. Public libraries qualify for a subsidy on their purchases under the Government's public library access scheme.

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the retail cost of the vote bundle is per printed page; and what the retail cost per page was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2004. [41768]

Nick Harvey: The current retail cost of the vote bundle per printed page is 18p and has been held at that price since before 1997.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his plans for the deployment of additional British troops to Afghanistan. [38663]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made on 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 41WS.

A statement will be made to the House should the United Kingdom decide to commit additional forces to the international security assistance force (ISAF) in 2006.

Armed MOD Police

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will set out the *(a)* training programme and *(b)* rules of engagement for armed MOD police who guard (i) Aldermaston, (ii) Faslane and (iii) other UK departmental sites; and if he will make a statement. [40735]

Mr. Touhig: The training programme for all Ministry of Defence police (MDP) firearms officers follows the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum that was introduced in February 2004. The curriculum identifies the training that should be delivered to firearms officers and was introduced by the code of practice on 'Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons'. Officers in Nuclear Guarding roles receive additional training to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Defence Joint service Publication 440 'Defence Manual of Security'.

MDP do not operate under 'Rules of Engagement' but are governed by the law relating to the use of force, as are all other UK police forces. The law is contained within:

Section 3 Criminal Law Act 1967 and Section 3 Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967

Section 117 Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and Article 88 Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989

Common Law

Human Rights Act, 1998

The four types of legislation listed apply to MOD police who guard Aldermaston, Faslane and other UK departmental sites.

British Base, Cyprus

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British service men and women are stationed in Cyprus. [42450]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to Tri Service Publication 6, Global Location of UK Regular Forces (TSP 6). This shows that as at 1 October 2005, there were 3,090 UK Regular Service Personnel posted to Cyprus.

Copies of TSP 6 are held in the Library of the House and also available on www.dasa.mod.uk

Civilian Detainees

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British civilian detainees of the Japanese did not receive the compensation because they had no blood link with the UK; and what estimate he has made of the cost of including them in the scheme. [41143]

Mr. Touhig: Until the Ministry of Defence has completed the review that I outlined in my statement to the House on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1119–28) I am unable to provide this information. I hope to make a further statement, on the outcome of the review, in February.

Courts Martial

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2202W, on courts martial, what role Private Gary Bartlam's commanding officer played in the process that led to the reduction of Private Bartlam's statement. [40438]

Mr. Ingram: The decision to reduce Private Bartlam's sentence was made by the Army Reviewing Authority and the Court Martial Appeal Court in the High Court. The commanding officer played no part in this process.

Decorations/Payments

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Hendon residents are *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* have received (i) the Veterans' Badge, (ii) the Suez Campaign Clasp, (iii) the Arctic Convoy Badge and (iv) ex-gratia payments as former Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees; and if he will make a statement. [41221]

Mr. Touhig: We do not have the information required to establish how many residents of Hendon might fulfil the eligibility criteria for the Armed Forces Veterans' Badge, the General Service Medal Suez Canal Zone Clasp, the Arctic Convoy Emblem and ex-gratia payments as former Far East Prisoners of War or Civilian Internees.

The veterans' badge scheme was launched in May 2004 and since April 2005 11 residents from Hendon have applied for and received the badge. There are no accurate records of geographicel issue available before April 2005.

The first General Service Medal Suez Canal Zone Clasp was issued around October 2003 and it is estimated that some 42,250 had been issued by 30 December 2005. Records are not maintained of the geographical issue of these clasps.

Production and issue of the Arctic Convoy Emblem has not yet started.

The Veterans Agency has received four claims from Hendon residents for an ex-gratia payment under the scheme for former Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees. Two claims have been paid and two rejected.

Departmental IT Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41269]

Mr. Touhig: Information on the number and cost of laptop computers bought in each year since 1997 is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information relating to the number and cost of mobile telephones is only available from 1999:

£ million

	Number	*Spend (ex VAT)*
1999	6,656	2.64
2000	8,964	2.66
2001	10,958	2.37
2002	13,808	3.40
2003	17,084	3.96
2004	22,029	3.98
2005	24,800	4.74

There are a small number of local agreements in place for which information is not available.

Illegal Drugs (RN Seizures)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 557, on illegal drugs (RN seizures), when he expects to be able to supply the remaining information. [41885]

Mr. Ingram: Most of the hurricane damage at the Joint Inter Agency Task Force South (JIATFS) in Key West, Florida, has now been repaired and I expect to be able to provide as much further information as is held by the JIATFS to the hon. Member by the end of this month.

Lieutenant-Colonel Blair Mayne

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will award a posthumous Victoria Cross to Lieutenant-Colonel Blair Mayne; and if he will make a statement. [41550]

Mr. Touhig: In 1946 the Government reviewed all actions and campaigns that took place during world war two and decided that after this date no further awards would be made. This remains the case to this day, and it would be impossible to second guess the decisions made by military commanders at the time. For that reason it is not possible to make a posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Lieutenant-Colonel Blair Mayne.

None of this lessens our appreciation for Lieutenant-Colonel Mayne's actions at the time, which were recognised with the award of a fourth Distinguished Service Order.

Maladministration

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many payments for maladministration have been made by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies, *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies and *(d)* other bodies for which his Department has responsibility in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [32240]

(2) when he expects to answer question 32240 tabled by the hon. Member for Yeovil on 24 November 2005. [40642]

Mr. Touhig: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Medals

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many General Service Medal Suez Canal Zone clasps for the period 16 October 1951 to 19 October 1954 have been issued; how many applications have still to be processed; on what date the first clasp was issued; and when he expects that the final award will be made. [41478]

Mr. Touhig: As at 30 December 2005, some 42,250 General Service Medal Suez Canal Zone clasps had been issued. A further 758 applications were waiting to be processed. The first clasp was issued in October 2003.

It is likely that a small number of applications from veterans or their relatives will continue to be received for many years to come.

While this means that it is impossible to predict when the final award will be made, the applications currently outstanding should be processed within two months.

Met Office

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many responses his Department received to the Met Office consultation about proposals to change its civil centre forecast production network; and how many responses were received from each UK political party. [28344]

Mr. Touhig: The Met Office received 166 responses to the consultation about proposals to change its civil forecast production network. Of these responses, 33 were from the Labour party, 20 from the Liberal Democrats, nine from the Conservatives, 12 from the Scottish National party and nine from the Democratic Unionist party.

Ministerial Visits

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times he has visited *(a)* Dacorum and *(b)* Hertfordshire in his official capacity in the last 12 months; and what the purpose was of each visit. [29923]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, in his former role as Secretary of State for Defence, opened the new MBDA facility in Stevenage on 6 April 2005. My noble Friend Lord Bach, the former Minister for Defence Procurement, visited Paradigm in Stevenage on 22 March 2005.

Since the General Election no Defence Ministers have visited the borough of Dacorum or the County of Hertfordshire.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003–04 and *(y)* 2004–05. [40086]

Mr. Touhig: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Reserve Forces

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many appeals against compulsory mobilisation under the Reserve Forces Act have been made in the last 12 months; and how many were successful. [41658]

Mr. Touhig: As at 11 January 2006, there has been one appeal made by a Reservist in the last 12 months against compulsory mobilisation under the Reserve Forces Act 1996. This was subsequently withdrawn.

Royal Flight

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) who is allowed to use the resources of the Royal Flight; on what criteria eligibility is based; and whether he has plans to alter these criteria; [42175]

(2) what plans he has for the future of the Royal Flight. [42176]

John Reid: No. 32 (The Royal) Squadron, based at RAF Northolt, is established for the support of military and government communications tasks in times of crisis and war. The Royal Household, Government Ministers and senior military officers may use irreducible spare capacity within this communications fleet when the aircraft are not being used to support named military operations or training. Such tasking is allocated according to seniority.

It is planned to replace the three commercially owned-RAF operated Twin-Squirrel Helicopters which form part of the fleet with three Agusta 109 Power helicopters under similar contractual arrangements in April.

Furthermore, an Independent Review of Royal Family and Ministerial Air Travel headed by Sir Peter Gershon is currently under way.

Royal Navy (Surface Fleet)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the Royal Navy's surface fleet is *(a)* at sea and *(b)* available to put to sea at a week's notice. [42049]

Mr. Ingram: On 12 January 2006, of the total commissioned Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships, 32 per cent. were at sea. A further 58 per cent. could put to sea at one week's notice.

Troubles (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of deaths in the recent period of the troubles in Northern Ireland that have been caused by armed forces personnel; and whether he intends to re-open investigations into these cases. [27355]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* The attribution of deaths in Northern Ireland is not a matter for the Ministry of Defence and it is for the Police Service of Northern Ireland to decide if they are to re-open investigations into deaths in Northern Ireland during the troubles.

UK-awarded Contracts

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department permits participation in UK-awarded contracts by firms that have engaged in activities that violate international humanitarian law. [35735]

Mr. Ingram: Violation of international humanitarian law is in law a matter of state culpability rather than of firms or companies. In awarding contracts, the Ministry of Defence's policy is to assess tenders against a number of criteria to evaluate the most suitable compliant tender providing value for money. A contract may not be placed with a company if there are reasonable doubts about its suitability.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth Control

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what research projects on *(a)* abortion, *(b)* contraception, *(c)* reproductive health and *(d)* the effects of coercive abortion on women have been commissioned by his Department in each of the last five years for which information is available; and what the publication arrangements were in each case. [41761]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not explicitly commissioned work on abortion , contraception and the effects of coercive abortion but we have commissioned five major Research Knowledge Programmes in the broad area of reproductive health for the period 1999–2005 for a total commitment of £10.6 million; (2000–01 £1 million; 2001–02 £1.9 million; 2002–03 £1.7 million; 2003–04 £2 million and 2004–05 £1.9 million). All of the programmes involve numerous research activities and smaller projects in Reproductive, Maternal and Sexual Health.

In 2005, DFID commissioned two research programme consortia for the period 2005–10 for a total of £5 million. The consortia involve a number of

different research activities in the broad areas of sexual reproductive health and rights and sexual reproductive health and HIV.

The aim of all of the programmes is to provide research that leads to better quality and a wider range of reproductive health services in developing countries.

Publication of material resulting from the programmes in appropriate journals, and other media, is the responsibility of the researchers.

Support is also provided to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the World Health Organisation Human Reproductive Health Programme and the UK's Medical Research Council.

Disaster Management

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what work his Department has undertaken to facilitate the exchange of disaster management expertise between the United Kingdom and each country affected by Hurricane *(a)* Ivan and *(b)* Emily. [42128]

Mr. Thomas: The three countries most seriously affected by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, were Grenada, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. In Grenada, we funded the provision of disaster management experts from Christian Aid UK and Oxfam UK, who worked closely on emergency projects with regional and local partners. For Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, the UK Government sent two humanitarian advisers to the region who provided initial emergency support to the relief efforts. The UK also funded Oxfam UK and Save the Children UK to send disaster management experts to Jamaica. Using this close network of partnerships helped in the exchange of disaster management expertise between the countries.

For the duration of the 2005 Hurricane season, DFID placed a Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Adviser in the region based in Barbados. The Adviser liaised with and provided advice to regional agencies and other development partners dealing with Disaster Risk Reduction and the continuing response to Hurricane Ivan. He also provided input to the two Caribbean Regional Donor groups for disaster coordination and response.

Following Hurricane Emily in July 2005, the Adviser visited Grenada and the island of Carriacou, to assess the damage and provide advice on the appropriate international response. This arrangement for the placing of UK expertise in the region will continue during the 2006 hurricane season.

The UK also funds a full-time Disaster Risk Reduction adviser to the Caribbean Overseas Territories. This Adviser provides ongoing expertise to these countries to strengthen and improve their disaster preparedness. He visited the Cayman Islands in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Ivan to advise on recovery planning.

At the regional level, after Hurricane Ivan the UK funded a technical review of hazard impacts and their effects on the built environment. DFID also contributed to the studies of the 2004 Hurricane season that underpinned the regional lesson learning conference held in Jamaica in April 2005.

HIV/AIDS

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department will provide in the next two years to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in Commonwealth of Independent States countries. [41699]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is supporting programmes to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in Central Asia, Ukraine and Russia. Details of commitments are as follows:

Central Asia:

DFID is providing £5.4 million over four years (2005–09) for a Central Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Programme, operating in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Programme will complement the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Regional HIV/AIDS projects in supporting the implementation of government strategies.

As part of the above work, DFID is also providing £1 million for the World Bank's Central Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Programme and £420,000 for the salaries of a Regional Policy Advisor and a Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor in the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) office in Almaty.

Ukraine:

DFID is providing £300,000 from May 2005 to May 2007, in support of the UNAIDS work with the Government of Ukraine to improve co-ordination of HIV/AIDS interventions. In addition DFID is providing 65,000. from September 2004 to September 2006, to support the work of the non-government Substance Abuse and AIDS Support Fund and to provide technical support to the UN Global Fund.

DFID has also provided £25,000 in August 2004 for an HIV/AIDS harm reduction awareness campaign in Crimea and £350,000 from September 2004 to September 2005 for work with the Ministry of Education to highlight HIV/AIDS issues in schools and among young people.

Russia:

DFID is providing £74,000 over 2006–07, comprising: (i) £22,000 in support of UNAIDS work with the Government of Russia; (ii) £47,000 to support a regional response to tackling HIV/AIDS in Nizhny Novgorod and (iii) £50,000 to disseminate findings from previous DFID funded research to help inform the Government of Russia's policies for tackling HIV/AIDS.

Horn of Africa

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the food situation in the Horn of Africa. [42213]

Hilary Benn: Poor rains in much of the Horn of Africa at the end of 2005 have left many communities who are dependent on farming and raising livestock in serious difficulties. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has issued a report saying that as many as 11 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti may require assistance in 2006. The severe food shortages in parts of these countries is sadly not a new phenomenon, and DFID has been responding with humanitarian assistance for many years. We are aware of the particular threat this year, the possibility that the current crisis may deepen, and that other areas may come to be affected.

DFID humanitarian advisers visited the worst affected areas in Kenya in November 2005, and visits to Somalia and Ethiopia are planned for early 2006.

This month DFID contributed £1 million to the World Food Programme for Somalia on top of the over £5 million we spent there on humanitarian interventions in 2005. This includes a number of health and nutrition operations in the worst affected parts of Southern Somalia.

In Ethiopia DFID made a commitment of £43 million in March 2005 to the cash and food aid based Productive Safety Net programme. This programme provides assistance to some of the poorest communities in Ethiopia. In December 2005 we announced a further £2.7 million for Kenya in response to the situation there.

DFID will continue to monitor the situation closely and we stand ready to provide additional support if necessary.

Hurricane Ivan

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with representatives of *(a)* the Government of Grenada and *(b)* the Government of the Cayman Islands concerning reconstruction efforts following Hurricane Ivan; and what funding his Department has (i) committed to these efforts and (ii) made available to date. [42129]

Mr. Thomas: Since Hurricane Ivan, DFID has remained closely engaged with the Government of Grenada. By December 2004, DFID had committed and fully disbursed £6.5 million of emergency assistance: £1 million was provided as emergency humanitarian support through partner agencies; £5.5 million was provided as emergency financial aid to help the Government meet their public sector salary obligations. In 2005, DFID committed a total of £325,000 to provide consultancy support in the forestry sector, a chartered surveyor to assess the damage done to the Governor-General's compound and the Parliament Buildings. With the US Agency for International Development, DFID co-financed debt advisers to develop proposals for the restructuring of Grenada's debt. In addition, our share of the European Commission humanitarian support and additional reconstruction funds was £1.18 million.

Most recently, both my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development and the Prime Minister, met Prime Minister Keith Mitchell in the lead up to and during the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Malta in November. During a meeting with Prime Minister Mitchell in May 2005, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State made it clear that DFID recognised the continuing reconstruction challenges facing Grenada, and he made a commitment that DFID would review the case for additional budget support to Grenada.

In November 2005, following the Government of Grenada's successful debt exchange offer to creditors and their work on a home-grown economic reform programme, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) judged the financing gap for 2005 to have been reduced to a limited and manageable level of about 1 per cent. of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Given this relative success we have decided not to offer further emergency financial aid to the Government of Grenada before March 2006. However, we remain open to the IMF's projections that the financial gap may widen dramatically in the next financial year and for a number of years after that, as the current construction industry boom subsides. We will continue to keep the situation under close review.

DFID provided some £250,000 to Cayman Islands for emergency supplies and services in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. We have not provided specific assistance for reconstruction. We understand, however, that the European Union is considering a request from the Cayman Islands Government for support to rebuild homes. DFID's focus has been aimed at improving and strengthening disaster preparedness in all UK Overseas Territories in the region. In the Cayman Islands, we also funded a study of the impact of Hurricane Ivan to help learn from the Cayman Islands' experience of handling the emergency.

Jordan

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided for projects in Jordan in each of the last five years; and how much such funding is planned for the 2005–06 financial year. [41178]

Hilary Benn: Jordan is now a middle income country that receives relatively large amounts of donor funding in relation to its levels of poverty. DFID has provided bilateral funding in the form of technical co-operation (i.e. support for projects) as well as other types of bilateral funding such as humanitarian assistance and debt relief. DFID's bilateral programme with Jordan closed in September 2005. DFID also provided funding to Jordan through our contributions to multilateral organisations including the EC and the World Bank, which we will continue to do.

million

	Technical co-operation	*Total bilateral programme*
2000–01	4.0	6.8
2001–02	2.3	6.4
2002–03	2.8	4.8
2003–04	1.2	4.2
2004–05	3.2	5.3

DFID is planning to provide £1.6 million in bilateral assistance to Jordan in 2005–06.

Lawful Activities

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what activities which were lawful before 1 May 2001 have since been made unlawful by legislation introduced by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [41636]

Hilary Benn: The only legislation introduced by DFID since 1 May 2002 was the International Development Act 2002, which put furthering poverty reduction at the heart of the Secretary of State's statutory powers. Subject to this overarching objective, as defined by the Act, it did not outlaw any specific activities. The restriction in the Act over how funds voted by Parliament can be used means, for example, that aid cannot be tied to the purchase of British goods and services.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support his Department is giving to the Palestinian Authority *(a)* to ensure the efficient running of the forthcoming elections and *(b)* to reconstruct Gaza. [41934]

Hilary Benn: The European Union (EU) has committed €14 million to enable the Palestinian Authority (PA) to prepare for elections, 18 per cent. of which is attributable to the UK. The core elements of the EU support are:

Assistance to the Palestinian Election Commission (€10 million);

Technical expertise on election operations (€1 million);

International observation of the election process (€2.5 million);

Assistance to voter and civic education (€350,000).

The UK Government are also assisting elections through the following projects:

Purchase of Ballot Papers (£45,000);

Media Monitoring of 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council Elections (£34,000);

Training of journalists and public awareness (£90,316).

The Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, Mr. James Wolfensohn, has identified the key issues for Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank to be an economic success for the Palestinians and to assure Israeli security. DFID is working closely with Mr. Wolfensohn's team and is providing assistance to help the PA develop a medium-term development plan—one of the key issues identified by Mr. Wolfensohn. DFID is also providing substantial financial support (£15 million in 2005–06) to support Palestinian refugees in Gaza and elsewhere. This assistance, provided via the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), helps provide education, health, housing and social services to Palestinian refugees.

South and Central America

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to each south and central American country in each year since 1997. [42130]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) has provided the following bilateral assistance to countries in central and south America since 1997:

£

Country	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Argentine Republic	134,680	159,818	134,323	7,567	248	—	—	—
Bolivia	4,394,934	4,262,732	6,254,949	7,509,130	124,55,178	9,267,954	7,056,854	5,401,807
Brazil	7,015,501	7,476,778	6,377,947	6,519,084	6,863,875	10,093,041	69,101,54	5,027,700
Chile	1,142,963	1,028,865	409,758	8	95,688	145,359	351,152	436,715
Colombia	2,229,176	2,617,346	1,537,320	1,730,155	933,784	600,043	350,886	541,016
Costa Rica	303,551	211,251	116,580	182,649	115,527	70,200	121,541	17,057
Ecuador	1,515,036	1,099,063	748,381	540,702	275,016	363,430	192,595	158,797
El Salvador	211,396	299,428	318,278	1,820,249	430,527	338,025	106,956	74,627
Guatemala	403,878	478,834	370,539	318,577	419,549	289,340	236,938	196,060
Guyana	5,351,023	5,846,429	9,999,846	13,821,291	12,490,518	12,080,149	17,098,065	8,770,704
Honduras	1,164,920	2,580,147	1,790,996	1,373,493	1,219,649	1,180,571	910,066	959,736
Mexico	4,052,209	3,794,111	2,171,981	1,538,577	511,800	560,844	70,791	96,871
Nicaragua	1,010,750	1,995,860	1,153,282	636,107	612,847	1,373,255	1,029,110	1,774,679
Panama	427,199	366,384	324,478	233,543	154,872	34,908	—	—
Paraguay	203,739	275,148	255,310	178,888	93,626	65,728	—	4,860
Peru	3,961,338	3,635,181	4,392,858	4,158,829	7,998,299	3,225,252	2,807,442	3,990,316
Uruguay	224,416	253,555	251,664	—	—	—	—	—
Venezuela	178,596	183,764	937,524	36,311	—	—	—	—

Bilateral funding is also provided through regional assistance, which benefits a number of countries in the region:

£ thousand	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Americas regional	1,326	1,095	897	2,570	1,529	738	808	774
Central America	—	10,419	1,405	855	2,407	4,373	4,407	2,860
Latin America	346	853	174	218	526	1,450	1,369	1,929

In addition, DFID contributes through multi-lateral channels, particularly through the Inter American Development Bank, the World Bank, European Commission and the United Nations. Information on our contribution through multi-lateral channels is only available until 2003:

£ million

Country	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Argentina	1.6	2.6	3.7	3.3	15.7	0.6	0.6
Bolivia	9.4	8.6	2.4	6.6	11.7	0.8	22.8
Brazil	3.1	4.6	5.7	8.9	14.2	7.6	6.7
Chile	1.2	0.7	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.4	0.8
Colombia	1.5	1.3	1.6	2.4	2.1	1.8	2.5
Costa Rica	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Ecuador	1.1	1.6	1.3	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.3
El Salvador	2.1	2.3	1.4	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.4
Guatemala	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.4	2.6	3.7	2.5
Guyana	2.7	1.2	0.8	1.5	1.3	0.8	5.6
Honduras	5.4	5.6	5.1	4.7	12.7	1.8	6.7
Mexico	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	3.0	1.2	1.0
Nicaragua	6.0	10.9	6.0	10.8	10.0	3.3	21.5
Panama	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3
Paraguay	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.3
Peru	2.6	9.3	3.5	4.0	3.1	2.3	3.5
Uruguay	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
Venezuela	0.5	0.9	0.5	1.5	0.8	0.9	1.0

TRANSPORT

A180

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the remaining sections of the A180 in north east Lincolnshire to be resurfaced with low-noise materials; and if he will make a statement. [42588]

Dr. Ladyman: The remaining sections of the A180 will be resurfaced with quieter materials as follows: Croxton to Ulceby in 2008–09 and Barnetby to Croxton in 2009–10 when maintenance becomes due; this is subject to the availability of funding.

Administration Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total administrative costs of his core Department were in the last period for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39829]

Ms Buck: The total administration costs for the core Department for Transport, as shown in Note 10 of the Resource Accounts for 2004–05 (HC 476), were £152,559,000. All of this expenditure is 'identifiable' for the purposes of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) published by the Treasury.

Canvey Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will visit Canvey Island to assess the need for an additional access route for the island from the Northwick area; and if he will make a statement. [42221]

Dr. Ladyman: The need for an additional access road to Canvey Island is not at present a matter for assessment by the Secretary of State but one for consideration by the local planning and transport authorities. I understand that, accordingly, Essex county council is currently progressing work looking at the feasibility of a link between Canvey and Thurrock and expects to consider the preliminary results of these investigations in the spring.

Car Exhaust Pipes

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce legislation to require car manufacturers to ensure exhaust pipes on motor vehicles are fitted on the off-side; and if he will make a statement. [41992]

Dr. Ladyman: It would be difficult to impose legislation to require exhaust pipes to be positioned only on the off-side, bearing in mind the overall design constraints of individual vehicles, the economies of scale that would be lost and the conflict with European internal market objectives.

The effectiveness of such a measure would also be questionable given the significant reduction in exhaust pollutants that are now being achieved from new vehicles and which are set to reduce even further as emission standards are progressively tightened.

Crime Reports (London)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes were reported to British Transport Police in each of the last five years in *(a)* England, *(b)* London, *(c)* each London borough and *(d)* each London (i) underground, (ii) mainline and (iii) interchange station in relation to (A) violence against the person, (B) sexual offences, (C) theft of passenger property and (D) robbery, broken down by gender; and whether the crime was reported by a member of (1) the public and (2) rail staff in each case. [36625]

Derek Twigg: The information has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Cycling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities of pedestrians have been caused by cyclists *(a)* on the road, *(b)* on pavements and *(c)* off-road in each of the last five years. [41522]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of pedestrian fatalities in personal injury road accidents who were hit by cyclists on the road for the years 2000 to 2004 is shown in the table.

	Fatalities
2000	3
2001	0
2002	4
2003	4
2004	1

There were no pedestrian fatalities hit by a cyclist on the pavement during these years.

We have no information on who was to blame for these accidents.

Information on pedestrian fatalities hit by cyclists off-road is not available.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40283]

Ms Buck: The Department and its agencies have a flexible approach in helping staff meet work life balance commitments. Although the Department does not have a home working policy, other policies cover a variety of working patterns. These patterns include flexible working hours, staggered hours, part-time working and job share. In addition, requests to work from home on an ad hoc basis are subject to line agreement.

The table provides figures where available from both the central Department and its agencies.

	Figures
DfT C	1,2
DVLA	157
HA	74
MCA	2
VOSA	2
VGA	1
GCDA	2
DSA	2

[1] In the recent staff survey (DfT C only completed by 1,374 (77 per cent.) participants) revealed 838 (61 per cent.) staff members worked flexibly. Those who did work flexibly, went on to say that they worked from home once a week, 117 (14 per cent.). This however, is only an approximate figure as it is based on those who participated in the staff survey.
[2] No central figures available

European Council

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the implications for United Kingdom transport policy of the EU sustainable development strategy noted in the EU Council Communiqué, Part VI, on conclusion of the European Council on 15 to 16 December 2005. [41542]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the implications for United Kingdom transport policy of the Commission's proposal to review the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. This is with a view to playing a full part in the discussions that the Austrian presidency of the Council of the European Union will set-up during the first half of 2006.

Local Transport Plan (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with Gloucestershire county council on its proposals for public transport in its local transport plan with particular reference to buses. [41524]

Ms Buck: The Secretary of State and other Transport Ministers have not had any meetings with Gloucestershire county council about its local transport plan. Officials based in both the central Department for Transport and the Government office for the south west have met Gloucestershire county council officials about the development of the county council's local transport plan including about the potential role of buses in it, regularly during the last two years. Officials also met a number of Gloucestershire county council's members about the plan in June 2005.

M1

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason the M1 is being resurfaced between junctions 20 and 21; how long the work will take; and what the total cost is of the work. [41977]

Dr. Ladyman: The M1 between junctions 20 and 21 is being resurfaced for safety reasons. The existing surface was reaching the end of its useful life and represented an increasing hazard to road users.

In order to minimise traffic disruption the resurfacing is being carried out in several phases. The first phase started in July 2005 and was completed in December. The second phase started on 4 January and is due for completion in March. Other phases will follow subject to the availability of funding.

The total cost of the first two phases is £9.8 million.

M6

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department is monitoring the impact of the M6 toll on the economy; and if he will make a statement. [41009]

Dr. Ladyman: No monitoring is being undertaken by the Department on the economic impact of the M6 toll as the impact of any major new infrastructure is only likely to show over a longer period. We will consider whether to make such an assessment after a period of about five years from opening.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what timetable the Highways Agency has set for erecting the sign for Shrewsbury on the M6. [41561]

Dr. Ladyman: Negotiations are currently under way between the Highways Agency, Shropshire county council and Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council about funding for this sign. Assuming agreement is reached, the sign should be erected during the first part of the 2006–07 financial year.

Motorway Resurfacing

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria are used when deciding whether to resurface a motorway for the purpose of reducing tyre noise; whether such work is always held in abeyance until the road surface in question needs replacing; what the typical additional cost of such work is over normal resurfacing; and if he will make a statement. [41978]

Dr. Ladyman: During the assessment of the Highways Agency's Spending Review 2004 submission, Ministers agreed that the resurfacing of concrete roads ahead of maintenance need, for noise reasons, would not be allocated funding.

The Highways Agency resurfaces sections of carriageway for the purpose of reducing tyre noise where there is a maintenance requirement, where it is required on safety grounds (due to loss of surface texture required for skid resistance in the wet), or as a result of general wear and tear caused by traffic.

The carriageway maintenance programme is developed on a whole life cost basis, identifying the appropriate maintenance treatment at the optimum time. When resurfacing a carriageway, it is standard Highways Agency practice to use quieter surfacing materials. There is no additional cost for these materials compared with conventional surfacing materials as they can be laid quickly; therefore, the overall laying costs are a lot less.

Railways

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, what mechanisms exist in the franchising process for train operating companies to ensure that an appropriate level of risk is transferred to the private sector; and what level of risk he deems appropriate. [39386]

Derek Twigg: The allocation of risk between a train operating company and the Department is governed by the franchise agreement. Following publication of the Future of Rail White Paper, extensive negotiations were undertaken with the Association of Train Operating Companies and a standard form franchise agreement was agreed having taken legal, economic, commercial and financial advice. The standard agreement reflects the optimum risk balance in the light of that that advice.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, what mechanisms exist to ensure that the tendering process for franchises of train operating companies is competitive. [39373]

Derek Twigg: The franchise replacement process follows Office of Government Commerce (OGC) procurement guidelines and is subject to review by independent OGC-appointed reviewers. Selected projects are additionally subject to annual audits.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what customer usage is on intercity rail lines; and what customer usage was in 2000. [40843]

Derek Twigg: In 2004–05, 85 million journeys were undertaken on long distance train services compared with 70 million journeys in 2000–01.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received about proposals for fare increases on the Hastings to Charring Cross line; and if he will make a statement. [39255]

Derek Twigg: No representations have been received.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends *(a)* to announce the outcome of the "Railways for All" consultation and *(b)* to publish a strategy for rail accessibility. [41599]

Ms Buck: We propose to publish the strategy shortly. A summary of the consultation responses to the draft strategy document, "Railways for All", will be published on the Department's website at that time.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has authorised negotiations with rail franchisees to secure agreements to invest in additional and higher quality rolling stock in return for an extension to the franchise period. [39332]

Derek Twigg: There are only two franchises in relation to which discussions on extending the franchise beyond its current term are taking place. These are Silverlink and Central Trains franchises. Increased investment in rolling stock does not form part of these discussions.

Road Accidents (Costs)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the most recent estimated cost of a road accident resulting in *(a)* serious and *(b)* slight injuries is (i) in total and (ii) broken down by (A) lost output, (B) medical assistance and ambulance costs and (C) human costs. [42709]

Dr. Ladyman: The more recent values used to estimate the benefits of the prevention of road accidents are set out in the "Highways Economic Note No. 1: 2004 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of Road Accidents and Casualties" which can be found on the DfT website.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_610642.hcsp

The Highways Economics Note disaggregates the elements of the value according to whether they relate specifically to casualties or accidents. The casualty-related values are lost output, medical and ambulance costs, and human costs. The costs of police, property damage and the administrative costs of accident insurance are accident-related costs. The total value of prevention of an accident is the aggregate of both sets of values.

The following table illustrates the average estimated costs of a road accident. Total casualty costs represent the sum of the casualty-related elements, while total value of prevention is the sum of casualty-related costs and accident-related costs.

Table: Average value of prevention per accident by severity (excluding fatalities) and element of costs (£ million June 2004)

	Injury severity	
	Serious	*Slight*
Lost output	21,379	2,550
Medical and ambulance	12,806	1,082
Human costs	145,370	12,151
Total casualty costs	179,555	15,783
Total value of prevention	184,269	18,496

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the most recent estimate is of the cost of a road accident, excluding the cost of deaths and casualties, broken down by *(a)* police costs, *(b)* insurance costs and *(c)* costs arising from damage to property. [42710]

Dr. Ladyman: The more recent values used to estimate the benefits of the prevention of road accidents are set out in the "Highways Economic Note No. 1: 2004 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of Road Accidents and Casualties" which can be found on the DfT website.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/paae/dft_rdsafety_610642.hcsp

The Highways Economics Note disaggregates the elements of the value according to whether they relate specifically to casualties or accidents. The accident-related costs include costs of police and property damage and the administrative costs of accident insurance. These costs are not specific to casualties.

The following table illustrates the average estimated costs per accident minus the casualty specific costs.

Table: Average value of prevention per accident by severity and element of costs (£ million June 2004)

	Injury severity		
	Fatal	*Serious*	*Slight*
Police costs	1,607	219	49
Insurance and admin	254	158	96
Damage to property	9,465	4,336	2,569
Total accident costs	11,326	4,713	2,714

Road Closures (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the occasions when the *(a)* A13 and *(b)* A127 between the M25 and Southend were closed in each direction for 30 minutes or longer during each of the last five years for which information is available; and what the (i) reason for and (ii) duration was of each such closure. [40982]

Dr. Ladyman: Only the section of A13 eastwards from M25 to its junction with the A1089 (to Tilbury) is a trunk road, for which the Secretary of State is directly responsible in his capacity as highway authority. The following table provided by the Highways Agency shows the total number of closures of 30 minutes or more for each carriageway since 2002. The precise duration of closure was recorded in only seven instances.

The remainder of the A13, and the whole length of the A127, is the responsibility of Essex county council, Thurrock borough council and Southend-on-Sea borough council as local highway authorities for the sections of the routes in their respective areas.

Date	*Carriageway*	*Duration*	*Reason for Closure*
24 January 2002	Eastbound	—	Oil Spillage
9 June 2002	Eastbound	—	Fatal Accident
12 July 2002	Eastbound	—	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1
30 July 2002	Eastbound	—	Flooding
8 August 2002	E/N Slip	—	Oil Spillage
13 August 2002	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
11 November 2002	Eastbound	1 hr 45 mins	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1
20 March 2003	Eastbound	—	Oil Spillage
14 May 2003	Westbound	—	Vehicle Fire
15 May 2003	Eastbound	—	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1
6 July 2003	Westbound	—	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1
14 July 2003	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
22 August 2003	Westbound	—	Vehicle Fire
14 September 2003	East and West	1 hr	Abandoned Vehicle/Suspected Package—Security Alert
18 October 2003	East and West	30 mins	Lamp column in dangerous position following Road Traffic Accident
28 October 2003	Eastbound	—	Total Closure
10 December 2003	Westbound	—	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 3
13 December 2003	Eastbound	4 hrs	Accident/ Damage to nearside barrier
20 December 2003	Eastbound	—	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1
2 March 2004	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
20 March 2004	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
30 March 2004	Eastbound	—	Oil Spillage
6 October 2004	Westbound	2 hrs	Serious Injury Accident
18 December 2004	Westbound	3 hrs 15 mins	Vehicle Fire
7 April 2005	Eastbound	—	Oil Spillage
17 May 2005	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
14 July 2005	Westbound	—	Oil Spillage
12 October 2005	Eastbound	—	Oil Spillage
27 October 2005	Eastbound	2 hrs	Multiple Road Traffic Collision
1 November 2005	Westbound	5 hrs 45 mins	Injury Road Traffic Accident Lane 1

Road Deaths (Sunderland)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road deaths there have been in the Sunderland council area in the last three years. [42442]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatalities in personal injury accidents, in the Sunderland local authority for the last three years for which data are available are given in the table.

	Fatalities[1]
2002	10
2003	8
2004	8

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident. Excludes confirmed suicides, death from natural causes and injuries to pedestrians with no vehicle involvement (eg a fall on the pavement).

Road Detrunking Programme

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his road detrunking programme. [42410]

Dr. Ladyman: The policy of transferring non-core trunk roads (detrunking) to local highway authorities was first set out in the White Paper "A New Deal for Transport" published in July 1998. Detrunking allows the Highways Agency to concentrate on the operation of the strategic trunk road network, whilst enabling local authorities to consider their own priorities for the improvement of non-core routes. The aim has been to transfer some 3,200 km (30 per cent.) of the trunk road network (as it was in April 1999) to local authorities in a phased programme. To date more than 80 per cent. (around 2,628 km) of the programme has been completed since April 2001. Prior to detrunking, the Highways Agency and local authorities agree the transfer of an appropriate level of funding for annual maintenance and in some cases for outstanding capital projects.

During the financial year 2005–06, six routes have been detrunked. They are:

A7 in Cumbria (between Carlisle boundary and the Scottish border)

A40 in Gloucestershire (between the Oxfordshire County Council boundary and the M5)

A48 in Gloucestershire (between A40 Highnam and the Welsh border)

A417 in Gloucestershire (from M40 to A40)

A500 in Cheshire (from Nantwich bypass to M6 junction 16)

A6514 in the City of Nottingham (from A52 to A60)

Road Improvements

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many roads have been widened in the last five years to ease bottlenecks. [40575]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 11 January 2006 (UIN 40570) which provides information on the Highways Agency trunk roads that have been widened in each of the last five years.

The following table lists local authority roads that have been widened (at a cost of over £5 million) to ease bottlenecks in the last five years:

	Scheme
2000	—
2001	—
2002	Bridgewater Northern Distributor Road
	A22 Dualling Nightingale Farm—Polegate
	City Link/White City Interchange
	A5063 Trafford (The Quays to White City)
2003	A689 Sedgefield—Wynyard
2004	Manchester-Salford Inner Relief Route (Regent Road to Gore Street)
	Stockport: Portwood roundabout under junction 27 of the M60
2005	North West Taunton Package
	A386 Plymouth Northern Corridor
	A228 Main Road to Ropers Lane
	Improved access to North Manchester Business Park (Central Park)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list trunk roads given lower noise surfaces in each of the last five years. [40577]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency aims to resurface the strategic road network with quieter materials as structural or safety related maintenance becomes due.

Highway maintenance is carried out on a whole life cost basis, implementing the appropriate maintenance treatment at the optimum time. The requirement to carry out carriageway maintenance is based on the condition of an identified length of carriageway. Consequently, maintenance is not carried out for complete lengths of individual roads, but only where it has been identified as being required as part of the whole life cost maintenance solution.

The following table shows the number of roads where the Highways Agency has implemented lengths of lower noise surfacing in the last five years, together with the number of lane kilometres (Lkms) treated (up to 21 December 2005):

	Number of roads	*Total Lkms*
2001	45	638.4
2002	54	951.5
2003	62	1237.4
2004	68	912.2
2005[1]	45	778.4

[1] Details taken from HAPMSystem on 21 December 2005, details for 2005 are therefore incomplete.

A list showing individual roads that were treated in each of the years in the above table has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on maintenance for trunk roads in each year since 2000–01. [40578]

Dr. Ladyman: The motorways and trunks roads of the strategic road network are managed by the Highways Agency, an executive Agency of the Department for Transport. The reporting of the spend on these roads is

not broken down between motorways and trunk roads. The figures for the spend on the maintenance of these roads since 2000–01 are, in £ million:

	Motorways and trunk roads
2000–01	545
2001–02	603
2002–03	656
2003–04	863
2004–05	857

Road Safety

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list those companies supporting his Department's THINK! road safety campaign; and if he will make a statement. [40979]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department's 2005 Annual Report to Parliament (Command Paper CM6527) listed the companies who supported the THINK! road safety campaign in 2004. Details of companies who are currently supporting the campaign are listed:

Drink Drive

Mitchells and Butler
Spirit Group (now owned by Punch Taverns)
Punch Taverns
Enterprise Inns
Regent Inns (Jongelurs and Walkabout)
The Union Pub Company
Pathfinder Pubs
JD Wetherspoons
Beefeater (Whitbread)
Auto Trader
Cabana Soft Drinks
Threshers
Scooterman
ComCab (Zingos)
Scoot
The Portman Group
The Publican
Hardys and Hansons
George Gale (now owned by Fullers)
Fullers
Youngs Pubs
Greene King
Shepherd Neame

Driver Tiredness

Moto
RoadChef
Welcome Break
First Motorway
Rocket Fuel
MultiMap
Little Chef
Philips Maps
M6 Toll Road
Auto Trader
RAC
The Caravan Club
CSMA
What Car?
Merlin Entertainment (Sea Life Centres)
Old English Inns

Child Road Safety

Asda
Fun Radio (Gcap)
Dairy Farmers of Britain
3M

Motorbikes

Hein Gericke
Arai
Bennetts
Suzuki and Rizla Suzuki
Ducati and Airwaves Ducati
Yamaha and Virgin Yamaha
Honda and HM Plant Honda
Vespa
Kawasaki and Hawk Kawasaki
Dorna
Motorcycle Circuit Racing Control Board
Feridax
Shoei
Spyke
Knox Back Protectors

The THINK! Road Safety campaign has received in-kind rather than cash donations from these partners. I welcome this third party support. It provides a very valuable and effective way of communicating key campaign messages, using practical and immediate solutions, through commercial brands.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will include in the forthcoming Road Safety Bill measures to introduce additional penalties for those who continue to use hand-held mobile phones while driving. [42194]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Safety Bill contains provisions to make the offence of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving endorsable with. three penalty points. The Fixed Penalty Notice will become 60. For those convicted in court, the available penalties will include penalty points and a discretionary disqualification as well as a fine of up to £1,000 (£2,500 in the case of a goods vehicle or a bus/coach).

Road Traffic Congestion

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the change in the level of road traffic congestion since 2000–01. [40568]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government announced in the White Paper The Future of Transport (July 2004) that it was replacing the indicator set in Transport 2010: The Ten Year Plan (July 2000). The new indicators, relating to journey time reliability on Highways Agency roads and person movements on local authority roads, will be measured from 2005–06 onwards. It is not possible to compare the new congestion indicators with the one used in 2000.

Roads

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on levels of road traffic miles travelled and road traffic congestion in *(a)* Harborough constituency and *(b)* the East Midlands Government office area. [38842]

Dr. Ladyman: Over the last 12 months the Department has received 21 representations for the East Midlands region in respect of the levels of road traffic miles travelled and road traffic congestion; and none specifically for Harborough.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to ask the Highways Agency to review carriageway lighting in Cambridgeshire on the A47 and A1 routes in the next 12 months. [40989]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency constantly monitors the safety record of all parts of the trunk road and motorway network and where justified takes action to install new lighting or extend any existing lighting provision. In all cases, the critical determining factor is the number and severity of accidents that have occurred during hours of darkness.

Following a structural and electrical testing programme of lighting columns on the A47 in Cambridgeshire, the Highways Agency plans to replace existing lighting on the A47 Soke Parkway between junctions 17 and 20. These works are phase 2 of the contract and are currently programmed to start in September this year.

The A1 in Cambridgeshire consists of an all purpose trunk road and a section of motorway known as A1(M) between junctions 14 and 17, running from Alconbury to Peterborough.

Lighting was provided along the complete length of the A1(M) at the outset, when the motorway opened in 1998 and no review is planned.

The Highways Agency has no proposals to review carriageway lighting along the A1 all-purpose trunk road in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City. Existing lighting columns and lanterns will be replaced as and when required under the Agency's maintenance regime.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect of seat belt wearing rates if persons guilty of an offence under section 14(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988, in lieu of a fine, attend a driving safety course paid for by the offender that includes instruction on the benefits of wearing seat belts; and if he will make a statement; [40983]

(2) if his Department will undertake a review drawing on international research and experience into the effects of requiring persons guilty of an offence under section 14(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988, in lieu of a fine, to attend a driving safety course paid for by the offender that includes instruction on the benefits of wearing seat belts; and if he will make a statement. [40985]

Dr. Ladyman: This offence relates to the failure of adults to use seat belts in motor vehicles. The Department has not undertaken such research and has no current plans to undertake such a review. Seat belt wearing rates in Great Britain are already generally high as demonstrated by the wearing rates given in my answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2026W, to the hon. Member.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department last undertook a review of the evidence relating to the effectiveness of seat belts in reducing deaths and injury that drew on *(a)* UK and *(b)* international research; and if he will make a statement. [40984]

Dr. Ladyman: A report to Parliament, 'Compulsory Seat Belt Wearing: Report by the Department for Transport' dated 14 October 1985 (ISBN 0115507094, available from The Stationery Office) is the last such review. That report provided the evidence to support the decision, debated in January 1986, to make permanent the regulations on seat belt wearing that had first come into force in January 1983. The factors that make seat belts effective in reducing deaths and injury have not changed since then.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken on the effects of seat belt wearing; and if he will make a statement. [41751]

Dr. Ladyman: Two research projects are currently being undertaken. One is the regular observational survey of seat belt wearing by TRL Ltd. for the Department—the most recent report, 'Lf2096', is available at www.trl.co.uk/store/report_list.asp?pid=211&pno=6&searchtext= (see the page for reports 51 to 57).

The second, an 'In-depth Study of Trends in Fatal Accidents', will report in spring 2007. That part of the study being undertaken by TRL Ltd. will include, among other things, an estimation of the reduction in risk achieved by seat belt wearing.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice is given to speed camera partnerships regarding the prosecution of drivers of emergency vehicles for breaking the speed limit. [40277]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not give advice to safety camera partnerships about the prosecution of drivers of emergency vehicles who break the speed limit.

Section 87 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows police, fire, and ambulance vehicles to be exempt from speed limits if observing the speed limit would hinder the execution of emergency activity for which the vehicle is being used on that occasion. Prosecutions are considered outside of this exemption.

The Association of Chief Police Officers has policy guidance on this though final decisions on such prosecutions are a matter for Chief Police Officers.

Transport Infrastructure (Sussex)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been spent on improvements in transport infrastructure in west Sussex since 1997; and what proportion of this expenditure was spent in mid-Sussex. [42369]

Ms Buck: Since the introduction of local transport plans in 2000, west Sussex has received around £73 million for local transport improvements and maintenance schemes. In addition the county council has received approximately £14.5 million county council has received approximately £7.7 million for local transport capital investment. We do not have the data to identify a figure separately for local transport investment in mid-Sussex.

Funding for trunk roads is neither allocated nor recorded on a county by county basis. West Sussex has benefited from the new trains and associated power supply and depot upgrades delivered as part of the Mark 1 "slam door" stock replacement programme, the total value of the investment (benefiting west Sussex and other parts of London and the south east) being in the region of £2 billion.

Transport Projects (Appraisal System)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which transport projects were assessed using the New Approach to Appraisal system; and what the conclusions were in each case. [40571]

Ms Buck: The New Approach To Appraisal (NATA) was announced in the Government's 1998 White Paper "A new deal for transport: better for everyone". The NATA provides a comprehensive assessment of the main impacts of a scheme on the environment, safety, the economic performance, accessibility and integration so that all the key criteria are considered in decisions.

NATA was first used to inform decisions taken during the 1998 Roads Review and results for 67 schemes which were candidates for the targeted programme of improvements were published in "A new deal for trunk roads in England: Understanding the New Approach To Appraisal". The Highways Agency has continued to use the NATA for all major (that is, those costing more than £5 million) highway schemes since then. It also introduced a simplified version of NATA for use on small schemes.

Subsequently, the NATA was revised to be applicable to other transport modes, including rail, light rail and bus schemes. NATA has been used for appraisal of Community Infrastructure Funding. The Department has required the use of the NATA for the appraisal of all Local Transport Plan major schemes (road and public transport) since 2000. The NATA was the basis for OPRAF's 1999 "Planning Criteria—a guide to the appraisal of support for passenger rail services", revised in 2003 by the Strategic Rail Authority and published as "Appraisal Criteria—a guide to the appraisal of support for passenger and freight rail services".

The NATA has been applied to a wide range of transport projects proposed by a number of different agencies. The Department does not hold a comprehensive record of all of these projects and to compile one would be prohibitively expensive. However, the projects have been subject to the NATA before submission to Ministers in the period February 2004 to June 2005.

NATA is used to appraise and inform the prioritisation of schemes. A range of appraisal requirements including assessments using the NATA system apply to all schemes submitted to the Department for funding, with the level of detail required in the appraisal being proportional to the scale and complexity of the scheme. For each scheme, the Appraisal Summary Table provides an indication of the impact of the scheme on each of five criteria.

Water-borne Pleasure Craft

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the use of alternative fuels by water-borne pleasure craft. [41525]

Dr. Ladyman: None.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Closures (East Midlands)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* post offices, *(b)* bank branches, *(c)* independent retail shops and *(d)* police stations have closed in each calendar year since 1997 in (i) Harborough constituency and (ii) the East Midlands Government office area. [38841]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows.

(a) Post offices

Decisions on post office closures are an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. I understand from the company that the numbers of net closures are as follows:

Harborough constituency

2002–03: 1 net opening

1 net closure

4 net closures (including three under urban reinvention programme)

Constituency closure data are not available prior to financial year 2002–03.

East Midlands region

38 net closures

31 net closures

108 net closures

90 net closures

Regional closure data prior to financial year 2001–02 are not available. Closures in 2003–04 and 2004–05 include closures under the urban reinvention programme.

(b) Bank branches

The number of local bank branch closures is not available.

This is a matter for each individual bank, but my officials have checked with the British Bankers' Association, the Financial Services Authority and the Office for National Statistics. None of them are able to provide the number of bank closures.

(c) Independent retail shops

VAT de-registrations for retail businesses[1] in Harborough constituency and East Midlands Government office region, are shown as follows for 1997 to 2004.

VAT de-registrations in the retail sector[1]

	Harborough	*East Midlands*
1997	45	1,540
1998	25	1,490
1999	35	1,465
2000	30	1,425
2001	30	1,300
2002	30	1,320
2003	35	1,400
2004	35	1,420

[1] Standard Industrial Classification 52.

Source:

Small Business Service figures based on data from the ONS Inter Departmental Business Register.

(d) Police stations

Information provided by police forces for police stations opened and closed in Harborough constituency and East Midlands Government office region, are shown as follows for 1997 to 2004.

	Leicestershire[1]		*East Midlands Government office area*	
	Op	*Cls*	*Op*	*Cls*
1997	3	0	6	6
1998	2	2	2	25
1999	3	3	6	6
2000	2	0	4	0
2001	0	0	3	1
2002	1	1	3	3
2003	3	3	4	7
2004	0	0	1	2

[1] Harborough figures are included within Leicestershire.

EU Structural Funds

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, which types of projects may qualify for EU structural funding. [40961]

Alun Michael: The eligibility of projects for support from the EU structural funds is determined by the relevant Council and Commission regulations and by the more detailed priorities for intervention established in programming documents.

Although the details vary from one programme to another, typically structural funds programmes in the UK support a range of activities in the fields of business development, community regeneration, training and development of skills.

First-class Mail

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of first class mail was delivered to arrive the next day in each London postal district in *(a)* the most recent year available and *(b)* 1999–2000. [41602]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail and the chief executive has been asked to reply directly to the hon. Member.

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what steps will be taken by the Department following the consultation on the effectiveness of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as it applies to internal industry payments practices; [41123]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 in encouraging the timely settlement of construction industry debts. [41124]

Alun Michael: My written statement to the House on Monday 16 January announced the publication of "Improving Payment Practices in the Construction Industry—Analysis of the Consultation on Proposals to Amend Part II of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Scheme for Construction Contracts (England and Wales) Regulations 1998".

Illegal Broadcasting

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints Ofcom has received in each of the last five years in relation to *(a)* pirate radio stations and *(b)* illegal broadcasts; and how many prosecutions it initiated in each case in each year. [38022]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* Radio spectrum use under the Wireless and Telegraphy Act is a matter for Ofcom. The information on complaints and prosecutions has therefore been prepared in consultation with the regulator.

I am informed by Ofcom their records show that, since 1 April 2002 (when reliable records showing this level of detail began) the yearly figures for complaints received have been:

	Number
2002 (April-December)	592
2003	1,085
2004	446
2005 (to date)	966

The figures for completed prosecutions for the same periods are:

	Number
2002 (April-December)	23
2003	71
2004	59
2005	38

In recording these details, Ofcom (and its predecessor, the Radiocommunications Agency) draws no distinction between complaints about named pirate radio stations and unidentifiable illegal broadcasts. They record any complaint or allegation of illegal broadcasting in the same way.

Microgeneration

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many civil servants in his Department are dedicated full-time to the promotion of microgeneration. [42016]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry has three civil servants dedicated full-time to the promotion of microgeneration.

Military Hardware Exports

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of defence military hardware exports to *(a)* Poland and *(b)* Hungary in 2005. [41563]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI Export Control Organisation (ECO) is responsible only for holding information on the licences it has issued, not on exports made under those licences. The Government publishes detailed information on its export licensing decisions, including the total value of standard individual export licences (SIELs) issued, by destination, in its annual and quarterly reports on strategic export controls. Her Majesty's Revenue and Custom collects some data on exports of military list items which is published, by destination, in the annual reports.

The annual reports are available from the Libraries of the House, and the quarterly reports, from the DTI Export Control Organisation website, www.dti.gov.uk/export.control. We expect to publish the 2005 annual report by June 2006, and the final quarterly report for 2005, by end March 2006.

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will ensure that the data collected in relation to UK coal miners' health claims is passed to the Medical Research Council for archiving and further research. [38959]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* In general, the Department is happy to make available generic information collated through the schemes. It should be noted that much of the information the Department holds relates to individuals and their claims. The Department will have to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 in considering how much information can be released. The issue will be considered with the schemes' Medical Reference Panels.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many coal health claimants have been under surveillance since the scheme started; how many proven cases of fraud there have been in relation to *(a)* vibration white finger claims and *(b)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims; what the total cost has been to date of audit investigations on counter fraud procedures for each scheme; and what estimate he has made of the savings made through surveillance procedures. [38960]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* Surveillance has been undertaken on 80 claimants since the start of the schemes.

The main protection against fraud/exaggeration in the schemes is the medical assessment process in the respiratory disease scheme and the employment requirement in the vibration white finger (VWF) scheme. About 10 per cent. (26,000) of respiratory disease and 20 per cent. (24,000) VWF claims have been denied.

In addition, of 2,199 claims investigated as potentially fraudulent, 789 claims have been reduced or denied, 46 of which were as a result of surveillance. This is made up of 683 VWF, 100 COPD and six other claims. The total saving for anti-fraud activity is approximately £10.75 million of which approximately £870,000 has been saved from cases in which surveillance was used. The total cost of counter-fraud activity is approximately £3 million.

Mint Postage Stamps

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the sterling value was of mint postage stamps sold in post offices and by mail order in the United Kingdom in each year since 1997–98, broken down by *(a)* first class, *(b)* second class and *(c)* other. [41601]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Nuclear Industry

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which organisations will fund the upgrade of the Sellafield MOX Plant; and how much it is estimated to cost. [42124]

Malcolm Wicks: The Sellafield MOX Plant was transferred to the NDA under the Energy Act. As such the asset is owned by the NDA and it is responsible for funding its operation, maintenance and enhancement.

The planned engineering enhancements to improve SMP throughput are detailed in the current Near Term Work Plan and are estimated to cost in the order of £13.5 million over the next two to three years.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what has been the total cost of the Sellafield MOX Plant to date; and how much income it has generated. [42125]

Malcolm Wicks: I am advised by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that the current capitalised asset value of the Sellafield MOX Plant is £490 million. The income generated to date is £55 million.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what liabilities for pensions for workers in the state-owned sector of the nuclear industry are anticipated following any sale of companies in that sector. [42126]

Malcolm Wicks: The liabilities for accrued pensions will remain constant and therefore the effect will be neutral. Until the sale of Westinghouse is concluded and the competition of sites is completed we will not know how many staff will transfer to the private sector and how many will transfer accrued pension rights.

Piracy

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department has commissioned research into the cost to British trade of piracy in international waters. [37923]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The UK Government take the issue of piracy extremely seriously and have published on the Department's website a counter-piracy strategy which sets out the actions that it has committed to taking to tackle the menace of piracy. However, neither the Department for Transport nor the Department for Trade and Industry have commissioned research into the cost to British trade of piracy in international waters.

Radioactive Waste Management

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the implications of the use of discarded cathode-ray tubes for vitrification of high-level nuclear waste; and whether he has discussed this with the Committee for Radioactive Waste Management. [41518]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has made no assessment of the use of cathode-ray tubes for inclusion in the vitrification process of high-level nuclear waste.

I am advised by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that obsolete cathode-ray tubes have been considered for vitrified glass, but were found to be unsuitable as they did not produce a product that met the high quality control specification for the vitrified glass waste form.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the market value is of 1MW/hr of power under the renewables obligation certificate scheme; and what that value was in each year since the introduction of the scheme. [40880]

Malcolm Wicks: This is no single market value for renewables obligation certificates (ROCs). The renewables obligation is a market-based mechanism, and so the value of individual ROCs varies according to a number of different factors including volume, liquidity, supply and demand.

However, the Non Fossil Purchasing Agency operates, on behalf of its clients, a biannual ROC auction. The average price for a ROC in the last auction, which was completed on 20 October 2005, was £39.17.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total traded value in *(a)* financial terms and *(b)* MW/hr of the renewables obligation certificate scheme has been since its introduction. [40881]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government do not hold information on the market value or number of renewables obligation certificates (ROCs) traded since the introduction of the renewables obligation in 2002.

The renewables obligation is a market-based mechanism, and so the value of individual ROCs varies according to a number of different factors including supply and demand. In addition, not all ROCs issued by Ofgem will necessarily be traded. For example, electricity suppliers who are also renewables generators will have less need to trade ROCs than some other market participants.

Information on ROCs is published in Ofgem's Annual Report on the renewables obligation. A copy of which is available from the Libraries of the House.

Royal Mail

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Royal Mail spent on employment and recruitment specialists in each year since 1997. [41910]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what executive performance bonus scheme Royal Mail operates; and if he will make a statement on its objectives. [41912]

Barry Gardiner: As with other public limited companies, Royal Mail directors' remuneration is required to be published in its annual report and accounts. The latest accounts (2004–05) were published in May last year and a copy is available in the Libraries of the House.

Shrewsbury Power Station

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans there are to replace the power station near Buildwas in the Shrewsbury constituency. [41376]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a commercial matter for the company concerned.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Olympics

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what commitments the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games has given to the International Olympic Committee with regard to enabling them to monitor and regulate betting on the Olympic Games. [42215]

Mr. Caborn: The International Olympic Committee did not request any guarantees of this sort from London 2012 during the bidding phase on betting and as such none were given. The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) is aware of its obligations under the Host City Contract and has discussed these with Government. LOCOG is also aware of the existing legal position relating to betting in the UK, where the onus remains on governing bodies and the organisers of sporting events to protect the integrity of their own events. The Gambling Act 2005 makes it a key objective of the Gambling Commission to

keep gambling crime free. The Gambling Commission will work closely with sporting and Olympic authorities to minimise potential threats to the integrity of Olympic events.

2012 Paralympics

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department plans to provide to disabled athletes to enable them to compete in the 2012 Paralympics; and if she will make a statement. [41475]

Mr. Caborn: Financial support to our very best disabled athletes to enable them to compete at the highest level is provided through UK Sport's World Class Performance Programme. The investment for Paralympic Sport in the build up to the Beijing 2008 Paralympics is £22.4 million, including £2 million for the British Paralympic Association. In addition, the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme and 2012 Scholarships provide financial assistance to talented athletes, including disabled athletes, who are committed to combining their sport and education to help fulfil their sporting potential. £17 million is being provided to support these schemes over the period 2004–08. The level of financial support to our very best athletes, including disabled athletes, beyond 2009 in the build up to Games in 2012 has yet to be determined.

Administrative Costs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39944]

Mr. Lammy: Although DCMS retains policy and legislative responsibility for a number of functions in Wales and Northern Ireland none of these functions are carried out in the devolved countries themselves and therefore no administration costs are incurred directly by the Department.

Art/Sport (Disabled People)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to meet its target for increasing the take up of arts and sports opportunities by people with disabilities; and if she will make a statement. [41474]

Mr. Lammy: The Department is taking significant steps to increase participation in the arts and sports by people with disabilities.

In Sport, through Sport England, the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) receives £1.05 million funding each year. The EFDS is an umbrella organisation which brings together five disability sport bodies and disburses grants to other disability sport organisations and programmes.

There is also Lottery support for disability sport. The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI), has received an initial £1 million in lottery money to make health and fitness facilities accessible to disabled people.

In November 2004, the Equality Standard was launched as a framework for assisting sports organisations to widen access and reduce inequalities in sport and physical activity from under-represented individuals, groups and communities. This includes people with disabilities.

In the Arts, several of the Arts Council's Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) produce work specifically with or for disabled people—the Shape network, the Disability Arts Forum network, Vocal Eyes, Theatre Resource and StageText. RFOs also provide training and participatory sessions aimed specifically at disabled people.

In February 2004, the Arts Council allocated capital investment totalling £4.3 million to six disability-led organisations from the Grants for the Arts Capital programme. This represents 7 per cent. of the total allocation through the programme.

The Arts Council also supports the National Disability Touring Network which works with a range of venues and promoters to help expand arts participation and attendance by disabled people.

Big Lottery Fund

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will place in the Library a copy of the deprivation index used for resource allocation by the Big Lottery Fund. [41183]

Mr. Caborn: There is no one deprivation index used for resource allocation by the Big Lottery Fund. I have asked the chief executive of the Fund to write to the hon. Member in more detail and I will place copies of his response in the Libraries of both Houses.

Consultants/Special Advisers

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1094, on Consultants/Special Advisers, if she will place in the Library a copy of the ASK Europe plc report on 360 Degree Feedback; and if she will make a statement. [40750]

Mr. Lammy: From December 2003 to September 2004, DCMS ran a 360 Degree Feedback programme designed to increase self awareness and management performance among staff with line management responsibility. The contract was awarded to ASK Europe plc. after a competitive tender exercise. I am arranging for copies of ASK Europe's report on the programme to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 21 November 2005. [41973]

James Purnell: I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 11 January.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the Minister for Sport will reply to the letter of 25 November 2005 from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire. [42144]

Mr. Caborn: I am currently awaiting advice on the issues raised in the correspondence from your constituent, to which I hope to respond to shortly.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent by her Department on new works of art in each year since 1997; where each item is located; and whether each item is accessible to the public. [41327]

Mr. Lammy: The following figures represent how much the Government Art Collection (part of the Department for Culture, Media & Sport) has spent on works of art since 1 April1997, including the current Financial Year:

	£
1997–98	137,000
1998–99	127,000
1999–2000	179,000
2000–01	135,000
2001–02	158,000
2002–03	253,600
2003–04	225,200
2004–05	295,500
2005–10 January 2006	242,600

Some works of art included in these figures have been purchased or commissioned by the Government Art Collection on behalf of other Government Departments. These figures exclude works of art commissioned for the new Home Office building, Marsham Street, London as the project is ongoing and costs have not been finalised.

A list of current locations of works of art purchased since 1 April 1997 (as of 10 January 2006) and listed by Government Department and Government Art Collection (GAC), is provided in a separate document. I am arranging for copies of this document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The GAC's acquisition policy is guided by the Advisory Committee on the GAC which is a non-departmental public body. Members are both independent and ex-officio, including the Directors of the Tate, National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery.

The GAC plays a unique role in the UK in displaying works of art from its holdings in major Government buildings in the UK and abroad, in order to promote British art, culture and history. Due to the nature of Government buildings and current security issues, it is not possible for the general public to gain open access to most of the works on a daily basis. However, the buildings in which the works of art are displayed—in reception rooms, entrance halls, Minister's and ambassador's offices—all receive many thousands of visitors per year, all over the world.

Members of the public may consult the GAC to see individual works of art. Additionally, many Government buildings in the UK (including the GAC's own premises) are accessible during the annual Open House Weekend. The GAC also gives regular tours throughout the year round its premises, lends works of art to public exhibitions, and operates a website (www.gac.culture.gov.uk) listing and illustrating all its original works of art. A growing number of historical and modern prints are being added to this.

Digital Broadcasting

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2181W, on digital broadcasting, what estimate she has made of the *(a)* number of sets that will ultimately become surplus to requirement as non-digitalised and *(b)* total cost to the public of compliance with digitalisation; what regulations govern disposing of excess sets; and what estimate she has made of the cost of disposing. [41145]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Digital switchover itself does not require any equipment to be thrown away, but its timing may affect the timing of disposal of some equipment such as rarely used televisions that people choose not to adapt. This may accelerate the process by which all electrical equipment would be disposed of in the natural course of events.

DTI and DEFRA have commissioned research to model any changes in patterns of waste disposal generate by digital switchover. The first results from this research are expected shortly.

A comprehensive assessment of total costs to consumers arising from digital television switchover was made in cost benefit analysis work undertaken by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport between 2002 and 2005. Details of this assessment also appear in the Government's Regulatory and Environmental Impact Assessment on the timing of digital switchover which was published on 16 September 2005.

Any additional waste electrical equipment produced as a result of the switchover will be disposed of subject to the requirement of the EU waste electrical and electronic Equipment (WEEE) directive. The planned WEEE regulations, which implement the directive, will make producers of electrical goods financially responsible for the collection, treatment and recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment. The planned implementation of the WEEE regulations are currently under review and a new timetable for implementation will be announced shortly.

Elite Athlete Funding

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport from whom she has received representations on elite athlete funding since the pre-Budget report; and what view each expressed. [42705]

Mr. Caborn: In addition to periodic telephone calls and conversations between DCMS, UK Sport and BOA officials, the BOA wrote to the Department on 21 December about elite athlete funding. The letter expressed support for setting a target of 4th place in the Olympic medal table in 2012, and that there should be a six year funding package for elite athletes.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 32W, on elite athletes (funding), what the title was of UK Sports's submission; what level of funding it envisaged; over how many years; and what aspirational target for medals it set. [42737]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport's submission to the Department was called "A Sporting Chance for all in 2012: Additional Funding to Support Team GB Success at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: Options for the Chancellor's 2005 Pre-Budget Report: Submission from UK Sport".

The submission presents a 'top line' funding package together with a range of options for additional investment in the run-up to London 2012, starting in 2006. The submission identifies potential medal targets for 2012 depending on the resources available.

As this policy advice is under active consideration, it would not be appropriate to divulge further details.

Gender Equality (Sports Events)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her policy is on whether there should be equal prize money for men and women participating in mixed events such as road races. [42391]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are committed to promoting equality in sport but decisions on prize money for men and women participating in mixed events are an issue for those organising the events.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the *(a)* Amateur Athletics Association and *(b)* UK Athletics will be subject to the duty to promote gender equality under the Equality Bill. [42396]

Mr. Caborn: The Government have consulted on the range of bodies they intend to require to comply with the specific duties under the Equality Bill. The consultation period ended on 12 January 2006 and all responses will be carefully considered.

German Football Grounds

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the Government have requested an independent assessment of the safety of German football grounds to be used for the 2006 World cup; and if she will make a statement. [42703]

Mr. Caborn: The Government have not requested an independent assessment of the safety of German football grounds to be used for this summer's World cup.

While it is a matter for FIFA to decide whether any independent assessment is appropriate, the German FA has agreed to look at the concerns highlighted in the German consumer watchdog's report and I understand that the English FA will closely monitor the situation as necessary.

Gyms (Disabled Access)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 39–40W, on gyms (accessibility), in which parliamentary constituencies the 180 local authority gyms which have received Sport England investment are located; what recent meetings Sport England and the English Federation of Disability Sport have had with Cannons and Fitness First to discuss improving provision for disabled people in private sector facilities; what was discussed; and whether they propose to meet other gym providers. [41921]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England and the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) have met the Chair and chief executive of the Fitness Industry Association to discuss the implementation and delivery of a number of pilot projects in private sector gym facilities. Their aim is to encourage the implementation of the principles of the Inclusive Fitness Initiative to all providers.

Sport England is currently working with the following private gym providers: Fitness First, Colchester; Esporta, Guildford; Cannons, Paddington; Fitness Express, Kelling Heath; LA Fitness, Fornby; and Livingwell, Barnsley.

A list of the 180 local authority gyms supported by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 39–40W, on gyms (accessibility), what *(a)* submissions she has made to and *(b)* discussions she has had with the Department for Work and Pensions inter-departmental group on disability regarding disabled user access to gymnasia. [42009]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS has made no submissions about disabled user access to gymnasia to the inter-departmental group on disability, nor has it raised this issue as a specific discussion topic for the group.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 39–40W, on gyms (accessibility), which local authorities responded to her correspondence in August 2005. [42135]

Mr. Caborn: Our August 2005 letter to local authorities about the Disability Discrimination Act did not solicit a response. However, some local authorities have chosen to reply and these include:

Birmingham city council;

Manchester city council;

Sedgemoor district council;

West Lancashire district council;

Castle Morpeth borough council;

Selby district council.

Historic Sites

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many historic sites were on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk list in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each of the last five years. [41612]

Mr. Lammy: The number of historic sites on English Heritage's Building at Risk register for the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Sites
2005	7
2004	7
2003	8
2002	7
2001	7

During this period, three sites have been removed from the Register and a further three have been added.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) her Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05; [40068]

(2) how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) her Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003–04 and *(y)* 2004–05. [40110]

Mr. Lammy: My Department does not hold a record of the IT and telecommunications assets of its NDPBs, Agency or any other public body. The information could be collated only at disproportionate cost.

Olympic Development Authority

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she has taken to ensure potential suitably qualified candidates for the Board of the Olympic Development Authority (ODA) are informed of the prospective recruitment; and whether she plans to make it her policy that each country within the United Kingdom is proportionately represented on the ODA board. [41543]

Mr. Caborn: The advertisements for membership of the Board of the Olympic Development Authority were published in National newspapers and on the Web and several hundred applications were received.

Board members will be selected from among the applicants according to how well they meet the requirements of the post. There are no plans to recruit board members on a geographical basis but we are committed to assembling the best talent from across the UK.

Press Complaints Commission

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the term of office of the current chairman of the Press Complaints Commission is due to end. [41870]

James Purnell: The Press Complaints Commission is an independent body, and Government plays no role in the appointment of any of its officers. However, I understand from the PCC that Sir Christopher Meyer's term of office will run until 31 March 2009.

Theatre Audiences

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the percentage of audiences representing black and minority ethnic communities at *(a)* the National Theatre, *(b)* the Royal Opera House and *(c)* the English National Opera in the last year for which figures are available. [41132]

Mr. Lammy: 9 per cent. of English National Opera's (ENO) audience for the period 2004–05 were from the black and minority ethnic community. In addition, a February 2003 to May 2004 snapshot shows that 44 per cent. of participants in projects run by ENO Baylis (ENO's education programme) were from the black and minority ethnic community.

No comparable statistics were available for the Royal Opera House or National Theatre.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, working in partnership with its non-departmental public body partners, has commissioned the "Taking Part" survey which aims to improve our current knowledge of engagement in our sectors. The data collected will enable a robust measurement of the departmental Public Service Agreement (PSA) target on increasing participation and attendance amongst priority groups. These include people from the black and minority ethnic community.

Tourism

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the financial contribution of the tourist industry to London's economy in the last year for which figures are available. [40804]

James Purnell: The English regions 'First Steps Tourism Satellite Account' report (August 2005), sponsored by the English Regional Development Agencies, estimated that, in 2000, the contribution of tourism to regional Gross-Value Added (GVA) in London was around £7 billion, or 5.3 per cent.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many jobs she estimates the tourist industry creates in London. [40805]

James Purnell: The English regions 'First Steps Tourism Satellite Account' report (August 2005), sponsored by the English Regional Development Agencies, estimated that tourism industry employment in London was around 740,000 workers in 2000.

Violent Computer Games

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will commission research on the impact of violent computer games on individuals. [41520]

James Purnell: We commissioned research last year to determine whether there was any substance to allegations of a link between playing violent computer games and violent behaviour in real life. We will be publishing the results of the research shortly.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Brixham Council Proposal

Mr. Steen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he received draft proposals from Torbay council for the establishment of a town council for Brixham; if he will expedite his confirmation of receipt of the proposals to enable the town council to be established before 1 April 2007; and if he will make a statement. [40636]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received proposals from Torbay council for the establishment of a town council for Brixham on 1 December 2005. Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to Torbay council confirming receipt of their recommendation on 2 December 2005.

For administrative and financial purposes new parishes are established on 1 April in any year. The earliest date that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to establish a town council for Brixham is 1 April 2007.

Business Rates (London)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the change in the amount raised through business rates was in each London borough in 2004–05 compared to the previous year. [41603]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the amount raised through business rates in each London borough in 2003–04 and 2004–05 are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ctax/data/cp045tab4.xls

Correspondence

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Manchester Central sent on 16 August 2005, reference number FIRE01002/SKL. [42431]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no record of receiving my hon. Friend's letter of 16 August 2005. However, I have replied to my hon. Friends letter of 30 August on 9 January, which quotes the same reference number.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was *(x)* retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40142]

Mr. Woolas: Since the formation of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2002 no land or buildings for which it or its agencies are responsible have been sold. Information relating to non-departmental public bodies and independent statutory bodies is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

This answer does not include land and buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his (i) Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40105]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no properties in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which his Department is responsible are located in (A) England, excluding Greater London and (B) Greater London. [39861]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The figures on permanent staff (FTE basis) in Departments and agencies are published in Table D of Civil Service Statistics. This information is available on the Cabinet Office Statistics website at:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

Information on staff in non-departmental public bodies on a regional basis is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with stakeholders about implementation of each of the targets in his Department's strategic priority *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four and *(e)* five. [41015]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister works in partnership with all our delivery partners and stakeholders to deliver on our strategic priorities and public service agreement targets, and hold frequent discussions with them at the national, regional and local level.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of each of the targets in his Department's Strategic Priority *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four and *(e)* five. [41019]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister publishes an assessment of progress against our priorities and public service agreement targets in our annual and autumn performance reports. The latest assessment published was in the autumn performance report published in December 2005 (Cmd. 6722). The next assessment will be given in the annual report for 2005–06, due to be published in spring 2006.

Engagements

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 254W on engagements, if he will list the meetings he had while in *(a)* Worthing and *(b)* Brighton; and whom he met in each case. [41916]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister visited Worthing and Brighton as part of a regional visit to the South Coast on 17 December 2005. In Worthing, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister had a meeting to discuss regeneration initiatives in Shoreham and Worthing, at which council representatives and others involved in local regeneration projects were present.

In Brighton, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister visited the Brighton Jubilee Library, where he discussed economic development in the city. Representatives from the local council, Local Strategic Partnership, Economic Partnership and Regional Development Agency were present. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister also attended the Brighton and Hove Albion *v.* Hull City football match. Also present were a number of the directors of both clubs and their guests.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department will provide support for independents in the field of estate agents, surveyors and solicitors as home information packs become required by law. [41469]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are providing information, advice and other supporting material to all stakeholders, including the development and launch of a dedicated website targeting core stakeholder groups in spring 2006. This support will supplement industry initiatives including business solutions designed to meet the particular needs of small independent businesses.

Housing

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new *(a)* council houses, *(b)* houses for social rent and *(c)* private homes have been built in each year since 1977–78 ; how many are planned for 2006–07 in each case; and if he will make a statement. [41437]

Yvette Cooper: Historical figures on house building by tenure in England are provided in the Housing Statistics Table 244 on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156060.

Planned annual housing requirements are developed as part the Regional Spatial Strategies. The Government's response to Kate Barker's Review outlined its ambition to increase the rate of all house building from 150,000 net additional dwellings per year today to 200,000 net additional dwellings per year by 2016.

The Government set a target of providing 75,000 social rented homes, through a mix of new build and purchase, from 2004–05 to 2007–08. Of these it is estimated around 3,000 will be provided through local authorities and at least 60,000 through Registered Social Landlords. In addition housing will be provided under the Private Finance Initiative and by planning gain.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have used provisions in the Local Government Act 2004 to borrow for housing; against what *(a)* revenue stream and *(b)* security such borrowing is allowed; what the process of authorisation for such borrowing is; and whether such borrowing is (i) on and (ii) off balance sheet on (A) local and (B) national level. [41150]

Mr. Woolas: No information is centrally available on the number of local authorities which have borrowed for housing under the powers in the Local Government Act 2003, which came into force on 1 April 2004. An authority's borrowing for its own housing stock must be affordable from the resources available from its housing revenue account. All money borrowed by a local authority has to be secured against its total revenues. Authorities may borrow for capital spending without Government consent, provided that they can afford to service the debt out of their revenues. Any borrowing by an authority will be on its balance sheet and would appear on the balance sheet of any national consolidation of local authority account.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has for large scale housing development in Shrewsbury; what assessment he has made of the implications of such developments for green belt areas; and if he will make a statement. [40746]

Yvette Cooper: This falls within the responsibilities of Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council as the local planning authority. The allocation of sites for housing is a matter for the council to consider in the preparation of its new Local Development Framework (LDF). The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has a statutory role in relation to the LDF and proposals for individual sites may come before my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for decision on appeal or call in. Therefore it would not normally be appropriate for my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister to become involved directly in local planning processes for Shrewsbury. There is no statutory green belt in the Shrewsbury area, but any development on greenfield sites should be considered by the council against relevant national planning policies and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands, as well as the adopted local development plan.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of new housing development in Gravesham has been on brownfield land in each year since 1997. [40754].

Yvette Cooper: The percentage of new housing development in Gravesham is as follows:

	Annual completions (gross)	*Number of dwellings built on brownfield land*	*Percentage of dwellings built on brownfield land*
2000–01	92	85	92
2001–02	104	98	94
2002–03	209	129	62
2003–04	225	219	97
2004–05	486	449	92
Total	1,116	980	88
Annual average	223	196	—

Figures showing the percentage of new housing development on brownfield land prior to 2000 are not available.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of *(a)* the number and *(b)* the total area of privately owned gardens in Gravesham that has been developed in each year since 1997. [40755]

Yvette Cooper: The following table provides the number of privately owned gardens that have been developed on between 2000 and 2003:

	Annual completions (gross)	*Number of units built on private garden land*
2000–01	92	2
2001–02	104	6
2002–03	209	2
2003–04	225	—
2004–05	486	—
Total	1,116	—
Annual Average	223	—

Please note that the size in hectares and the figures for annual completions (gross) prior to 2000 and after 2002–03 are not readily available, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many hectares of *(a)* greenfield and *(b)* brownfield land have been developed in Gravesham in each year since 1997; and how many new homes such development has involved in each category. [40760]

Yvette Cooper: The following table provides the number of new housing developments in greenfield and brownfield land in Gravesham since 2000:

	Annual completions (gross)	*Number of units built on greenfield land*	*Number of units built on brownfield land*
2000–01	92	7	85
2001–02	104	6	98
2002–03	209	80	129
2003–04	225	6	219
2004–05	486	37	449
Total	1,116	136	980
Annual Average	223	27	196

Please note that the figures for annual completions (gross) prior to 2000 and the size in hectares is not readily available, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much money he estimates the Government's proposed housing levy will raise in Milton Keynes unitary authority in each of the next five years; [40905]

(2) whether the housing levy raised within the Milton Keynes unitary authority will be ring fenced for use solely within Milton Keynes unitary authority. [40906]

Yvette Cooper: As part of its response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply, the Government are currently consulting on the introduction of planning gain supplement (PGS), which would apply to residential and non-residential land. PGS would capture a modest portion of the land value uplift created by the planning process, in order to help finance additional infrastructure, while preserving incentives to bring forward land for development.

PGS would not be implemented before 2008. The level of PGS has not yet been set. It is premature to attempt to estimate the amount of PGS that might be raised in Milton Keynes unitary authority in 2008 and beyond.

PGS would be an essentially local measure. A significant majority of PGS revenues would be recycled directly to the local level for local priorities. This would help local communities to share better the benefits of growth and manage its impacts. As part of its consultation, the Government are consulting on how PGS revenues should be recycled to the local level for local priorities and how they should be used to fund strategic infrastructure at the regional level.

Separate from PGS there is currently a mechanism under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as substituted by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 whereby parties with an interest in land may enter into a planning obligation enforceable by the local planning authority. Such planning obligations are used to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms, for example to compensate for loss or damage created by a development or mitigate a developments' impact.

An approach to standardising planning obligations has been developed in Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes Partnership Committee (MKPC, which has development control powers in the Milton Keynes expansion areas) has developed a "prospectus" identifying and prioritising the local and strategic infrastructure needed to deliver 15,000 homes in the expansion flanks over the period to 2016. The prospectus identifies the contributions to infrastructure that will be made by developers, through planning obligations, broken down on a per dwelling basis. The s106 contribution that developers are expected to make amounts to around £18,500 per dwelling, plus land for social infrastructure and affordable housing. This represents approximately one quarter of the total

£1.2 billion infrastructure cost of the infrastructure development identified by MKP, with the remainder to be sought from mainstream and growth area public sector funding. Further details of the expected uses of such contributions over the next five years can be found in recent MKPC papers (in particular September and December 2005) available online at: http://www.mkweb.co.uk/mkpartnership/home.asp.

Housing Act 2004

Mr. Pope: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to issue guidance relating to the Housing Act 2004. [40038]

Yvette Cooper: The following table sets out the timetable for guidance relating to the Housing Act 2004. Guidance covering Wales is a matter for the National Assembly.

Housing Act 2004: Timetable for guidance

Provision/Part	*Proposed/Actual publication date of guidance*
Part 1—Housing Conditions	Statutory guidance for local authorities on the operation of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System was laid before Parliament on 28 November. Subject to the parliamentary procedure, it will be published before part 1 of the Act is implemented on 6 April, together with non-statutory guidance for other users of the rating system.
Parts 2, 3, 4 and 7—HMO and Selective Licensing	The Act does not provide for formal guidance but explanatory information will be made available for landlords and tenants. It is also intended that informal advice will be issued to local authorities in due course.
Part 4—Empty Dwelling Management Orders	March 2006
Part 5—Home Information Packs	Draft SI "The Home Information Pack Regulations 2006" and accompanying guidance published for consultation (consultation period ended 30 December 2005). Final version of regulations and guidance planned to be made in spring 2006. This will be supplemented by more general consumer guidance as part of planned publicity campaign on home information packs.
Part 6—Right to Buy modifications	Guidance has been issued for the changes to Right to Buy. The guidance booklet entitled 'Your Right to Buy your home' was revised together with the relevant Right to Buy forms. Copies of these have been issued to local authorities and housing associations. Guidance on landlords' discretion not to require repayment of discount, which was clarified by section 185 of the Act, was also issued in January 2005.
Part 6—Suspension of certain rights in connection with antisocial behaviour	ASB measures in part 6 of the Act commenced in June 2005. They include enabling local authorities to extend the period of introductory tenancies and withhold consent to mutual exchange on ASB grounds as well as measures to prevent tenants exercising the right to buy. We will be issuing a factsheet on these measures in the near future following commencement of associated regulations.
Part 6—Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments	We intend to publish guidance under section 226 of the Housing Act, in respect of section 225, which relates to the assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, in January 2006.
Part 6—Tenant Deposit Protection	Explanatory information to be issued from spring/summer 2006.

Park Homes

Mr. Pope: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to conclude the review of park homes legislation. [40037]

Yvette Cooper: The Government introduced several provisions in the Housing Act 2004, which came into force on 18 January 2005. These implement some of the key recommendations of the Park Homes Working Party. The provisions in the Act also allow us to insert further amendments to the Implied Terms and Written Statement. We expect to make regulations in early 2006 that insert further amendments.

The remaining recommendations relate to the model standards, the commission payment and site licensing. We are currently consulting on proposed amendments to the model standards for park home sites, with a view to issuing the revised model standards by autumn 2006. We intend to consult on the commission payment during summer 2006. We consulted on proposals to amend the site licensing regime during spring 2005 and issued a summary of responses in summer 2005. The proposals require primary legislation. We will take this forward as soon as practicable.

Planning

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what rights of appeal residents have to a proposed development by a statutory undertaking in accordance with Schedule II, Part 17 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (S.I. 1995/418). [40964]

Yvette Cooper: Residents do not have a right of appeal in relation to the permitted development of statutory undertakers authorised by the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO). In exceptional circumstances a local planning authority may consider that normal planning control should apply to permitted development. The planning authority can make and submit to the Secretary of State, my right hon.. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister a direction under Article 4

of the GPDO seeking the removal of the particular permitted development right and requiring an application for planning permission. Each submission for an Article 4 direction is considered on its own merits.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many developments have been made by statutory undertakings in each of the last five years using powers contained in Schedule II, Part 17 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (S.I., 1995, No. 418). [40967]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which organisation will be responsible for the collection of the Planning-gain Supplement. [42065]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

Alongside the 2005 Pre-Budget Report, the Government published Planning-gain Supplement: a consultation as part of its response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply. Box 1.3 of the consultation paper highlighted the main features of the proposed Planning-gain Supplement (PGS), including that PGS would be payable under a self-assessment regime administered by HM Revenue and Customs.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria his Department used in taking the decision that the Ikea application for a new store in the town of Bootle would result in a negative rating. [41236]

Yvette Cooper: The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister called-in the application for an IKEA store at Dunnings Bridge Road, Netherton, Sefton as it was considered that the proposal might conflict with national policies on important matters, in particular retail policies as set out in PPS6. The applicant has now withdrawn the application.

Private Rented Accommodation

Grant Shapps: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many students living in private rented accommodation were recorded in total in England on form CBT1 returned by local authorities on 21 October 2005. [41876]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the numbers of dwellings within each billing authority area that are subject to exemptions from council tax, or where some residents are disregarded for council tax purposes, are collected on the CTB1 (Supplementary) form. While some of the categories largely relate to students (e.g. exemption class N, for "a dwelling which is occupied only by students, the foreign spouses of students, or school and colleague leavers"), they do not provide a basis for making reliable estimates of the number of students living in private rented accommodation. This is because it does not include other information such as the tenure of dwellings, and the number of students in each dwelling, that would be needed to make an estimate.

Regional Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1700W, on regional government (1) if the Government will review its classification of the regional chambers as voluntary bodies to take account of their new statutory powers and responsibilities over planning; [40043]

(2) whether the regional chambers are public authorities. [40042]

Yvette Cooper: Regional assemblies are bodies formed voluntarily within each region that have since been designated by Government to undertake specific activities. In the performance of these activities we would regard them as undertaking a public role and therefore need to be mindful of their duties, for example under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Right to Buy

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many right-to-buy completions there were in each London borough in each year since 1996–97. [41610]

Yvette Cooper: The number of right-to-buy completions in each London borough, for each of the most recent years can be found tabulated on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website (table 4) at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded object.asp?id=1156373

Single Regeneration Budget Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the role of appraisal panels in awarding development funding under the single regeneration budget scheme. [40639]

Yvette Cooper: The single regeneration budget consisted of six annual bidding rounds, running from 1995 to 2000. Government offices (and regional development agencies for rounds 5 and 6) were responsible for assessing bids received from applicants and making recommendations to Ministers.

To assist with bid assessment, each Government office created an advisory panel of private and public sector experts to provide advice about the bids against the key assessment criteria set out in the bidding guidance for each round.

Copies of the bidding guidance are available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidelines his Department publishes on the tendering process for the allocation of single regeneration budget development funding. [40640]

Mr. Woolas: The single regeneration budget consisted of six annual bidding rounds, running from 1995 to 2000. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) predecessor Departments published detailed bidding guidance on each round for prospective bidders.

Copies of the bidding guidance are available on the ODPM website.

Town and Country Planning Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under section 224(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. [41054]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Waste Management

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department issues to county councils on their legal obligations to collect household waste from April 2007 in cases where a borough council chooses not to participate in a waste management partnership scheme. [40627]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Defra has not issued guidance on these particular circumstances. The duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for:

> district councils, as waste collection authorities, to collect household waste in their area and deliver it to their waste disposal authority; and,
>
> county councils, as waste disposal authorities, to arrange for the disposal of household waste collected by their district councils,

continue to apply where a district council chooses not to participate in a waste management partnership scheme.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Airspace (Extraordinary Rendition)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his interview on the Today programme on 12 December 2005, what methodology was used to check the allegations made by Liberty to several chief constables, to which he referred, on the United States policy of rendition of detainees. [41554]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the reply to the Rt. hon. Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) on 12 December 2005 (Official Report, column 1652–1653 W) and to the Written Ministerial Statement my Rt. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave on 10 January (Official Report, column 5WS). These demonstrate that the US Government has sought the UK Government's permission before using UK airports and airspace for the purpose of rendition.

Since before 11 September 2001, we have worked closely with the US to achieve our shared goal of fighting terrorism. As part of that close co-operation, we have made clear to the US authorities, including in recent months:

> that we expect them to seek permission to render detainees via UK territory and airspace (including the Overseas Territories and Sovereign Bases);
>
> that we will grant permission only if we are satisfied that the rendition would accord with UK law and our international obligations, and
>
> how we understand our obligations under the UN Convention Against Torture.

We are clear that the US would not render a detainee through the UK without our permission. It has sought such permission in the past: in some cases we have agreed, in others we have not, as my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made clear.

Belarus

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage a fair presidential election in Belarus in March. [41389]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government continue to raise the issue of free and fair elections with the Belarusian authorities, both bilaterally and together with EU partners. At November's General Affairs External Relations Council meeting in Brussels, EU partners called for the Belarusian Government to issue an early invitation to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights electoral monitoring mission, and stated the Council's willingness to take appropriate restrictive measures in the event of a failure to uphold international standards. A further discussion on Belarus will take place in January's Council meeting.

Burma

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent representations the British Government have made to Russia regarding *(a)* the situation in Burma and *(b)* placing Burma on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council; [41723]

(2) what representations the Government have made to Russia regarding the sale of a nuclear reactor to Burma. [42248]

Ian Pearson: Both our ambassador in Rangoon and our Mission to the United Nations in New York regularly discuss the situation in Burma with their Russian counterparts. They are fully aware of our views. On 16 December 2005 United Nations Security Council members, including Russia, met with the UN Secretary-General and senior UN officials in informal consultations to consider the situation in Burma.

The British ambassador has raised the issue of the possible sale of a Russian nuclear reactor to Burma with her Russian counterpart. There is no evidence that this matter has progressed beyond the signing of a memorandum of understanding.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made by the *(a)* British Government and *(b)* European Commission of the effectiveness of the EU common position on Burma. [41880]

Ian Pearson: We consider that the best interests of the people of Burma continue to be served by a twin-track common position of targeted measures against members of the regime, and humanitarian support to the poorest and most vulnerable. With our European partners and the European Commission, we keep the common position under review.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with Condeleeza Rice regarding the situation in Burma. [42244]

Ian Pearson: There have been no recent discussions with Condeleeza Rice regarding the situation in Burma. However, officials regularly discuss the situation in Burma with their counterparts in the United States.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK Government recognises the National League for Democracy as the winners of the 1990 elections in Burma. [42245]

Ian Pearson: Yes.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made in the past two years to companies importing Burmese goods into the UK. [42246]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has made no recent representations to companies importing goods into the UK, but our clear policy is not to encourage trade with Burma.

Caps Committee on Missing Person

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will provide further financial support to the Caps Committee on Missing Persons towards their general programme of exhumations and identifications due to start in Spring 2006; and if he will make a statement. [41334]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The United Nations search for missing persons in Cyprus is both a humanitarian priority and a rare prospect for reconciliation between the two communities on the island. In 2004, we donated US$50,000 towards what we hope will become a truly successful confidence building measure. More recently, we have informed the Committee on Missing Persons and the British charity INFORCE, which is assisting in the new phase of the Committee's work, that we are happy to provide further funding of up to £45,000. We expect that this contribution will go towards training forensic archaeologists from both communities in the necessary skills for continuing this important work.

China (Arms Embargo)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government supports the lifting of the EU embargo on arms exports to China. [42046]

Ian Pearson: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2061W.

Christian Minorities

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received from Christian minority groups from *(a)* Burma, *(b)* China and *(c)* Pakistan. [41048]

Ian Pearson: We have received no recent representations from Christian minority groups from China and Pakistan. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office continues to receive correspondence from UK-based organisations about the treatment of Christians in these two countries.

Officials at our embassy in Rangoon have frequent meetings with Christian and other minority groups in Burma. They have also provided funding to these groups for schools, orphanages and a peace and reconciliation project.

We are concerned about the situation of religious freedom in all three countries and we regularly raise those concerns with their governments, bilaterally and with our international partners.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 5 December 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. T. Iqbal. [41840]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied on 9 January.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 5 December 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms R. Hughes. [41841]

Dr. Howells: We have no record of having received this letter and have requested a copy from my right hon. Friend's office. My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will reply as soon as possible after a copy of the letter is received.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the annual expenditure on training and development by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39980]

Mr. Straw: The approximate figures for expenditure on training and development are as follows:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

	£000
2002–03	9,136
2003–04	11,429
2004–05	13,171
2005–06 (Est.)	14,919

Notes:
1. Includes all training and development costs (including languages, ICT, security, consular and visa work), most training-related travel where separately identifiable.
2. Excludes most staff costs, indirect and overhead costs.
3. Figures apply to the FCO's staff in the UK (all in the South East of England) as well as diplomatic missions overseas.

British Council

£000

	Total	Of which: Scotland	Wales	England	Northern Ireland
2002–03	5,200	14	8	5,172	6
2003–04	7,300	25	8	7,261	6
2004–05	6,500	25	6	6,456	13
2005–06 (Est.)	4,400	25	6	4,354	15

Notes

1. Includes all direct costs and fees, travel and accommodation, project budgets relating to staff development and the indirect cost of staff attendance.
2. Excludes apportionment of overhead costs.
3. British Council figures are not broken down by English region.

Wilton Park

£000

2002–03	15
2003–04	16
2004–05	15
2005–06 (Est.)	23

Note

Figures apply to the South East of England.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy

£000

2002–03	1
2003–04	1
2004–05	6
2005–06 (Est.)	10

Note

Figures apply to the South East of England.

No other non-departmental public bodies reported expenditure in any financial year over £1,000.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41249]

Mr. Straw: Expenditure on refreshments can be identified only by examining individual transactions in the UK and at overseas Posts for the periods concerned. The information requested is not held centrally and could therefore be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41587]

Mr. Straw: The amount spent on salaries paid to UK based civil servants in each year since 1997 is as follows:

£

Financial year	Amount
1997–98	127,942,176.19
1998–99	128,674,412.28
1999–2000	135,464,386.85
2000–01	147,110,659.02
2001–02	152,775,417.07
2002–03	171,743,435.00
2003–04	177,045,645.99
2004–05	185,914,352.64

Departmental Functions

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39819]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is a global network and carries out its core functions across the world through its 218 embassies, high commissions and consulates overseas. In the UK, policy and service delivery functions are carried out in London and the corporate function is split between London and Hanslope Park, near Milton Keynes.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs (Ian Pearson) gave to the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan (Mr. Salmond) on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1950W. The FCO does not identify its expenditure on administration costs by area.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40015]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is a global network which carries out its core functions across the world through its 218 embassies, high commissions and consulates overseas. The FCO has five officers working in the Glasgow office of UK Trade and Investment, a joint FCO and Department for Trade and Industry organisation. They are involved in assisting British companies in the gas and oil industries to find business abroad. The FCO does not identify its expenditure on administration costs by area.

Diplomatic Immunity

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 539W, on diplomatic immunity, if he will set out in his proposed written ministerial statement whether a prosecution for the offence was undertaken in the home country of the person holding the diplomatic immunity. [41903]

Mr. Straw: Further to my written ministerial statement of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 127–29WS, it is not within our remit to set out whether a prosecution for the alleged offence was undertaken in the home country of the person entitled to immunity. We do all we can to ensure that alleged offences committed in the UK are fully investigated and, if there is justification, the outcome determined by the UK courts. Where the sending State refuses to waive immunity to enable a prosecution to take place in the UK, we ask for the withdrawal of the diplomat. Once the diplomat has left the UK we consider this an end to the matter. Foreign missions are not obliged to inform me of action taken once the alleged offender has left the United Kingdom.

Embassy Function (Incident)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1388W, on damages, what the nature was of the incident that led to burns sustained at an embassy function. [40859]

Mr. Straw: The incident took place at a barbecue. Lighter fuel was spilled accidentally, ignited and burned the legs of a guest at the function.

Energy Supplies (Russia)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the occasions in the past 12 months on which Ministers in his Department have met representatives of the Russian Government to discuss the security of energy supply to the United Kingdom and EU. [41629]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* On 4 October 2005, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary took part in bilateral discussions in London with President Putin and senior members of his government during which a substantial exchange on energy security issues took place. The energy sector formed an important part of the EU engagement with Russia under the UK Presidency. This was most prominent in discussions held during the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council on 3 October 2005, co-chaired by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, and also on 4 October during the EU- Russia Summit, hosted by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. Energy security will also be a key theme for the Russian G8 Presidency during 2006 and in preparation for this, senior FCO officials met with Russian counterparts in September 2005 in Moscow for economic talks which included discussion of energy supply issues.

EU Military and Policing Operations

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what EU *(a)* military and *(b)* policing operations in countries outside the EU (i) are under way, (ii) are planned and (iii) have been carried out since 1997. [40940]

Mr. Straw: Since 1997 the European Union has conducted three military operations under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP): Operation Concordia in Macedonia (March-December 2003), Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (June-September 2003) and Operation Althea in Bosnia, which was launched in December 2004 and is ongoing. At this moment there are no additional EU military operations being planned.

There have been five ESDP civilian policing missions: the EU Police Mission in Bosnia (January 2003 to present); EUPOL Proxima in Macedonia (December 2003 to December 2005); the EU Police Advisory Team in Macedonia (December 2005 to present); EUPOL Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (April 2005 to present); and EUPOL COPPS, the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories. This last was launched on 1 January 2006 and is building on the work of the UK-led EU Coordination Office for Palestinian Policing Support. Current discussions about the EU's future role in Kosovo have included the possibility of a policing contribution.

There is a range of other ESDP missions currently active covering security sector reform, rule of law, ceasefire monitoring and border monitoring. The EU can also provide support, including military and police resources, to another international organisation, as it is currently doing for the African Union Mission in Sudan operation in Darfur.

Further details on all ESDP missions can be found on the FCO's website at:

http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename = = OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c = Page&cid = 1077042145284.

Hamas/Interpal

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether there are links between Hamas and Interpal; and if he will make a statement. [42089]

Dr. Howells: The Charity Commission has investigated Interpal on several occasions regarding their links with Hamas. They have found insufficient evidence to support taking action against Interpal.

Iran

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has received that Iran is removing control seals from nuclear installations. [41830]

Dr. Howells: On 10 January, inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that Iran had started to remove IAEA seals on enrichment-related equipment and material at its enrichment facility in Natanz. The IAEA expected the removal of seals at Natanz and at two related storage and testing locations to be completed by 11 January.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in securing the return from Iran of the naval and military equipment seized by them in the Shatt-al Arab. [42048]

Dr. Howells: We have raised the return of boats and equipment with the Iranian authorities on numerous occasions, at both Ministerial and senior official level, in Tehran and London. The British Ambassador in Tehran did so most recently on 12 December. Our discussions are continuing.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Iran's progress towards ratifying the Additional Protocol; and if he will make a statement. [42507]

Dr. Howells: In the 'Tehran Statement' of 12 October 2003, Iran agreed to sign an additional protocol to its Safeguards Agreement, and to commence ratification procedures. It further stated that

"as a confirmation of its good intentions, the Iranian Government will continue to co-operate with the [International Atomic Energy] Agency (IAEA) in accordance with the Protocol in advance of its ratification".

Iran signed the Additional Protocol on 18 December 2003. In the Paris Agreement of 15 November 2004, Iran again reaffirmed that it would

"continue to implement the Additional Protocol voluntarily pending ratification".

Iran has not yet ratified the Protocol. In its most recent resolution on 24 September 2005, the IAEA Board of Governors urged Iran

"promptly to ratify and implement in full the Additional Protocol"

and

"pending completion of the ratification of the Additional Protocol, to continue to act in accordance with the provisions".

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the progress made in the construction of the heavy water research reactor at Arak in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [42508]

Dr. Howells: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Dr. Mohammed El Baradei confirmed in his November 2005 report that the Agency had carried out a design information verification visit to Arak and noted that the civil engineering construction of the reactor building was continuing. In declarations to the IAEA, the Iranian government has stated that the facility should be ready for commissioning in 2014. We are not aware of any change to this timescale.

We have made clear to the Iranians our concerns that this reactor design is not best suited to their declared research needs, but presents significant proliferation concerns in respect of its suitability for the production of weapons grade plutonium. This is why we have suggested to Iran for some time that it should acquire instead a research reactor moderated by light water. We made clear in our comprehensive proposal presented on 5 August 2005 that we would support them in doing this.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the return of British military equipment confiscated by Iran in the summer of 2004 was last raised by the UK Government's representative in Tehran; and what the result was of that discussion. [42509]

Dr. Howells: We have raised the return of boats and equipment with the Iranian authorities on numerous occasions, at both Ministerial and senior official level, in Tehran and London. The British Ambassador in Tehran did so most recently on 12 December 2005. Our discussions are continuing.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the stage that has been achieved by the Iranian government in the development of nuclear weapons technology; and if he will make a statement. [42510]

Dr. Howells: Iran is seeking to master enrichment technology. This would give it the capability to produce nuclear weapons grade enriched uranium. Iran's recent notification that it intends to resume research and development activity, including the introduction of nuclear material into enrichment centrifuges, is contrary to the calls expressed in repeated International Atomic Energy Agency Board resolutions and to Iran's own undertakings, and does nothing to resolve longstanding international concerns over Iranian government intentions.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Thurrock of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 193W, on Iran, when he expects the explanatory meeting between Iran and the EU scheduled for 2006 to take place; and if he will make a statement. [42717]

Dr. Howells: The E3/EU held exploratory talks with Iran on 21 December aimed at establishing whether a basis could be agreed for resuming negotiations on long-term arrangements for Iran's nuclear programme. We made crystal clear that a resumption of negotiations would only be possible if Iran refrained from any further erosion of its suspension of enrichment related and reprocessing activities, including research and development on enrichment.

Iran's decision to restart enrichment related activity on 9 January was a clear rejection of the diplomatic process the E3/EU and Iran have been engaged in for over two years with the support of the international community. In addition, it constitutes a further challenge to the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and international community. We have, therefore, decided to inform the IAEA Board of Governors that our discussions with Iran have reached an impasse.

Iraq

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice his Department has given to the Iraq Oil Ministry on the introduction of production sharing agreements. [41884]

Dr. Howells: The contractual arrangements for future oil exploration and production are a decision for the incoming Iraqi Government and the Government have not sought to influence this decision. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office did support a 2003 independent study which set out the full range of possible contractual financing arrangements to allow the rehabilitation and development of the Iraqi oil industry.

Under the outgoing Iraqi Transitional Government, the Ministry of Oil was clear that the option of concluding Production Sharing Agreements would be one of a range of contracts that might be needed to help redevelop the oil industry. This is because after decades of isolation, Iraq has weak technical and managerial capacity combined with an ageing infrastructure with severely outdated production facilities. Furthermore, there has been no explorations for new fields since the 1980s and limited post-2003 investment and poor maintenance. Given the state of the infrastructure, and the US$20 billion needed for reconstruction of the oil industry, it is highly unlikely that the Iraqi Government will be able to fund investment in the oil industry itself. Without the needed investment the oil industry will not be able to fuel the required sustainable economic growth in Iraq.

The Government reiterates, however, that the decision as to whether to conclude a Production Sharing Agreement will be for the Iraqi Government to decide.

Israel

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department last met Israeli officials to discuss the security wall; and if he will make a statement. [41476]

Dr. Howells: The British ambassador in Tel Aviv last raised our concerns on the route of the barrier with the Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 19 December.

We fully recognise Israel's right to self-defence. A barrier is a reasonable way to achieve this. But the barrier's route should be on or behind the Green Line, and not on occupied territory. Construction of the barrier on Palestinian land is illegal. The route is particularly damaging around Jerusalem, as it risks cutting the city off from the west bank and dividing the west bank in two.

We will continue to raise our concerns over the barrier with the Israeli Government at all levels.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likelihood of a pre-emptive strike by Israel on Iran's nuclear facilities. [41898]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in the House on 10 January that he had

> "made it clear that military action is not on our agenda, and I do not believe that in practice it is on anybody else's agenda."

Kashmir

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Governments of India and Pakistan on including representatives of the people of Kashmir in the next round of peace talks. [41305]

Dr. Howells: The UK supports the on-going Composite Dialogue process between the two countries. This aims to resolve all of their outstanding differences, including over Kashmir. For any such settlement to be durable, we believe that the views of the Kashmiris must be taken into account, and we continue to raise this with our Pakistani and Indian interlocutors. We therefore welcome the steps taken so far by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to initiate a dialogue with Kashmiri separatists, and are aware of reports that a second round of talks may begin early this year.

Moldova

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to visit Moldova. [41544]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no plans to visit Moldova.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much funding was contributed by his Department to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in each year since 2001. [41949]

Dr. Howells: The United Kingdom's total contributions to the activities of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe were £17.3 million in 2001–02, £20.4 million in 2002–03, £24.8 million in 2003–04 and £24.8 million in 2004–05.

Pakistan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Pakistan on the growth in the number of cases being brought before the courts for the charge of blasphemy. [41527]

Dr. Howells: We make regular representations to the Government of Pakistan regarding the Blasphemy Laws. In December 2005 the UK and EU Partners démarche raised its concerns with the Government of Pakistan about the 19 cases of Blasphemy registered in 2005. With our European Union partners we encourage the Government of Pakistan to repeal or modify the Blasphemy Laws to remove the possibility of the Laws being misused.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Government funding for the Palestinian Authority is made *(a)* through the World Bank Trust Fund and *(b)* directly to the Palestinian Authority. [41933]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

DFID provides support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) budget through the Reform Trust Fund managed by the World Bank. Since the fund's inception in January 2004 total DFID funding has amounted to £12 million. Funding is conditional on the achievement of benchmarks for reform, progress against which is carefully monitored. Through this process the Reform Trust Fund has helped the PA to improve its financial control and management.

DFID also provides financial aid and technical assistance to the PA in the areas of public administration and reform, budgeting and planning, security sector reform, statistics, and the water sector.

Public Diplomacy Review

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to respond to Lord Carter of Coles's Public Diplomacy Review. [41237]

Mr. Straw: In my written ministerial statement to the House on 15 December 2005, I welcomed the recommendations made in the noble Lord Carter of Coles's Review. I wrote to the noble Lord on 14 December 2005 making this clear. Public Diplomacy is a vital part of our work in promoting UK interests overseas. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is committed to working closely with Public Diplomacy partners to achieve maximum impact from our public diplomacy activity. Work has already begun on

implementation of the recommendations. I intend to keep the Foreign Affairs Committee informed of progress.

Sharm El Sheikh Bomb Attacks

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether assistance given by his Department to the families of the victims of the Sharm El Sheikh bomb attacks in July was in line with his Department's usual practice; [40122]

(2) what assistance was given by his Department to the families of the victims of the Sharm El Sheikh bomb attacks in July. [40123]

Mr. Straw: The assistance given to the families of the victims of the Sharm El Sheikh bomb attacks incorporated the experience and lessons learnt from previous incidents.

The British ambassador in Cairo led a team to the scene arriving eight hours after the bombings; a rapid deployment team from London (including trained Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) volunteers, the police, Red Cross and medical personnel) arrived within 24 hours. Further police staff for disaster victim identification deployed to Sharm El Sheikh the following day. A call handling centre was set up in the FCO within one hour of our hearing of the incident, with calls being transferred later in the day to the West Midlands police who acted on our behalf in the UK throughout the crisis on call handling, and on family liaison issues.

On the ground, we set up an office and provided support to survivors and visiting families, helped to arrange medical evacuations and, liaising with the tour companies, arranged for survivors to be flown home. We also helped to locate and repatriate those who died in this tragedy. Throughout, we worked closely with the Egyptian authorities.

The FCO also has in place a package of immediate assistance measures to help victims of terrorism overseas and their families in the immediate aftermath of an incident such as this. These measures were made available to the families affected.

South Africa (Chemical Weapons Data)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the South African Government has requested *(a)* information and *(b)* assistance from the UK Government in seeking to ascertain the extent of information or help extended by the Chemical Weapons Establishment at Porton Down to Wouter Basson during the period of the apartheid regime; and if he will make a statement. [39882]

Dr. Howells: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my hon. Friend the former Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Dr. Denis MacShane) gave him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 94W.

Spain

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to visit Spain. [41564]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary currently has no plans to visit Spain.

Staffing Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the staffing costs of each *(a)* embassy and *(b)* consulate were in the last year for which figures are available. [39687]

Mr. Straw: I am placing the information requested for the financial year 2003–04 in the Library of the House.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the use by the Sudanese authorities of amputation as a deterrent for crimes; and what representations he has made to them to end such punishment. [41814]

Ian Pearson: The UK believes that extreme punishments such as stoning, amputation and execution under Sharia law are wholly inconsistent with international human rights standards. We regularly raise with the Government of Sudan the need to respect human rights and abide by international human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We are also pressing the Government of Sudan, both bilaterally and through multilateral forums such as the EU-Sudan Human Rights Dialogue, to ratify and implement human rights treaties to which it is not a party, including the UN Convention Against Torture.

Under the terms of the new Sudanese constitution, Sharia law, which allows for corporal punishment such as amputations, will apply in the states of Northern Sudan, but not Southern Sudan. The constitution also specifies that in the national capital non-Muslims shall not be subject to Sharia law, and that a Specialist Committee will ensure that Non-Muslims are not adversely affected by the application of the Sharia law in the National Capital. This committee was formed on 4 January 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to help resolve the dispute between the North and South of Sudan over the allocation of oil wells; and if he will make a statement. [41831]

Ian Pearson: Under the terms of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), revenue from oil resources shall be shared equally between the National Government and the Government of South Sudan, with a contribution going to the oil producing state. The Commission to define the boundaries of Southern Sudan in accordance with the CPA was established on 8 September 2005.

The National Petroleum Commission, comprising members of the National Congress Party, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement and oil producing states, is tasked to formulate, monitor and assess policies on the petroleum sector, negotiate all new oil contracts and ensure transparency in the handling of all oil revenues. The UK is providing financial support to this commission.

We are pressing the parties to resolve any disputes using the mechanisms provided by the CPA. The UK also holds a seat on the Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC), which monitors implementation of the CPA. The parties to the CPA have the right to bring any disputes to the AEC for its recommendations, although no cases have yet been brought.

Terrorist Suspects (Guantanamo Bay)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has *(a)* received and *(b)* made to the United States Administration on behalf of Bisher Al-Rawi and Jamil Al-Banna currently detained at Guantanamo Bay. [39152]

Dr. Howells: While it is long-standing policy that we cannot provide consular assistance for individuals who are not British nationals, we agreed exceptionally in March and April 2005 to meet the families of the five detainees in Guantanamo Bay whom we knew were resident in the UK, but who are not British citizens. My noble Friend the former Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister of State, Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, met the families and representatives of Bisher Al-Rawi on 5 April 2005 and of Jamil Al-Banna on 19 April 2005. We passed the concerns expressed to us by the families to the US authorities. We were additionally asked to submit an amicus curiae brief on behalf of these five detainees in court proceedings in the United States. We gave careful consideration to this request, but concluded that the most effective way to achieve real improvements to the situation of the detainees was through continuing discussions about Guantanamo and detainee policy with the US authorities.

We continue to receive correspondence from members of the public and others who have concerns about Guantanamo Bay, including about detainees who were resident in the UK. We have always made clear that we regard the circumstances under which detainees are continuing to be held in Guantanamo Bay as unacceptable. The US Government knows our views. We will continue to raise our concerns at official and ministerial level, and to work with the US authorities to resolve the issues of concern to us.

Uganda

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he plans to have with Ugandan President Museveni about the imprisonment of opposition leader Kizza Besigye. [41033]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised the case of Dr. Besigye when he met President Museveni at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Valetta at the end of November 2005. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, and our High Commissioner in Uganda have underlined the need for a transparent and fair civilian trial at the highest level of the Ugandan Government. We are encouraged that Dr. Besigye was released on bail on 2 January.

UK Ambassador (Buenos Aires)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the works of art stolen from the UK ambassador's temporary residence in Buenos Aires in August 2001; what the value was of each item; and if he will make a statement on *(a)* the security arrangements in place at the time of the robbery and *(b)* any changes subsequently made. [40761]

Mr. Straw: In August 2001, our ambassador in Buenos Aires moved to a temporary residence in order that the principal residence be refurbished. During this move, a number of works of art were stolen from the ambassador's temporary residence shortly before it was occupied. These were:

"Offering to Jupiter" painting by Michael Rocca, value £80,000.

"Lake Landscape" painting by George Arnauld, value £35,000.

"St. James's Park and Banqueting Rooms" painting by Anthony Higmore, value £60,000.

"Landscape" painting by Edward Charles Williams, value £60,000.

"Sir Woodbine Parish" painting by Edmund Dyer (after Thomas Phillips RA), value £5,000.

Immediately following this incident, a full police investigation was initiated. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not comment on specific security measures taken to protect its missions and residences overseas. However, the FCO takes the security of our staff and official premises very seriously and security arrangements at all our posts are regularly reviewed, including after incidents of this nature.

UK Embassies/Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of running each *(a)* embassy and *(b)* consulate in the last year for which figures are available. [39864]

Mr. Straw: I am placing details of the cost of each post in the Library of the House.

US Administration (Rendition)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish the wording of questions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have put to the US Administration about rendition in each of the last six months. [41856]

Dr. Howells: It is not usual practice to make public the content of confidential ministerial or official exchanges with our international partners. We discuss security and human rights issues with the United States on a regular basis.

Since before 11 September 2001, we have worked closely with the US to achieve our shared goal of fighting terrorism. As part of that close co-operation, we have made clear to the US authorities, including in recent months:

that we expect them to seek permission to render detainees via UK territory and airspace (including Overseas Territories and Sovereign Bases);

that we will grant permission only if we are satisfied that the rendition would accord with UK law and our international obligations; and

how we understand our obligations under the UN Convention Against Torture.

West Papua

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the source was of the advice to his Department that the recent use of Tactica water cannon vehicles by police in West Papua was for the purpose of dispersing a violent incident during which demonstrators were seeking to cause criminal damage to a public facility. [41946]

Ian Pearson: Following reports that Tactica water cannon had been used in Papua, an embassy official visited Papua and spoke to local community leaders and non-governmental organisations there.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what lines of inquiry his Department is pursuing to investigate the events that led to Tactica water cannon vehicles being used recently by police in West Papua on demonstrators, in addition to information from the Indonesian Government. [41947]

Ian Pearson: The British embassy has followed up reports that Tactica water cannon were used in Papua by speaking to a number of local community leaders and non-governmental organisations about the use of water cannon in Papua.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1562W, on West Papua, what the reasons are for not making the reports available to *(a)* the public and *(b)* hon. Members; what his response would be to a freedom of information request for the same documents; and if he will make a statement. [42000]

Ian Pearson: Release of political reporting would cause harm to the effective conduct of international relations as it depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between Governments and international organisations. This relationship allows for the free and frank exchange of information on the understanding that it will be treated in confidence. By releasing information that they have provided strictly in confidence, there is a possibility that they would refuse to share similar information in the future. This would harm the UK's ability to protect and promote its interests through international relations, which there is a strong public interest in maintaining. For these reasons we consider that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

These reasons apply equally if the reports were requested for release to the public, to Parliament or through Freedom of Information Act requests.

Wouter Basson

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what investigations have been carried out as a result of the statement by South Africa's Deputy Defence Minister Kasrils that Wouter Basson obtained information from the United Kingdom in support of the apartheid regime's chemical and biological weapons programme; and if he will make a statement. [39743]

Dr. Howells: Following allegations that the Government was involved in providing information to personnel connected to South Africa's Chemical and Biological Weapons programme, the Government conducted full investigations into the allegations made. There was no evidence to suggest UK Government officials knowingly provided assistance to any South African Chemical and Biological Weapons programme.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the reasons were for each of the three démarches made by and on behalf of the UK Government to *(a)* President Mandela and *(b)* the South African Government in respect of Wouter Basson; and if he will make a statement. [39798]

Dr. Howells: Démarches were made to the South African Government to highlight the Government's concerns about the onward proliferation risk of any remaining records or expertise relating to offensive Chemical and Biological Weapons programmes, and to encourage South Africa to submit a confidence building measure return to the United Nations in respect of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Bill of Rights

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on progress made in implementing the proposal to establish a round-table forum to progress the debate about a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. [9129]

Mr. Hanson: I wrote to all Northern Ireland political party leaders on 28 December 2005 inviting each of them to meet with me to discuss their views on how we can work to build cross-community support for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

Civil Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland from which Departments of the Northern Ireland Office officials responsible for the Department's e-Business strategies were represented on the project board for the Northern Ireland civil service e-HR contract. [36176]

Angela E. Smith: The Government Departments from which officials responsible for the e-Business strategies were represented on the project board for the Northern Ireland civil service e-HR contract are as follows:

Department of Employment and Learning;

Department of Education;

the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister and

the Department of Enterprise Trade and Industry.

Correspondence

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will reply to the letter dated

11 November 2005 from the hon. Member for North Down in relation to the Mental Health Unit at Ards hospital. [42721]

Mr. Woodward: There is no record of a letter dated 11 November 2005 being received by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in relation to the Mental Health Unit at Ards Hospitals.

Dentistry

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dental practices in Northern Ireland ceased to operate within the NHS during 2005. [42134]

Mr. Woodward: During 2005 two dental surgeries closed. In the first case, the dental contractor owned a second surgery and the registered patient list transferred to the contractor's other surgery. In the second case, all the registered patients were transferred to another NHS dental provider in the near vicinity.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are taken by the Department to support staff with mental ill health. [36271]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office provides emotional support, advice and factual information in a confidential manner to staff with mental ill health.

Occupational health services are available to help employees remain effective in work or to facilitate the successful return to work.

Two Northern Ireland Office Agencies offer staff an employee assistance programme, counselling and psychotherapy services.

Electricity Supply

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to ensure continuity of supply to Northern Ireland electricity consumers following the recent problems at Coolkeeragh Power Station. [42274]

Angela E. Smith: In order to meet Northern Ireland's electricity demand during the current unavailability of Coolkeeragh power station, Northern Ireland's available generating capacity is being augmented by imports from Great Britain via the Moyle Interconnector and by energy trades with the Republic of Ireland via the North-South interconnector. In addition, Northern Ireland Electricity plc has taken steps to help maintain electricity supplies by ensuring that adequate stocks of back-up fuel are held at the Ballylumford and Kilroot power stations.

Coolkeeragh is in the process of resolving its current problem and expects to be able to generate again by 20 January 2006.

Health Boards (Agency Staff)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the costs have been to each health board of employing private agency staff in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [42267]

Mr. Woodward: The bulk of the costs in question are incurred by the 19 HSS trusts. The information provided in the table relates agency expenditure to a trust's host Board i.e. the area in which each trust is located.

£000

Board	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
EHSSB	14,822	16,503	19,428
NHSSB	3,247	8,209	8,258
SHSSB	1,272	1,108	811
WHSSB	2,777	3,506	4,522
Total	22,118	29,326	33,019

In addition, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, in providing its regional service, incurred expenditure on agency staff of £267,000 and £306,000 in the years 2003–04 and 2004–05 respectively. It incurred no such expenditure in 2002–03.

Hospital Parking

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many car parking spaces were provided by *(a)* Belfast City Hospital, *(b)* Mater Infirmorum Hospital, *(c)* the Royal Group of Hospitals and *(d)* Ulster Hospital in the last year for which figures are available; and how much was raised through parking charges by each hospital in that year. [40938]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is set out in the following table.

	Number of parking spaces	*Amount generated for Trusts in 2004–05*
Belfast City Hospital	1,080	623,000
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	357	117,000
Royal Group of Hospitals	2,311	0
Ulster Hospital	1,082	357,000

Parking at the Royal Group of Hospitals is operated by Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and the car parking charges do not generate any income for the Trust.

Hospitals (Delayed Discharges)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the rate of delayed discharge was in each major hospital in Northern Ireland on the last date for which figures are available. [42266]

Mr. Woodward: The rate of delayed discharge, within each hospital who had any delayed discharges at 31 March 2005, is detailed in the following table.

Hospital	*Rate of delayed discharge (Percentage)*
Belfast City Hospital	3.77
Musgrave Park Hospital	3.77
Forster Green	2.42
Ulster Hospital	6.62
Bangor	10.15

Hospital	Rate of delayed discharge (Percentage)
Royal Victoria Hospital	4.54
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	2.43
Lagan Valley Hospital	3.39
Downe Hospital	10.28
Robinson Memorial Hospital	8.00
Dalriada	9.38
Causeway	7.34
Moyle Hospital	42.32
Whiteabbey Hospital	16.17
Mid-Ulster Hospital	11.78
Antrim Hospital	4.74
Braid Valley Hospital	53.05
South Tyrone Hospital	19.51
Mullinure	8.33
Craigavon Area Hospital	0.80
Daisy Hill Hospital	3.43
Altnagelvin Hospital	2.57
Erne Hospital	4.15
NI Average Rate	5.82

Notes:
Rate of delayed discharge is calculated by dividing the number of delayed discharges as at 31 March 2005 by the average number of available beds over the period 2004-05 for each hospital.

Source:
Hospital Information Branch

Invest NI

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what investment was made in Strangford constituency in the last five years by Invest NI; and if he will make a statement. [42264]

Angela E. Smith: During the past five years from April 2000 to March 2005, Invest NI, and its predecessor agencies offered assistance worth £9.5 million to businesses within the Strangford parliamentary constituency area. This contributed towards a total planned investment of £42.6 million.

This includes £1.4 million assistance offered to inward investment projects within Strangford, contributing towards a planned investment of £6.3 million.

The Invest NI Local Office Network actively promotes enterprise and business start-ups in the area through partnerships with local business development bodies and the district councils. The Start a Business Programme has supported 667 locally focused business starts within Strangford since September 2001 to date. These are estimated to produce an associated additional investment within the Strangford area of almost £6.7 million.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many people are employed as researchers by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency; [40828]

(2) when payment of the last annual wage increase commenced for researchers within the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. [40829]

Angela E. Smith: Staff working in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency are employed by the Department of Finance and Personnel. At the end of December 2005 none of those staff were graded as researchers.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what contracts the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency holds to collect statistics. [40830]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency currently holds two contracts:

Contract to undertake the Northern Ireland Household Panel Study (waves 5 through to 8).

Contract to undertake sweep 3 of the Millennium Cohort Study.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the steps being taken to resolve the current pay disputes within the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. [40831]

Angela E. Smith: The chief executive of NISRA has sought delegated authority for the pay of survey interviewers with a view to resolving the outstanding pay issue for this group. The relevant trade union has been consulted on this issue and its views are currently being considered by the Department.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency; and how many of these are regarded as employees of the Northern Ireland civil service. [40832]

Angela E. Smith: The number of staff working in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency at the end of December 2005 was 369, of whom 110 were graded as administrative staff and 242 were graded as statisticians. In addition, NISRA had 17 other staff (including students) on a casual basis. NISRA also has a field-force of 298 fee-paid survey interviewers who have a non-guaranteed hours contract unique to their role.

All staff working in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency are employed by the Department of Finance and Personnel, a Department of the Northern Ireland civil service.

The status of the interviewers is that they are employees of the Department but are not employed under the full range of terms and conditions of service applicable to civil servants.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what contracts the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency has lost in each of the last three years. [40833]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency has not lost any contracts in the last three financial years.

Pathways to Work

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Pathways to Work pilots are being carried out in Northern Ireland. [39224]

Angela E. Smith: Three Pathways to Work pilot programmes are currently under way in Northern Ireland in Ballymoney, Lurgan and Magherafelt. An announcement on future expansion of Pathways to Work will be made alongside publication of details of the Skills and Science fund shortly.

Police Training Centre

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when work is expected to commence on-site for the new police training centre for Northern Ireland; and when building work is likely to be completed. [28407]

Mr. Woodward: Subject to final decisions on the most appropriate funding arrangement the police hope to commence construction of the new Police College in the summer of 2007. We anticipate building will take some 2–3 years.

Premature Deaths

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent estimate he has made of the number of premature deaths in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Upper Bann caused by smoking. [36379]

Angela E. Smith: The number of premature deaths caused by smoking is not available in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Upper Bann. as smoking history is rarely recorded on death certificates.

However, Northern Ireland level estimates can be made of the total number of deaths attributed to smoking by using information on the contribution that smoking makes to specific conditions recorded at death. The Health Development Agency[1] published the most recent estimates for Northern Ireland in 2004. This report estimated that in Northern Ireland each year over the period 1998 to 2002, 2,300 deaths can be attributed to smoking.

[1] Twigg, L., Moon, G., and Walker, S. The smoking epidemic in England, Health Development Agency, 2004 (http://www.publichealth.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o = 502811).

Pre-School Provision Report

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the review of effective pre-school provision in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Department of Education concluded with respect to different pre-school settings and their respective impacts on children's development. [40764]

Angela E. Smith: The effective pre-school provision in Northern Ireland (EPPNI) project found that attending a pre-school setting, compared to none, enhances all-round development for all children, and that children benefit more from nursery school, nursery class or playgroup provision than from other types of pre-school provision.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Department of Education will publish the findings of the effective pre-school provision in Northern Ireland study. [40765]

Angela E. Smith: The report of the effective pre-school provision in Northern Ireland (EPPNI) project is expected to be published by the end of February 2006.

School Transport Costs

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils receive home-to-school transport in each of the board areas to *(a)* controlled schools, *(b)* maintained schools, *(c)* grant-maintained schools, *(d)* Irish-medium schools, *(e)* special schools, *(f)* voluntary grammar schools and *(g)* further education colleges; and what the cost per pupil is in each category. [40853]

Angela E. Smith: The education and library boards provided home to school and college transport to pupils broken down as follows:

	BELB		*NEELB*		*SEELB*		*SELB*		*WELB*	
Schools 2004–05	*Pupils*	*Unit cost (£)*	*Pupils*	*Unit cost (£)*	*Pupils*	*Unit cost (£)*	*Pupils*	*Unit cost (£)*	*Pupils*	*Unit cost (£)*
Controlled and Maintained	1,135	679	19,412	633	16,236	500	24,759	540	22,775	491
Integrated	1,272	447	1,547	687	1,895	506	1,349	720	1,877	458
Irish-Medium	83	446	77	2,052	77	792	73	1,274	154	901
Special	1,554	1,829	1,066	2,560	1,518	2,899	466	2,888	754	716
FE Colleges 2003–04[1]	395	268	3,999	223	1,367	485	2,331	443	1,515	456

[1] While details on schools are in respect of the 2004–05 financial year the latest available data with regard to FE colleges relates to the 2003–04 financial year.

Note:

Current statistics do not differentiate between pupils attending controlled, maintained and voluntary grammar schools. Also it is assumed the request in respect of grant-maintained schools is a reference with regard to integrated schools.

Sports Stadium

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of locating the new sports stadium for Northern Ireland at Ormeau Park in Belfast. [42725]

Mr. Hanson: Between May and September 2004, the Strategic Investment Board, on behalf of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure undertook a technical site evaluation exercise to help identify a suitable location for a multi-sports stadium for Northern Ireland. Ormeau Park in Belfast was assessed as part of this evaluation but was rejected due to planning and access problems with the site.

Temporary Housing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action has been taken by the Department of Social Development where the Northern Ireland Housing Executive has been found to be

providing unsuitable or unsafe temporary dwelling for tenants whose permanent dwellings are undergoing improvement works. [42277]

Mr. Hanson: This is an operational matter falling within the day to day responsibility of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. However, if such an occurrence were to be drawn to the Department's attention, the Housing Executive would be asked to take remedial action as quickly as possible. I understand that a problem has been identified in the Coleraine area where residents have complained about the condition of mobile homes which are being used for decanting purposes. I am advised that with the exception of one of these mobile homes where dampness was discovered they are fit for habitation. They are, however, hard to heat in the winter and I have asked the Housing Executive, therefore, to address this issue.

Water Charges/Service

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost will be of financing the implementation of the charging and billing system for new separate water charges; and who will be responsible for those costs. [40782]

Mr. Woodward: The total cost of financing the implementation of the charging and billing system is estimated at £15.9 million, with the cost being borne by the Department for Regional Development. The new systems, which form part of the reform programme to improve the efficiency and quality of water and sewerage services, will provide a customer contact centre and collect water and sewerage charges from domestic and non-domestic customers. When the new charges are fully phased in this will allow up to £300 million per year to be allocated to other public services in Northern Ireland.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was paid in *(a)* wages and *(b)* overtime in each of the Water Service telemetry centres in each of the last three years. [40641]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question:

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan, dated 13 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much was paid in *(a)* wages and *(b)* overtime in each of the Water Service telemetry centres in each of the last three years (40641). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

A breakdown of the total wage costs for the Water Service's 4 telemetry centres during the financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04 is set out below. As part of the changes in the financial reporting procedures, occasioned by Water Service's reorganisation into a functionalised structure in 2004–05, the wage costs for all of the telemetry centres were grouped together under a single cost centre. It would therefore be difficult to extract a breakdown of the costs for 2004–05 across the 4 telemetry centres without a lengthy and costly manual exercise.

£

	2002–03			2003–04			2004–05
Telemetry centre	*Wages*	*Overtime*	*Other pay costs*[1]	*Wages*	*Overtime*	*Other pay costs*[1]	*Total pay cost*
Marlborough House (Craigavon)	62,400	36,400	55,100	66,100	37,800	55,800	143,800
Altnagelvin (Londonderry)	72,300	28,700	51,400	55,300	36,400	47,500	139,700
Academy House (Ballymena)	71,400	39,700	53,600	73,500	43,400	57,300	132,200
Westland House (Belfast)	54,600	56,300	51,500	[2]56,000	[2]57,700	[2]52,800	179,100

[1] Other pay costs include—Allowances, Employers National Insurance and Superannuation costs.
[2] The Westland House costs for 2003–04 are estimated—actual costs are not readily available.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academic Performance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on academic performance by *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary pupils in (i) Somerset schools, (ii) England and (iii) the south west. [41452]

Jacqui Smith: The 2005 national results show that standards in both primary and secondary schools are continuing to rise, with improvements at every key stage this year. Since 1997 at key stage 2, English has increased by 16 percentage points (pp) to 79 per cent. and in maths by 13 pp to 75 per cent.. Provisional results at key stage 3 show English has increased by 17 pp to 74 per cent.; in maths by 14 pp to 74 per cent.; in science by 10 pp to 60 per cent.; and in ICT by 19 pp to 69 per cent. At key stage 4 provisional results show the percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs has increased by 10.6 pp to 55.7 per cent.

Standards of educational attainment in both primary and secondary schools in *(a)* Somerset and *(b)* the south west show that performance is above that of the national average. A summary of the 2005 outcomes is set out in the following table.

Information about education and skills by constituency is made available by the Department through the 'In Your Area' web site, available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea.

Performance level[1]

	Primary—KS2 percentage achieved level 4+			*Secondary—KS3 percentage achieved level 5+*				*Secondary—KS4 percentage achieved 5+ A*-C*
	English	*Maths*	*Science*	*English*	*Maths*	*Science*	*ICT*	*GCSE or equivalent*
Somerset[2]	80	76	88	77	77	75	75	57.9
National	79	75	86	74	74	70	69	55.7
South West	79	75	87	75	75	73	72	55.8

[1] Data for KS2 is amended. For KS3 and KS4 data are provisional.
[2] Overall figures for Bath and NE Somerset, North Somerset and Somerset local authorities.

Administrative Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39828]

Maria Eagle: All the core functions of the Department of Education and Skills are carried out in England at four locations, one of which is London. The Department and HM Treasury do not monitor administration costs by region. Further details of the Department's expenditure, including administration expenditure, are outlined in the Department for Education and Skills' Departmental Report 2005, a copy of which is available in the House Library (Cm6522).

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total administrative costs for her core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39839]

Bill Rammell: The total administration costs for the Department are outlined in Annex E of the Department for Education and Skills' Departmental Report 2005, a copy of which is available in the House Library (Cm6522). All administration costs are identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the administrative costs were of each agency for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39856]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills is not responsible for any agencies. Further details of the Department's expenditure are outlined in the Department for Education and Skills' departmental report 2005, a copy of which is available in the House Library (Cm6522).

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40066]

Bill Rammell: The administrative costs for 2004–05 of those non-departmental public bodies for which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has responsibility are listed as follows. All of these costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as identifiable costs.

Net administration costs of non-departmental public bodies[1,2]

	£000
Adult Learning Inspectorate	25,818
British Educational Communications and Technology Agency	15,460
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	105,304
Higher Education Funding Council for England	18,304
Investors in People	2,297
Learning and Skills Council	212,257
National College for School Leadership	17,677
Office for Fair Access[3]	410
Partnership for Schools[3]	7,667
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority	41,141
Sector Skills Development Agency	5,715
Student Loans Company[4]	48,337

Net administration costs of non-departmental public bodies[1,2]

	£000
Training and Development Agency for Schools	14,476
Construction Industry Training Board[3]	39,844
Engineering Construction Industry Training Board[3]	93
Total	554,800

[1] Receipts relating to administration costs have been deducted.
[2] Out-turn figures are from individual NDPB annual accounts.
[3] The Office for Fair Access and Partnership for Schools are new NDPBs set up in 2004–05.
[4] The SLC administration figures are for the whole of the UK and include contributions from Scotland and Ireland.
[5] Funded by industry levies and not from DfES funds.

Cassels Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to implement the recommendation of Sir John Cassels in 2001 that a clearing house be developed for prospective apprentices and employers; when she expects to implement such a system; and if she will make a statement. [42329]

Phil Hope: We are committed to implementing the recommendation of a clearing house from the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee report in 2001, and are currently working with the Learning and Skills Council to build on good practice from the various local, regional and sector-based models that are already operating. Our plans for 14–19 reform include significant engagement with employers, and we are considering a form of clearing house which will incorporate other opportunities for young people to gain experience in the workplace, such as work placements. The recently published 14–19 Implementation Plan states our intention to develop a clearing house by 2007/08.

Child Care Bodies

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many regulatory bodies for which her Department has responsibility regulate child care; and if she will make a statement. [42119]

Beverley Hughes: One. Ofsted regulates child care in England for children under eight. Through the Childcare Bill currently before Parliament, we are taking forward the commitments in our 10-year child care strategy published in December 2004 on reforming the regulation and inspection of child care.

Children's Centres

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children's centres opened in each year from 1999–2000; how many she expects will open in each year to 2010–11; and if she will make a statement. [41296]

Beverley Hughes: No Sure Start Children's Centres were opened between 1999–2002. Local authorities were asked to start planning the development of Children's Centres in February 2003 and 67 centres were designated in 2003–04. An additional 163 centres were designated in 2004–05, and we expect a further 600 centres to be designated in 2005–06. Local authorities are still developing plans for children centre delivery for 2006–08, and a breakdown of numbers of centres to be opened in these years is not centrally available. However, by the end of this period we expect at least 2,500 to be designated. The Government intend to develop 3,500 Sure Start children's centres by 2010. This will mean every community in England will have a children centre co-ordinating a range of integrated services for pre-school children and their parents.

Constructivist Approaches to Learning

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has carried out on the efficacy of constructivist approaches to learning. [40721]

Beverley Hughes: The Department has not commissioned any research exploring the efficacy of constructivist approaches to learning.

Degree Courses

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students were admitted onto degree courses in each year since 1997–98, broken down by *(a)* socio-economic class and *(b)* ethnic group. [27540]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the following tables. The figures are taken from data collected by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) which are limited to students who apply to full-time first degree courses via the UCAS application system. The figures do not therefore cover part-time students nor those full-time students who apply directly to Higher Education Institutions.

(a) Number of UK domiciled students accepted onto full-time degree courses by UK higher education institutions

	by social class				
	1997/98	*1998/99*	*1999/00*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*
Total number accepted	276,505	272,340	277,340	281,810	298,055
Of which:					
I. Professional	37,760	36,850	37,250	37,305	38,195
II. Intermediate	109,020	107,695	108,030	109,820	113,285
IIIN. Skilled non-manual	34,090	32,475	33,215	34,515	35,525
IIIM. Skilled manual	39,695	39,505	39,920	39,780	43,570
IV. Partly skilled	20,850	20,345	20,585	21,590	20,795
V. Unskilled	4,895	4,605	4,770	4,805	4,885
Unknown	30,195	30,870	33,570	33,995	41,800

by socio-economic group

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Total number accepted	309,460	316,240	320,535
Of which:			
1. Higher managerial and professional	59,425	58,035	58,595
2. Lower managerial and professional	79,660	80,180	82,310
3. Intermediate occupations	39,835	38,930	39,500
4. Small employers	18,525	18,845	18,950
5. Lower supervisory/technical	11,835	12,695	12,540
6. Semi-routine	31,895	33,065	33,930
7. Routine	14,310	14,015	14,335
Unknown	53,970	60,480	60,375

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5 so components may not sum to totals.

2. The classification used to record the social background of students changed between academic years 2001/02 and 2002/03, and so the two sets of data in these tables are not directly comparable.

Source:

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

(b) Number of UK domiciled students accepted onto full-time degree courses by UK higher education institutions, by ethnic group

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
Total number accepted	276,505	272,340	277,340	281,810
Of which:				
Asian	22,665	23,540	25,050	26,990
Black	8,330	7,980	8,350	8,910
White	224,450	216,880	219,920	222,045
Other	4,215	4,215	4,600	5,110
Unknown	16,845	19,730	19,415	18,750

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Total number accepted	298,055	309,460	316,240	320,535
Of which:				
Asian	28,820	28,775	29,735	30,565
Black	9,240	9,815	11,565	12,505
Mixed	5,150	5,850	6,420	7,215
White	231,370	238,350	244,300	247,990
Other	2,035	1,940	2,090	2,660
Unknown	21,445	24,725	22,130	19,600

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5 so components may not sum to totals.

2. The classification of ethnic group changed between academic years 2000/01 and 2001/02 in order to incorporate those of mixed ethnicity, and so the two sets of data in these tables are not directly comparable.

Source:

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Departmental Estate

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40073]

Maria Eagle: The following table details expenditure on buildings and insurance of buildings for the Department.

	2004/05		Planned 2005/06	
Region	*Rent, rates and service charge*	*Insurance*	*Rent, rates and service charge*	*Insurance*
London	23,253,389	77,800	23,253,389	80,000
North West	589,736	0	591,250	0
Yorkshire and the Humber	945,355	0	945,355	0
North East	188,000	0	188,000	0
South East	123,621	8,000	124,500	8,500
East of England	218,908	4,637	186,863	3,500
West Midlands	63,212	0	15,750	0

The Department do not hold any records of property expenditure by NDPBs, Executive agencies or other public bodies for which the Department is responsible.

The information requested for the years 2002 to 2003 and 2003 to 2004 could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40337]

Maria Eagle: Our data show that £58,401 was spent via the Department's framework contract. £39,875 of this total was spent on bottled water, the remainder being on ancillary products such as cups and maintenance.

A further £43,629 was spent "off contract". To provide the information requested for this spend could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Disabled Children (School Holiday Support)

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many qualified staff are available to support families with disabled children during school holidays in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Wakefield District and *(c)* Normanton constituency; and whether she plans to increase resources in this area. [41096]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not held by the Department and to collect it would incur disproportionate cost.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of total spending on the education maintenance allowance for each year from 2003–04 to 2008–09. [41455]

Maria Eagle: Spending on the education maintenance allowance programme is within the Treasury's annually managed expenditure (AME). The following table shows, for 2003–04 and 2004–05, actual spend on the programme through AME, and for the years 2005–06 to 2008–09, the provision made in AME for the programme based on an assessment of take up in future years. These figures were correct at the time of the pre-Budget report in November 2005. AME programme forecasts are updated every six months.

EMA provision made in AME

	£ million
2003–04 actual	142
2004–05 actual	260
2005–06 planned	432
2006–07 planned	569
2007–08 planned	589
2008–09 planned	598

Education Spending

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage change in educational spending per pupil is proposed for 2006–07 in *(a)* Redbridge and *(b)* Waltham Forest; what this equates to in money terms per pupil; and what the total expenditure per pupil will be in 2006–07 in each borough. [42681]

Jacqui Smith: The information is set out in the following table. All figures are for allocations of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) per pupil. Authorities must apply the whole of their allocation of DSG to their schools budget, but they are free to add to it from their own resources: final figures for total expenditure per pupil may therefore be higher than the authority's allocation of DSG per pupil.

	Redbridge	*Waltham Forest*
Percentage increase	7.3	6.9
Cash increase (£)	255	264
Total Dedicated Schools Grant (£)	3,757	4,115

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what per capita spending on primary school pupils in England was as a percentage of per capita spending on secondary school pupils in each year from 1978–79; and if she will make a statement. [41448]

Jacqui Smith: The available information is contained within the following table. Similar data are not available before 1992–93.

School based expenditure[1,2,3] per pupil[2] in local authority maintained primary and secondary schools since 1992–93[3]

£ cash terms prices

	Primary[4] (£ per pupil)	*Pre-primary and primary[4] (£ per pupil)*	*Secondary (£ per pupil)*	*Primary (£ per pupil as a percentage of secondary £ per pupil)*	*Pre-primary and primary (£ per pupil as a percentage of secondary £ per pupil)*
1992–93	n/a	1,560	2,260	n/a	69.2
1993–94	n/a	1,610	2,240	n/a	71.9
1994–95	n/a	1,660	2,270	n/a	73.1
1995–96	n/a	1,690	2,300	n/a	73.8
1996–97	n/a	1,740	2,350	n/a	74.0
1997–98[5]	n/a	1,740	2,360	n/a	73.6
1998–99[5]	n/a	1,870	2,450	n/a	76.4
1999–2000[4,6]	2,010	2,050	2,610	76.9	78.5
2000–01	2,210	2,280	2,830	78.2	80.5
2001–02	2,480	2,570	3,150	78.7	81.4
2002–03[7]	2,530	n/a	3,230	78.5	n/a
2003–04	2,750	n/a	3,550	77.7	n/a
2004–05	2,910	n/a	3,800	76.7	n/a

n/a = figures are not available.

[1] School based expenditure includes only expenditure incurred directly by local authority schools. This includes the pay of teachers and school-based support staff, school premises costs, books and equipment, and certain other supplies and services, less any capital items funded from recurrent spending and income from sales, fees and charges and rents and rates. This excludes the central cost of support services such as home to school transport, local authority administration and the financing of capital expenditure.

[2] The expenditure data to 1998–99 are drawn from the annual 'RO1' spending returns which local authorities submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. Figures for 1999–2000 to 2001–02 are drawn from section 52 (table 3) outturn statements which local authorities submitted to the DfES. Figures for 2002–03 onwards are taken from section 52 (table A) outturn statements. The change in sources is shown by the blank rows. The pupil data are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

[3] From 2002–03 the calculation is broadly similar to the calculation in previous years. However, 2001–02 and earlier years includes all premature retirement compensation (PRC) and Crombie payments, mandatory PRC payments and other indirect employee expenses, while from 2002–03 only the schools element of these categories is included. In 2001–02 this accounted for approximately £70 per pupil

of the England total, while the schools element of these categories accounted for approximately £50 per pupil of the England total in 2002–03. Also, for some LAs, expenditure that had previously been attributed to the school sectors was reported within the LA part of the form from 2002–03 and would therefore be excluded, though this is not quantifiable from existing sources.

[4] Expenditure was not distinguished between the pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of section 52 for financial year 1999–2000.

[5] Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99.

[6] The expenditure data for 1999–2000 onwards reflect the return of grant maintained schools to local authority maintenance.

Note:

Figures are reported in cash terms as at 11 January 2006 and rounded to the nearest £10 and may not sum due to rounding.

Educational Psychologists

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many educational psychologists are employed by local education authorities. [39516]

Jacqui Smith: Information on the number of educational psychologists in service is collected in January of each year. The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of educational psychologists employed in each local authority in January 1997 and 2005.

Full-time equivalent number of educational psychologists[1] in local authorities in England, January 1997 and 2005

	1997	2005
City of London	[1]—	[1]—
Camden	8	16
Greenwich	16	15
Hackney	11	12
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	11
Islington	10	14
Kensington and Chelsea	9	6
Lambeth	13	14
Lewisham	14	12
Southwark	14	13
Tower Hamlets	14	15
Wandsworth	11	12
City of Westminster	10	9
Barking and Dagenham	13	15
Barnet	16	15
Bexley	11	14
Brent	12	14
Bromley	12	10
Croydon	10	15
Ealing	13	14
Enfield	15	23
Haringey	15	13
Harrow	11	13
Havering	8	10
Hillingdon	12	14
Hounslow	10	11
Kingston upon Thames	5	8
Merton	7	8
Newham	12	12
Redbridge	8	11
Richmond upon Thames	7	7
Sutton	6	8
Waltham Forest	13	12
Birmingham	39	55
Coventry	13	11
Dudley	11	12
Sandwell	14	16
Solihull	9	12
Walsall	11	11
Wolverhampton	12	18
Knowsley	9	5
Liverpool	16	20
St. Helens	6	8
Sefton	10	12
Wirral	14	15
Bolton	8	10
Bury	8	8
Manchester	18	19
Oldham	7	11
Rochdale	8	6
Salford	10	11
Stockport	12	13
Tameside	8	12
Trafford	5	6
Wigan	12	12
Barnsley	4	9
Doncaster	11	15
Rotherham	12	9
Sheffield	19	17
Bradford	19	13
Calderdale	8	5
Kirklees	22	25
Leeds	15	32
Wakefield	10	11
Gateshead	9	14
Newcastle upon Tyne	14	13
North Tyneside	7	11
South Tyneside	6	8
Sunderland	12	11
Isles of Scilly	[1]—	[1]—
Bath and North East Somerset	5	[1]—
City of Bristol	17	16
North Somerset	8	10
South Gloucestershire	7	10
Hartlepool	3	4
Middlesbrough	5	8
Redcar and Cleveland	5	5
Stockton on Tees	9	10
City of Kingston Upon Hull	8	12
East Riding of Yorkshire	8	9
North East Lincolnshire	4	7
North Lincolnshire	5	4
North Yorkshire	13	16
York	7	9
Bedfordshire	16	16
Luton	n/a	5
Buckinghamshire	25	23
Milton Keynes	n/a	12
Derbyshire	32	31
Derby	n/a	11
Dorset	25	19
Poole	n/a	7
Bournemouth	n/a	7
Durham	23	27
Darlington	n/a	5
East Sussex	18	17
Brighton and Hove	n/a	12
Hampshire	61	52
Portsmouth	n/a	8
Southampton	n/a	13

Full-time equivalent number of educational psychologists[1] in local authorities in England, January 1997 and 2005

	1997	2005
Leicestershire	26	19
Leicester	n/a	26
Rutland	n/a	[2]
Staffordshire	28	28
Stoke on Trent	n/a	14
Wiltshire	13	20
Former Berkshire	21	n/a
Swindon	n/a	8
Bracknell Forest	n/a	5
Windsor and Maidenhead	n/a	6
West Berkshire	n/a	9
Reading	n/a	5
Slough	n/a	11
Wokingham	n/a	7
Cambridgeshire	20	18
Peterborough	n/a	8
Cheshire	30	25
Halton	n/a	6
Warrington	n/a	8
Devon	35	30
Plymouth	n/a	14
Torbay	n/a	6
Essex	63	47
Southend on Sea	n/a	6
Thurrock	n/a	6
Former Hereford and Worcester	22	n/a
Herefordshire	n/a	7
Worcestershire	n/a	24
Kent	56	41
Medway	n/a	11
Lancashire	55	43
Blackburn with Darwen	n/a	11
Blackpool	n/a	8
Nottinghamshire	33	29
Nottingham	n/a	14
Former Shropshire	13	n/a
Shropshire[3]	n/a	[2]
Telford and Wrekin[3]	n/a	14
Cornwall	13	17
Cumbria	17	11
Gloucestershire	9	23
Hertfordshire	35	38
Isle of Wight	4	6
Lincolnshire	19	22
Norfolk	24	26
Northamptonshire	23	30
Northumberland	9	13
Oxfordshire	18	27
Somerset	16	25
Suffolk	16	20
Surrey	34	41
Warwickshire	15	20
West Sussex	22	35
England	1,768	2,156

n/a = not available.

[1] Includes those on secondment for in service and initial training for Educational Psychologists.

[2] Signifies < 1.

[3] Shropshire Educational Psychologists service is shared with Telford and Wrekin. Numbers are shown under Telford and Wrekin.

Source:

Annual survey of teacher numbers and teacher vacancies, Form 618g.

Falling School Rolls

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment has been made by the Department of the effects of falling school rolls in *(a)* the North East and *(b)* Gateshead, East and Washington, West constituency. [41621]

Jacqui Smith: The Department's national forecasts indicate that primary school rolls will fall by 129,000 between 2004/05 and 2007/08 with secondary rolls falling by 133,000 between 2004/05 and 2007/08.

Local authority forecast data are at authority level and we do not have forecasts for the Gateshead, East and Washington, West constituency. Gateshead local authority's 2004 forecasts indicate that primary rolls will fall by 1,176 between 2004/05 and 2007/08 and secondary rolls will fall by 422 between 2004/05 and 2010/11. Sunderland local authority's 2004 forecasts indicate that primary rolls will fall by 2,739 between 2004/05 and 2007/08 and secondary rolls will fall by 1,876 between 2004/05 and 2010/11. We have developed a toolkit offering practical advice to help local authorities manage the challenges and opportunities presented by falling primary rolls. The toolkit is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/fallingrolls.

Foster Carers

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to ensure that foster carers are not discouraged by the welfare and benefits system from taking children on foster placements, with particular reference to housing benefit; and if she will make a statement. [41597]

Maria Eagle: Foster carers play a vital role and we are committed to ensuring that they are not discouraged from caring for children by financial issues.

All payments to foster carers in respect of children placed with them are disregarded in the calculation of entitlements for income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance and housing benefit. For the purposes of jobseeker's allowance, foster carers are treated as not being in remunerative work and so no account is taken of the hours spent in 'caring' for the children whom they are fostering. In cases where single foster parents are caring for a child, they are treated in the same way as lone parents in terms of their entitlement to income support (provided they meet the criteria). This means that their potential entitlement is not dependent on their availability for employment.

Moreover, in March 2003 Home Responsibilities Protection was extended to include foster carers. The number of years they need to work to qualify for the state pension will therefore be reduced to take into account their years of caring (including periods when they are awaiting a placement), thereby increasing their long-term financial security.

Fosterline, a new advice line funded by the DfES, offers information for prospective and existing foster carers on a range of issues, including benefits.

More widely, we are seeking to improve the financial support that foster carers receive through the introduction of a national minimum allowance. We shall be consulting on our proposals later this month.

Further Education

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to promote a national brand for *(a)* sixth-form colleges and *(b)* general further education colleges, as recommended in the Foster report. [41553]

Bill Rammell: As the Secretary of State for Education and Skills said at the Association of College's annual conference on 16 November, we think Sir Andrew Foster has produced an impressive report which sets out a clear direction of travel. We want to take the time to consider the detailed recommendations in Sir Andrew's report. These recommendations, and how they should be taken forward, are being discussed with the Learning and Skills Council, colleges and other stakeholders. This includes those recommendations that relate to the branding and reputation management of FE and sixth-form colleges. We plan to announce in the spring the next stage of our reform of further education.

Stephen Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps she is taking to ensure that the Learning and Skills Council is able to fund further education colleges sufficiently to meet the demand for places on non-basic skills courses for people aged over 19 years; and if she will make a statement; [40704]

(2) what assessment she has made of the extent to which the Learning and Skills Council is able to fund further education colleges sufficiently to meet the demand from those wishing to study English for speakers of other languages courses; and if she will make a statement. [40705]

Bill Rammell: On 21 October the Government set out their priorities for post-16 education including adult line. I set out the Government's priorities for the learning and skills sector and the impact on funding in 2006–07 and 2007–08 on the 21 October, and full details can be found in "Priorities for Success" on the LSC's website. Overall funding for further education (FE) which includes adult skills increased by 4.4 per cent. in 2005–06. Funding for non-vocational learning opportunities for adults, delivered mainly through local authority adult education services, has also increased. In 2004–05 we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005–06. After piloting from 2002 we have also announced the national roll-out of the National Employer Training Programme in 2006–07 with a budget rising to £399 million in 2007–08. Through their dialogue with providers and their assessment of the needs of local communities, LSCs agree plans which enable colleges and other providers to deliver a wide range of learning opportunities to meet the needs of learners and employers. Literacy, numeracy and English language learning is a key priority.

Graduates and Postgraduates

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of working age people have held a qualification at *(a)* degree level or equivalent and *(b)* above degree level in each parliamentary constituency in each year since 1997. [40698]

Bill Rammell: The information requested has been place in the House Libraries.

HE/FE Drop-out Rates

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what statistics the Government keep on drop-out rates from further and higher education courses. [42015]

Bill Rammell: Since 1996/97, information on projected non-completion rates for higher education students has been published annually, initially by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and latterly by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education". The latest available figures giving overall non-completion rates for students starting full-time first degree courses in England are shown in the table. Figures published in 2005 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that in 2003 the UK had one of the lowest higher education non-completion rates among OECD countries.

Percentage of UK domiciled full-time first degree students expected neither to obtain an award nor transfer—English higher education institutions

Percentage

Students starting courses in:	*Non-completion rate*
2002/03	13.9
2001/02	13.8
2000/01	15.0
1999/2000	15.9
1998/99	15.8
1997/98	16.1
1996/97	15.7

Source:
"Performance Indicators in Higher Education", published by HESA. For 2002/03, the projected outcomes summarise the pattern of movements of students at institutions between 2002/03 and 2003/04 and give the outcomes that would have been expected from starters in 2002/03 if progression patterns were to remain unchanged over the next few years. The HESA data show the proportion of entrants who are projected to: obtain a qualification (either a first degree or another undergraduate award); transfer to another HEI; neither obtain a qualification nor transfer (i.e. fail to complete the course).

One of the measures used by the Government to monitor performance in further education is the learner retention rate. The learner retention rate is the proportion of qualification aims for which all learning activities were completed.

Learner retention rates are published annually in a Statistical First Release (http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000583/index.shtml). The overall learner retention rate for FE colleges was 85 per cent. in 2003/04, the latest year for which final data are available.

Retention rates for individual colleges can be downloaded from the LSC website (http://benchmarkingdata.lsc.gov.uk/year8/index.cfm). For the middle 80 per cent. of colleges the retention rate in 2003/04 lay in the range 78 per cent. to 91 per cent.

Retention rates are highly dependent on the mix of qualifications done at a college. A college that does few short courses and many full courses is likely to get a

relatively low retention rate, simply because the national retention rate for short courses is relatively high and the national retention rate for full courses is relatively low.

FE college retention rates and HE institution non-completion rates are collected in different ways and are not comparable.

Healthy Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the schools which have achieved healthy schools status, broken down by local education authority. [39443]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Higher Education

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many further education students went on to university in the last year for which figures are available. [24999]

Bill Rammell: The latest information is given in the table.

Accepted applicants to full-time undergraduate courses by previous school type UK institutions 2004/05

School type	*Acceptances*
Further education	112,395
Maintained schools	123,315
Independent schools	31,390
Other	4,125
Not known	63,065
Total	334,295

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in *(a)* Sprowston High School, *(b)* Kellesden High School, *(c)* King Edward School and *(d)* Norwich High Street in Norwich progressed to (i) medicine, (ii) law and (iii) science subjects at university in the last five years. [37916]

Bill Rammell: Figures on the number of pupils from individual schools entering higher education are not calculated by the Department. Information on the number of entrants from Norwich, North constituency are given in the table. Figures for 2004/05 will be available later in January.

18-year-olds entrants to HE courses from Norwich, North constituency

Academic year	*Pre-clinical medicine*	*Law*	*All sciences*[1]	*All subjects*
2000/01	[2]	5	55	140
2001/02	[2]	5	65	160
2002/03[3]	[2]	5	80	165
2003/04	5	10	65	175

[1] 'Sciences' includes 'Medicine and Dentistry', 'Subjects allied to Medicine', 'Biological Sciences', 'Physical Sciences', 'Computer Sciences', 'Mathematical Sciences', 'Architecture Building and Planning' and 'Engineering and Technology'.
[2] less than 3.
[3] In 2002/03 a new coding frame for recording subject of study was introduced, as was a new method of apportionment between subjects studied. As such, figures for 2002/03 onwards are not directly comparable to earlier years.
Note:
Figures are on a DfES whole year count basis and are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Home Schooling

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment has been made of the impact the proposals contained within the Education White Paper will have on local education authority powers to regulate home schooling. [41622]

Jacqui Smith: Local authorities have a duty to ensure that all children of compulsory school age in their locality receive a suitable full-time education. While the White Paper proposes a new statutory duty on local authorities to identify children missing education, it will not have any impact on local authority powers to regulate home schooling and there are no current plans to introduce compulsory registration of parents choosing to educate their children at home.

Learning and Skills Councils

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to improve the operation of Learning and Skills Councils in London; and if she will make a statement. [42684]

Bill Rammell: London faces a range of opportunities and challenges which need distinctive and tailored solutions. One of the biggest challenges over the next few years will be the Olympics and Paralympics. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the body responsible for planning and funding skills in London, has made good progress in meeting the skill needs of the capital, and is committed to working with all private and public sector partners to ensure that these opportunities are realised and the challenges met.

The appointment of an LSC Regional Director for London has helped to strengthen the way that the LSC is working with partners to tackle education and skills issues in the capital. The recent appointment of a new Director for Regeneration, whose responsibilities include links to the Olympics, will further strengthen its ability to deliver training and skills in London.

The LSC is also undergoing a radical restructuring exercise, which will ensure that the LSC is able to identify and respond to London's learning and skill needs even more effectively. These proposals will create a number of specialist economic development teams that will focus on skills for employers and regeneration. They will be supported by a new regional centre that will co-ordinate work with the RDAs, Sector Skills Councils and Regional Skills Partnership. The proposals are currently out to consultation with staff and unions until the end of January, and the final agreed changes will take effect from summer 2006.

We will also want to consider in due course the outcomes of the current consultation on the powers and responsibilities of the Greater London Authority.

Level 2 Qualification

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the entitlement to a first Level 2 qualification is available to citizens of other countries resident in England; and if she will make a statement. [41598]

Phil Hope: The Level 2 entitlement is targeted at all adults aged 19 or over without a first full level 2 qualification. It provides access to free tuition for their first full Level 2 qualification and eligibility is determined using a process of self-declaration. This process requires the learner to complete and sign a declaration of eligibility stating their highest level of qualification held.

All individuals must meet the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) residency and nationality criteria. This is laid down in section 7 of the LSC Funding Guidance for Further Education 2004–05 (published April 2004) and the supplementary 2005–06 guidance which corresponds to the groups listed in the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations, 1997.

Learner eligibility in relation to the Level 2 entitlement, and wider LSC funding eligibility, is widely drawn. The LSC regards an individual as ordinarily resident, and therefore eligible for LSC funding, as any person who habitually, normally and lawfully resides from choice and for settled purpose in that country. A copy of the LSC Funding Guidance for Further Education 2004–05 and supplementary 2005–06 information can be found at the following internet addresses:

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/pre2005/funding/streams/funding-guidance-for-fe-2004–05.pdf

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/2005/quality/performanceachievement/funding-guidance-for-fe-2005–2006..pdf

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the companies in receipt of funds in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 as part of the entitlement to a first level 2 qualification; and how much was received by such companies in each pilot area. [41620]

Phil Hope: During 2004–05 and 2005–06 the entitlement to a first full level 2 qualification has been available to individuals through further education (FE) colleges and to employers and their employees through Employer Training Pilots (ETP).

In 2004–05 the approach to individuals was piloted through FE colleges in the North East and South East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) regions. From 2005–06, in a transition year toward national roll-out in 2006/07, all FE colleges in all LSC regions began to implement the entitlement. Individual learners exercising their entitlement are not asked to pay their contribution to the tuition fee; these fees are received by FE colleges from the LSC.

ETPs were introduced in September 2002. At the end of March 2004, 8,427 employers were involved and by the end of March 2005, 19,440 had signed up. By the end of December 2005, a total of 26,974 employers and 226,426 learners had participated in ETP. Nearly 80 per cent. of ETP learners are, or were working towards an NVQ level 2 qualification.

Details of contracts between ETP managers and employers taking part are confidential, including information on learning given and funding received. Release of any information, including the names of participating employers, would be subject to getting formal agreement from each employer Given the numbers of employers in ETP we believe that the costs of disaggregating the data and then obtaining permission to use it from employers would be disproportionate.

Local Strategic Partnerships

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* guidance and *(b)* advice the Learning and Skills Councils have issued as to who should chair local strategic partnerships. [42678]

Bill Rammell: The consultation paper "Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping the Future" launched on 8 December by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister examines the future role of LSPs, their governance and accountability, and their capacity to deliver sustainable community strategies and local area agreements.

Membership of LSPs is drawn from a wide range of local partners, including the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The leadership of individual LSPs is a matter for local discretion and members' views can be sought on their chairmanship. The LSC has not issued guidance on who should chair LSPs.

Medicine

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many British medical students have studied in England in each year since 1997; how many were entrants from *(a)* the state sector and *(b)* the independent sector in each year; and if she will make a statement. [22923]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures for medical students are shown in the table. Information for 2004/05 will be available in January 2006. Information on the school background of young (under 21) higher education students is published annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", but this covers all students and does not show figures for each subject separately. The latest data collected by HESA for 2003/04, covering students of all ages, show that 30 per cent. of entrants to undergraduate medical and dentistry courses came from the independent sector, compared to 12 per cent. of entrants to all undergraduate courses of any subject. Comparable figures for earlier years are not available centrally at present.

UK domiciled students on undergraduate medical courses, English HE institutions

Academic year	*Students*
1997/98	16,640
1998/99	16,575
1999/2000	16,650
2000/01	17,215
2001/02	17,970
2002/03	20,540
2003/04	22,695

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest five.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Ofsted Offices (Refurbishment Expenditure)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost of refurbishing Ofsted offices in *(a)* Bristol, *(b)* Nottingham and *(c)* Manchester is expected to be; if she will provide a breakdown of expenditure for each office on items costing £500 or more including import and labour costs; and if she will make a statement. [41152]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the question tabled on 14 December (38605) by the hon. Member for Bognor, Regis and Littlehampton. [41596]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 517W.

Physical Education

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what guidance is being provided for primary school head teachers on how to implement the workforce reform proposals in relation to physical education while maintaining *(a)* safety standards for children and *(b)* progress towards the public service agreement target on high quality physical education; [40768]

(2) what guidance is produced by the Teaching and Development Agency on the minimum number of hours in initial training needed by primary school teachers to be adequately prepared to teach physical education *(a)* safely and *(b)* to the level required for the achievement of the public service agreement target on high quality physical education. [40769]

Jacqui Smith: We have worked with the British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education (BAALPE) to develop a range of guidance documents for schools. Guidance is aimed at helping schools to implement workforce remodelling and to take a fresh look at the roles of support staff and external specialists in PE. We have always been clear that anyone working in this area needs to have relevant skills, experience and competence, with the safety of pupils always the first consideration. Full details of the guidance developed can be found at: www.baalpe.org.

The Training and Development Agency for Schools does not prescribe a number of hours to be spent on any individual area of the curriculum for trainee teachers. Instead, the Agency requires trainees to meet a demanding set of outcomes by the end of their training programmes. All primary trainee teachers are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of PE as well as demonstrating teaching ability in PE before they can become newly qualified teachers. This should enable newly qualified teachers to meet the PSA target. All trainee teachers are required to be able to manage lessons safely.

Post-16 Education

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the staying on rates for 16-year-olds in England were in each year from 1996–97; and if she will make a statement. [41453]

Bill Rammell: The percentage of 16-year-olds in full-time education in England is shown in the following table.

	Percentage of 16-year-olds in full-time education in England
1996	70.6
1997	70.2
1998	70.2
1999	71.8
2000	71.0
2001	70.7
2002	71.9
2003	72.3
2004 (Provisional)	74.2

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the effect on staying-on rates of the introduction of the education maintenance allowance; and if she will make a statement. [41454]

Maria Eagle: EMA was subject to one of the most comprehensive evaluations of any educational initiative. It was piloted in 10 areas (plus five others in London/Leeds) and the evaluation followed two cohorts of 16-year-olds for four years from 1999/2000 and 2000/01. Their outcomes were compared to those of matched individuals in 11 control areas. It was rolled out to a further 41 area in 2000/01 so that it was operating in around one third of the country.

The results indicated that EMA increased participation of eligible young people in the pilot areas by 5.9 percentage points. This is equivalent to an increase in participation of all 16-year-olds across the whole country of 3.8 percentage points. There was a particularly strong impact for key target groups:

young males (1.2 times impact),

none/low/middle achievers (1.3 to 1.7 times impact)

lower SEG groups (1.3 to 1.6 times impact)

The results also showed positive impacts on retention from Y13 to Y14, and also on an individual's attachment to education, as measured by number of terms which they stay in education to age 19.

EMA was rolled out to 16-year-olds in the remaining two thirds of the country in September 2004. There was a 1.9 percentage point increase in participation of 16-year-olds in full-time education between 2003/04 and 2004/05. This is in line with the increase in participation which was expected from the roll out of EMA and is the largest increase in participation for over 10 years. While it is not possible to say that all of the increase was due to EMA, this was one of the most important initiatives aimed at increasing participation. The Department and LSC will be doing further analyses of local participation when these become available to try to get a better estimate of the change which might be due to EMA. EMA was rolled out to 17-year-olds in September 2005 and will be fully rolled out to 18-year-olds from September 2006.

This year the LSC has adopted the strategy of measuring EMA take-up to show early impact of the scheme locally. Volumes are on target, and take-up among poorer students is higher than originally projected, which is the group upon whom EMA is likely to have the greatest beneficial effect. Take-up among 16-year-olds largely met or exceeded estimated figures in 2004/05. Where take-up is lower than anticipated, the local LSC targets additional support to raise awareness of EMA and increase the figures.

Postgraduates

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of students *(a)* studying for and *(b)* who achieved postgraduate degrees were educated in state schools in each year since 1997. [24453]

Bill Rammell: The available information on the previous school type of students is published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in 'Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK'. However, these figures cover undergraduate entrants only and corresponding information for postgraduates is not available.

The latest available information on the school background of higher education students covers young (aged under 21) first degree entrants, and is shown in the table.

Proportion of UK domiciled young full-time first degree entrants to English Institutions from state schools and colleges

Academic Year	*Proportion from state schools and colleges*
1997/98	81.0
1998/99	84.4
1999/2000	84.1
2000/01	85.0
2001/02	85.2
2002/03	86.4
2003/04	86.1

Source:
"Performance Indicators in Higher Education" published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Qualifications (Gateshead)

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of working age people in Gateshead East and Washington West were *(a)* qualified to (i) post-graduate level, (ii) graduate level and (iii) A-level and *(b)* without qualifications in each year from 1990. [41623]

Phil Hope: The following table shows estimates of the level of highest qualification held by the working age population in the parliamentary constituency of Gateshead East and Washington West. Data come from the Local Labour Force Survey. The number of people holding qualifications at post-graduate level and who were sampled in the LLFS, were too small to yield any meaningful estimates. The figures below therefore indicate the proportion qualified to either graduate level or equivalent (level 4), or postgraduate level (level 5). Qualified to A-level is defined as level 3 in the table. Data at parliamentary constituency level are not available prior to 1999.

Percentage

Qualification level	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Level 4 or 5	18	16	18	18	23	25
Level 3	16	12	14	14	13	12
Trade apprenticeships[1]	13	13	12	10	7	7
Level 2	13	17	17	17	17	16
Below level 2	18	17	16	18	17	17
Other qualifications[2]	[3]	7	4	5	6	7
No qualifications	19	17	19	18	16	17

[1] For the purposes of target measurement people with trade apprenticeships as their highest qualification are assigned to level 3 and level 2 in the ratio of 50:50.
[2] Qualifications that cannot be assigned directly to levels. For the purposes of target measurement, people with Other qualifications as their highest qualification level are assigned to level 3:level 2:below level 2 in the ratio of 10:35:55.
[3] Estimates for 1999–2000 and 2000–01 based on small sample sizes have been suppressed as they are statistically unreliable. Estimates for later years based on small sample sizes have been given, and are therefore subject to a higher degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution and, in particular, changes from year to year should not be used in isolation from the figures for a run of years.
Notes:
1. As with all sample surveys the estimates presented in this table are subject to sampling variability.
2. Columns may not sum to 100 per cent. due to rounding.
3. Working age people are defined as males and females aged 16–64 and 16–59 respectively.

School Budgets (Shrewsbury)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional funding has been made available for schools in Shrewsbury which have been unable to remain within their financial budgets for 2005–06. [41160]

Jacqui Smith: My Department has not made any additional funds available to Shropshire county council for this purpose. However, the LEA and School Budget Regulations enable local authorities to support schools in financial difficulty through sums held centrally by them, or by extending licensed deficit facilities under the conditions set out in their schemes for financing schools.

In 2005–06 Shropshire received a 7.1 per cent. increase per pupil in its Schools Formula Spending Share.

School Curriculum (International Activities)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps the Government are taking to encourage schools and local education authorities to promote greater international links and opportunities with regard to curriculum-related activities; and if she will make a statement; [41155]

(2) what steps the Government are taking to encourage schools and local education authorities to promote international professional development opportunities for teachers and head teachers; and if she will make a statement; [41156]

(3) what representations she has received about encouraging schools and local education authorities to promote greater international links and opportunities; and if she will make a statement. [41157]

Bill Rammell: A key aim of 'Putting the World into World-Class Education—An international strategy for education, skills and children's services' is to equip our children, young people and adults for life in a global society and work in a global economy. In addition, our national languages strategy clearly sets out the importance of international partnerships for the enrichment of language learning and to the curriculum more generally.

Feeding into these, a tremendous amount of work is taking place to encourage schools and local authorities to promote international development opportunities for teachers and head teachers as well as greater international links and opportunities with regard to curriculum-related activities:

Under citizenship education (which is statutory in secondary schools), pupils are being taught about the world as a global community, the political economic, environmental and social implications of this, including the wider issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility;

The DfES has funded and worked with organisations to produce resource materials to support schools, such as the guide on 'Developing a Global Dimension' in the school curriculum';

The Global Gateway website (www.globalgateway.org) is being continuously developed as our primary resource for all aspects of internationalism in education. It is primarily a global school partner finding facility. It also contains, among other things, guidance and resources for curriculum-related activities and information on professional development opportunities for teachers;

With the British Council, we have developed a promotion pack containing relevant information and ready-made presentations for use by local authorities and other regional and local networks (e.g. the British Council Regional Professional Development network, development education centres) and, through them, to schools;

We are working to further increase the impact of the DfES Teachers' International Professional Development (TIPD) programme, including greater synergy with the NCSL International Programme for Head teachers so that they can both potentially impact more on whole system change and policy development;

The Comenius EU Programme provides opportunities for schools to work in multinational partnerships in projects to support and develop all areas of the curriculum, as well as opportunities for teachers to undertake training periods within one of the participating countries. Since 2004/05 the British Council has undertaken a focused promotion of the opportunities to schools and local authorities, and in 2005 there was a record number of 1,044 UK schools taking part in school projects. 605 teachers also took training courses in the programme, the majority being intensive courses for language teachers.

We have had a very enthusiastic and positive response to the international strategy and have been working across a wide range of partners on raising the profile of the global dimension. Partners include: DFID and other Government Departments; British Council; Association of Colleges; Development Education Association; Institute of Education, University of London; Learning and Skills Council; QCA; NCSL; Universities UK; and UK Forum for International Education and Training.

School Swimming Pools

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school swimming pools there were in 1997; and how many have closed in each of the subsequent years. [41889]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not held centrally.

School Transport

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which local authorities operate a Home to School transport scheme; and if she will make a statement. [41004]

Jacqui Smith: All local authorities in England and Wales are required to make arrangements for home to school transport under provisions contained in the Education Act 1996.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what evaluation her Department *(a)* has undertaken and *(b)* plans to undertake to ascertain why parents are not using home to school transport provided by local authorities; and if she will make a statement. [41005]

Jacqui Smith: My Department is not aware of any evidence to suggest that there is any large scale failure on the part of parents to take advantage of home to school transport arranged by local authorities, and therefore has not, and does not plan to undertake any such evaluation.

Schools

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children resident in the London borough of Croydon are educated in other local

authorities, broken down by the local authority of the school which the child attends. [41131]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

Number of children residing in Croydon local authority by local authority in which they attend school

	Primary[2]		Secondary[3]		Special[4]	
LA of schooling	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*
Croydon	22,053	92.4	15,418	77.3	461	71.8
Bexley	—	—	6	[1]	[1]	—
Birmingham	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Brighton and Hove	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bromley	398	1.7	1,011	5.1	7	1.1
Buckinghamshire	—	—	—	—	[1]	[1]
Camden	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Ealing	—	—	[1]	[1]		
East Sussex	—	—	—	—	[1]	[1]
Greenwich	—	—	5	[1]	—	—
Hackney	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	3	[1]	28	0.1	[1]	[1]
Hampshire	—	—	—	—	[1]	[1]
Haringey	—	—	6	[1]	—	—
Harrow	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Hertfordshire	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Islington	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea	4	[1]	3	[1]	[1]	[1]
Kent	—	—	5	[1]	5	0.8
Kingston upon Thames	[1]		8	[1]	—	—
Lambeth	381	1.6	296	1.5	29	4.5
Lewisham	31	0.1	48	0.2	[1]	[1]
Lincolnshire	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Merton	190	0.8	212	1.1	13	2.0
Newham	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	—	[1]	[1]		
Oxfordshire	—	—	—	—	[1]	[1]
Redbridge	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	7	[1]	—	—
Southwark	32	0.1	91	0.5	3	0.5
Surrey	445	1.9	936	4.7	52	8.1
Sutton	138	0.6	1,647	8.3	45	7.0
Tower Hamlets	—	—	3	[1]	[1]	[1]
Wandsworth	169	0.7	166	0.8	8	1.2
West Berkshire	—	—	—	—	[1]	[1]
West Sussex	[1]	—	—	—	5	0.8
Westminster	11	[1]	27	0.1	—	—
Total	23,862	—	19,933	—	642	—

[1] Indicates low count or negligible percentage.
[2] Includes middle deemed primary.
[3] Includes middle deemed secondary CTCs and academies.
[4] Includes special and non-maintained special schools.
Source:
Annual Schools Census 2005

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children attend schools in the London borough of Croydon, broken down by the local authority area in which the child is resident. [41133]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

Number of children attending schools in Croydon local authority by local authority in which the pupils reside

	Primary[2]		Secondary[3]		Special[4]	
Resident LA	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*
Croydon	22,053	93.0	15,418	81.5	461	90.7
Barnet	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bexley	[1]	[1]	3	[1]	—	—
Brent	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bromley	180	0.8	717	3.8	[1]	[1]
Camden	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Ealing	—	—	1	[1]	—	—
East Sussex	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—

Number of children attending schools in Croydon local authority by local authority in which the pupils reside

	Primary[2]		Secondary[3]		Special[4]	
Resident LA	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of resident population*
Greenwich	—	—	10	0.1	—	—
Hackney	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Harrow	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Havering	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Islington	—	—	4	[1]	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	3	[1]	—	—
Kent	4	[1]	6	[1]	—	—
Kingston upon Thames	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Lambeth	482	2.0	1,176	6.2	10	2.0
Lewisham	26	0.1	259	1.4	[1]	[1]
Luton	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Medway	[1]	[1]	—	—	—	—
Merton	143	0.6	256	1.4	8	1.6
Newham	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Redbridge	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Somerset	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Southwark	43	0.2	204	1.1	3	0.6
Surrey	348	1.5	266	1.4	7	1.4
Sutton	292	1.2	420	2.2	10	2.0
Tower Hamlets	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Wandsworth	10	[1]	64	0.3	[1]	[1]
West Sussex	[1]	[1]	16	0.1	—	—
Westminster	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
York	—	—	[1]	[1]	—	—
Unknown	114	0.5	69	0.4	4	0.8
Total	23,701		18,918		508	

[1] Indicates low count or negligible percentage.
[2] Includes middle deemed primary.
[3] Includes middle deemed secondary CTCs and academies.
[4] Includes special and non-maintained special schools.
Source
Annual Schools Census 2005

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Shropshire did not exceed their budget in the 2004–05 financial year. [40749]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is contained within the following table:

	Total
Number of local authority maintained schools reported on section 52 outturn during financial year 2004–05[1]	167
Number of schools over their revenue budget for 2004–05[2,3]	122
Total number of schools within their revenue budget for 2004–05[2,4]	45

[1] Included in the above table are all local authority maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools reported by Shropshire local authority on their 2004–05 Section 52 Outturn Statement (Table B).
[2] For the purposes of this table, a school is defined as operating within its revenue budget during 2004–05 if its closing revenue balance is greater than or equal to its opening revenue balance. The balance information reported in Shropshire's return is not internally consistent for all schools and in two cases this inconsistency, although relatively small, could mean that they should have been reported as over rather than within their revenue budget for the year.
[3] Of the 122 schools who were within budget for 2004–05:
eight started the year with a deficit revenue balance and remained in deficit at the end of the year;
15 went from having a deficit revenue balance at the start of the year to being in surplus at the end of the year;
99 started the year with a surplus revenue balance and ended the year further in surplus;
[4] Of the 45 schools who were over budget for 2004–05:
34 had sufficient surplus revenue balances at the start of the year that they still remained in surplus at the end of the year;
seven went from having a surplus revenue balance at the start of the year to being in deficit at the end of the year;
four started the year with a deficit revenue balance and ended the year further in deficit.
Note:
Data are as reported by Shropshire LA, but is being validated by the Department and is likely to change.

Schools White Paper

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what functions *(a)* her Department, *(b)* HM Inspectorate, *(c)* School Admissions Forums, *(d)* Ofsted, *(e)* the Schools Commissioner, *(f)* the Schools Adjudicator, *(g)* local authorities and *(h)* the Audit Commission will exercise with regard to (i) community schools, (ii) trust schools, (iii) special schools, (iv) city academies, (v) pupil referral units, (vi) federated schools and (vii) foundation schools under the proposals in the Schools White Paper; and what formal powers each body will be able to exercise in the discharge of each function. [37104]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills will set the overall legislative and policy framework for all schools.

Admission Forums provide a vehicle for representatives of admission authorities and other key parties to discuss admission issues and consider the effectiveness of local admission arrangements. The function of the Forum is to provide advice on difficult admission issues, information for parents and to broker agreement on arrangements for admitting vulnerable pupils to schools quickly. All maintained schools, including Trust schools, and Academies must have regard to the Forum's advice. Admission Forums will have no functions in relation to special schools or Pupil Referral Units.

Ofsted contribute to improvement and provide accountability through independent inspection and reporting. New shorter, sharper inspections were introduced in September 2005 as part of the New Relationship with Schools. The White Paper proposes that Ofsted should explore the introduction of even lighter touch inspections for high-performing schools. It also proposes that Ofsted should be given powers to investigate complaints from parents.

The Schools Commissioner will be a senior Civil Servant within DfES and as such he/she will be carrying out functions on behalf of the Secretary of State. The Schools Commissioner will have a general role in promoting trust schools, including encouraging the spread of good practice between schools. In particular, the Commissioner will support schools wishing to adopt trusts, for example by brokering relationships with suitable partners and providing model documentation to facilitate the formation of trusts.

The Schools Adjudicator rules on any objections to the proposed admission arrangements of all maintained schools, including Trust schools, and makes decisions on school organisation matters referred to him. Under the proposals in the White Paper, local authorities will be able to propose new foundation schools, propose the closure of all schools and propose expansion or the addition of SEN facilities to all categories of school. Where there is a conflict of interest, proposals will be decided by the Adjudicator. The Schools Adjudicator will have no functions in relation to Academies, special schools and Pupil Referral Units.

The Audit Commission is an independent public body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently, and effectively in the areas of local government. It will continue to have a role in monitoring the effectiveness of the delivery of school improvement policies.

The White Paper sets out a role for local authorities as the champions of the young people and parents in their area. Local authorities are currently responsible for ensuring that there is sufficiency of supply (as laid out in Sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996). Under proposals set out in the White Paper, the local authority will also be responsible for promoting choice, diversity and fair access. Local authorities also provide challenge and support to schools through the School Improvement Partner. They will have new powers to intervene early in underperforming schools. They will also be expected to consider radical action when a school is judged to be inadequate by Ofsted.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the measures in the White Paper "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All" which have been proposed to address *(a)* root causes of social disadvantage and *(b)* religious and culture segregation in education. [37780]

Jacqui Smith: As stated in the first paragraph of the executive summary of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All"; its aim is

> "to transform our school system so that every child receives an excellent education—whatever their background and wherever they live".

All the policies set out in the White Paper will contribute to this aim and will address the root causes of social disadvantage and religious and cultural segregation in education. In particular:

more personalisation enabling every school to provide an education tailored to the needs of every pupil, supported by catch up and extra support for those who need it to ensure that every child reaches their potential;

ensuring that choice is more widely available to all, not just to those who can pay for it, will be delivered by better information, dedicated choice advisers and an extended transport offer to help the least well-off parents exercise choices;

ensuring that school failure and underperformance, which is often most severe in disadvantaged areas, is tackled swiftly and decisively;

ensuring that schools have the necessary freedoms to respond to the particular circumstances that they face in their locality and are able to engage and work with external partners to bring in additional expertise, including through the acquisition of trusts;

ensuring that school staff have the necessary powers to deal effectively with disruptive pupils for the benefit of all children in the school;

creating a new, strategic role for local authorities as the champions of pupils and parents in their area, particularly the most disadvantaged.

Schoolteachers and College Staff

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary school teachers in London have *(a)* a first class, *(b)* an upper second, *(c)* a lower second, *(d)* a third class and *(e)* no degree. [40380]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides degree class information for all full-time regular teachers in service in maintained secondary schools in London in 2004, the latest information available. For comparison, the degree class of those teachers qualifying during 2003 is also provided.

Percentage of full-time teachers in London secondary school service, March 2004[1], by class of degree held and year of qualification

	Year of qualification	
Class of degree	*All years*	*2003*
1st Honours	4.1	6.0
2nd Honours[2]	73.2	73.7
3rd and unclassified honours	6.4	4.5
Degree obtained outside UK	5.0	8.1
Pass/Other[3]	10.1	7.5
No degree recorded[4]	1.2	0.2
Total	100	100

[1] Provisional estimates.
[2] Information for 2nd class honours degrees cannot be split into 2:1 or 2:2 categories.

[3] Includes teachers whose degree class is not recorded, teachers with other graduate equivalent qualifications and a small number of teachers with higher degrees where the class of their first degree is unknown.

[4] Includes teachers obtaining qualified teacher status through a Certificate of Education. Some of these teachers may have gained degree level qualifications after entering teaching but no details of these qualifications are available.

Source:

Database of Teachers Records

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* school teachers and *(b)* college staff there are in each English region. [39805]

Jacqui Smith: Information on teachers employed in maintained schools is collected in January of each year and September for staff in further education colleges. The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of teachers in maintained schools in each local authority in January 2004 and 2005, and the full-time number of staff in further education colleges in September 2004, the latest information available.

Full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools and full-time staff in further education colleges by Government Office Region

	Maintained schools January		*Further education colleges*[1] *September*
	2004	*2005*	*2004*
North East	22,700	22,700	4,300
North West	62,000	62,200	12,600
Yorkshire and the Humber	44,200	44,600	8,700
East Midlands	36,200	36,400	5,400
West Midlands	48,200	49,200	9,400
East of England	47,100	47,200	6,100
London	61,600	62,700	9,500
South East	65,500	66,300	10,200
South West	40,200	40,600	6,800
Region Unknown	—	—	3,800
England	427,700	431,900	76,800

[1] Information relates to full-time staff whose primary role is teaching and does not include other staff whose primary role is supporting teaching and learning or other support.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Source:

Annual survey of teacher numbers and teacher vacancies, (Form 618g) and Staff Individualised Record.

Sector Skills Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government Capital Reserve in the Learning and Skills Council Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 is; and what guidelines cover its use. [36579]

Bill Rammell: I have overall responsibility for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). However the operations of the LSC are managed and overseen by Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive. Details of the LSC's Statutory Accounts and the guidelines and policies they use for the Government Capital Reserve are a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom has written to the hon. Member with information and copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

I refer to your recent parliamentary questions in which you asked the Secretary of State *(a)* what the donated asset reserve in the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 is and what guidelines cover its use *(b)* what the Government Capital Reserve in the LSC Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 is and guidelines cover its use. I am pleased to provide the following information answering your questions below.

The Donated Asset Reserve reflects the current net book value of the fixed assets transferred to the LSC from the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) when the LSC was set up. The Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance for 2004–05 provides further detail on the accounting for this reserve. The Government Accounting manual covers the management of assets.

The Government Capital Reserve reflects the current net book value of fixed assets acquired by the LSC. The Government Capital Reserve is credited with the amount of the grant that equates to the asset's acquisition cost. Notes 9 and 10 to the accounts provide further details on the fixed assets of the LSC. The Executive NDPBs Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance for 2004–05 provides further detail on the accounting for this reserve. The Government Accounting manual covers the management of assets.

I trust the above information will be of assistance to you

Social Mobility

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on changes in social mobility in relation to inter-generational academic achievement between 1978 and 2005. [41449]

Jacqui Smith: The Secretary of State's speech to IPPR on 26 July 2005 set out the Government's commitment to help develop a society which can foster greater social mobility. Her speech underlined the important role that education can play in improving life chances for all individuals, and it set out the forward looking context for our programme of reform across the system.

An assessment of changes in inter-generational academic achievement is constrained by data limitations. However in a paper accompanying the speech, "Has the Social Class Gap Narrowed in Primary Schools", analysis was presented to show how gaps in attainment between pupils from high and low income brackets (proxied by free school meal (FSM) status) have changed. The paper focused on key stage 2 between 1998 and 2004, the period in which the data allow such comparisons to be made.

The analysis showed that performance has improved on average for both FSM and non-FSM pupils, but there was little significant change in the gap between the two groups. However it was found that schools with the highest proportions of pupils eligible for FSM did narrow the gap compared to schools with low proportions of FSM. For example in key stage 2 English, the gap in attainment at level 4 narrowed by eight percentage points in the period 1998–2004 between schools with high and low proportions of FSM pupils. The full paper is available on the Department's website.

Further analysis will be carried out over the coming months. In particular, we will look at key stages 1, 3 and 4, to the extent that data for these phases can be tracked over time on a comparable basis.

Special Educational Needs

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support and services are available for new parents whose children have been diagnosed at birth as suffering from learning difficulties in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Wakefield District and *(c)* Normanton constituency; and whether she plans to increase this assistance. [41098]

Maria Eagle: The Government are committed to improving services for all children and their families, including those with learning disabilities. The Every Child Matters programme, alongside the implementation of the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and the Government's SEN strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement", supports and promotes early intervention to help families of very young disabled children. In particular, the Government's Early Support Programme has been funded to improve support to parents of disabled children aged 0–3 and to provide timely interventions at the very earliest stages of impairment being identified. The development of Sure Start Children's Centres will also improve the integrated support provided to families with children under 5. Disabled children and special educational needs are a priority for this programme.

In the West Yorkshire area there are currently 24 Children's Centres (expected to rise to 76 by September 2006) and 1 Early Support Programme (with one currently being developed in Wakefield). All local authorities have now been asked to begin using the Early Support approaches and materials to review and improve services for families with young disabled children.

Families of children with learning disabilities are, of course, entitled to access an additional range of local authority and health support. Details about these local services are not collected centrally and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

State Schools (Selection)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of selection on religious grounds in state schools on social cohesion. [41127]

Jacqui Smith: We welcome faith schools into the maintained sector as they can make an important contribution to community cohesion by promoting inclusion and developing partnerships with schools of other faiths, and with non-faith schools. Many faith schools play their part in social cohesion by admitting pupils of other faiths and none and we encourage them in the School Admissions Code of Practice to do this.

Summer Enterprise School

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the forecast budget is for the Summer Enterprise School programme; how this budget is distributed between each pathfinder programme; and what the cost is for each school; [38889]

(2) if she will list the organisations which bid to run the Summer Enterprise School pathfinder programme; which bid was successful; and what provision that bid made for the programme; [38890]

(3) which organisations her Department consulted on the estimate of costs for the Summer Enterprise School pathfinder programme; and what comparisons have been made with similar schemes overseas. [38891]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Following the Chancellor's 15 November announcement that Young Enterprise (YE) will run Enterprise Summer School Pathfinders in 2006, the DfES hav. been given responsibility for the delivery of the Pathfinders. £2 million has been made available, and while we have had early discussions with YE about how, along with other organisations, they will deliver the Pathfinders, we are not yet at a stage to finalise detailed costings.

Enterprise Summer Schools were initially announced on 26 June 2005, and a number of proposals to run them were received following that announcement. However, Young Enterprise, as a nationally enabled charity with a regional structure, and long experience of enterprise education, had the only suitable proposal. In pathfinding and evaluating YE's different summer school models we will be taking account of international best practice.

Specialist Schools

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reason selection of up to 10 per cent. of intake by aptitude is not permitted in schools which specialise in *(a)* business and enterprise, *(b)* engineering, *(c)* humanities, *(d)* mathematics and computing and *(e)* science; and if she will make a statement. [40728]

Jacqui Smith: Admission authorities of schools have been able to select up to 10 per cent. of their intake based upon applicant's aptitude in certain prescribed subjects. We allow this limited flexibility so that pupils with a relevant aptitude can gain access to particular schools.

However, we are opposed to academic selection and do not wish to see it extended. It is accordingly permissible only to use tests that assess aptitude in the particular subject as distinct from general academic ability.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average point score at *(a)* Key Stage 3 and *(b)* GCSE and equivalent was for specialist schools in 2004, (i) in total and (ii) broken down by specialism. [41672]

Jacqui Smith: The average point scores at Key Stage 3 and GCSE and equivalent for specialist schools in 2004 are shown in the following tables:

2004 Key Stage 3:

Specialism	Number of schools	Average points score
All specialist schools	1,433	34.9
Arts	226	34.4
Business and enterprise	82	34.5
Engineering	14	34.8
Language	187	36.1
Maths and computing	76	35.9
Science	121	36.1
Sports	226	33.9
Technology	491	34.7
Combined specialism	10	35.5

2004 GCSEs and equivalents:

Specialism	Number of schools	Average points score: Capped[1]	Average points score: Uncapped
All specialist schools	1,443	295.1	361.2
Arts	227	290.1	353.3
Business and enterprise	82	294.1	363.0
Engineering	14	287.7	340.8
Language	187	312.7	383.7
Maths and computing	76	309.8	379.4
Science	121	313.7	385.7
Sports	228	276.7	331.9
Technology	498	293.2	362.1
Combined specialism	10	301.8	358.0

[1] Average capped point scores are calculated using the best eight results.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of pupils attending specialist schools attained five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics in 2004 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by specialism. [41673]

Jacqui Smith: The number and proportion of pupils attending specialist schools who achieved five or more GCSE's including English and mathematics in 2004 is shown in the following table:

Specialism	Number of 15-year-old pupils achieving five or more grades A*-C, including English and maths	Percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving five or more grades A*-C, including English and maths
All specialist schools	130,812	45
Arts	19,603	42
Business and enterprise	6,781	44
Engineering	1,229	43
Language	19,824	53
Maths and computing	7,595	53
Science	12,480	53
Sports	17,420	38
Technology	44,943	44
Combined specialism	937	49

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of pupils attending specialist schools achieved *(a)* level 5 or above and *(b)* level 6 or above in 2004, (i) in total and (ii) broken down by specialism. [41674]

Jacqui Smith: The proportion of pupils attending specialist schools achieving level 5 or above and level 6 or above in 2004 are shown in the following table:

2004 Key Stage 3

Specialism	Number achieving L5 or above	Proportion achieving L5 or above (percentage)	Number achieving L6 or above	Proportion achieving L6 or above (percentage)
All specialist schools	653,929	74	385,627	44
Arts	102,764	72	58,815	41
Business and Enterprise	35,961	73	20,236	41
Engineering	6,476	73	3,816	43
Language	91,424	79	58,771	51
Maths and Computing	34,627	78	21,841	49
Science	58,123	80	36,949	51
Sports	97,522	70	53,291	38
Technology	222,489	73	129,236	43
Combined	4,543	78	2,672	46

State-funded Education

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of gross domestic product was spent on state-funded education in *(a)* 1979–80, *(b)* 1987–88, *(c)* 1997–98 and *(d)* 2004–05. [41126]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on education in the UK.

	Percentage
1979–80	5.1
1987–88	4.7
1997–98	4.5
2004–05	5.4

Note:

1. Figures on UK education spend for the years shown were obtained from the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses.

2. The GDP figures used are the latest available and were updated at the end of December 2005.

3. The international definition of education expenditure used to produce the figures for the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses has changed over time; therefore, the figure for 1979–80 is not directly comparable with the other years. The figures for 1987–88, 1997–98 and 2004–05 have been produced to the same definition and so are comparable.

Teachers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have qualified but have not taken up a career in teaching since 1997; and what the cost per student has been of training such people. [39909]

Jacqui Smith: Data from the Teachers Pension Scheme indicate that the following proportions of qualifiers are not known to have any teaching service up to March 2004 since qualifying.

Year of qualification	*Percentage without teaching service*	*Qualifiers recorded on Teachers Pension Scheme*
1997	10	26,223
1998	10	24,841
1999	8	24,197
2000	8	21,814
2001	8	21,812
2002	11	23,038
2003	20	25,175

Note:
Figures exclude those qualifying through employment based routes.

The main reason for the higher figures in the most recent years is that some qualified teachers delay the start of their teaching careers. The proportion of qualifiers without teaching service usually falls substantially over the first year or two after qualification, and in the long-term has been around 9–10 per cent. since 1990; the figures for the 2003 qualifiers are expected to fall to a similar level. For example, the proportion of all qualifiers without recorded teaching service by March of the year after they qualified has remained at 20 per cent. for 2001, 2002 and 2003, but for 2002 qualifiers it fell to 11 per cent. after another year and for 2001 qualifiers it fell to 8 per cent. after two.

The Teachers Pension Scheme has only partial coverage for those teaching outside maintained schools, for example in independent schools or in further or higher education, so the true proportion is expected to be lower.

The cost of teacher training varies according to different routes to achieving qualified teacher status (QTS) to work in maintained schools in England. The three main types are:

a. Undergraduate courses leading to a degree plus QTS.

b. Postgraduate courses leading to QTS; and

c. Employment-based teacher training routes leading to QTS.

The funding which each of these routes attracts from the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) is in 2005/06:

a. Undergraduate courses: £16,000 per trainee (or £4,000 per year), excluding fee/maintenance support.

b. Postgraduate courses: £5,200 per trainee, plus at least £1,200 fee/maintenance support, plus £6,000 bursary (in total £12,400 per trainee).

c. Employment-based teacher training routes: £17,620 per trainee, including a £13,000 grant towards the employment costs of each trainee.

Truancy

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were *(a)* stopped and *(b)* cautioned for truancy in (i) Wimbledon and (ii) the London borough of Merton in each year since 1997. [41706]

Jacqui Smith: Since December 2002, the Department has co-ordinated national truancy sweeps in England. These usually take place during the autumn and spring terms. Data are collected from each local authority (LA) which participates in the national sweeps and relates to the whole LA and not to individual areas.

Under Section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 police officers have the power to return truants to their school or to a local designated place. There is no power to arrest, caution or detain children because they are out of school without a good reason. Children who truant from school are not committing a crime; their parents are legally responsible for their non-attendance. However, it is important that follow up arrangements are made for children who are out of school with no good reason.

Data for the London borough of Merton

Truancy sweeps	*Total number of truancy sweeps*	*Total stopped*	*Total stopped with no valid reason for being out of school*	*Total stopped over the year with no valid reason for being out of school*
Autumn 2002	Not known	63	11	11
Spring 2003	2	16	7	40
Autumn 2003	5	44	33	
Spring 2004	4	48	22	
Autumn 2004	5	23	8	30
Spring 2005	3	15	11	11
Autumn 2005	[1]			

[1] Data still being collected

Deprivation Funding

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will announce the full conclusions of the Deprivation Funding Review; and if she will make a statement. [41300]

Jacqui Smith: My written statement of 7 December on the School Funding Settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 announced that the report of the DfES/HM Treasury review of deprivation "Child Poverty, Fair Funding for Schools" was being published on the same day, and is on Teachernet at www.teachernet.gov.uk/deprivationfundingreview/. A copy of the report has also been placed in the House Libraries.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the allocation of funding to schools in deprived areas of Somerset; and if she will make a statement. [41301]

Jacqui Smith: Under the current Schools Formula Spending Share (SFSS) arrangements in 2005–06, Somerset's SFSS takes account of the incidence of Additional Educational Needs, in the form of the numbers of families found to be in receipt of income support and working families tax credits, and the level of primary and secondary ethnicity in schools in Somerset. The school funding regulations stipulate that authorities must have a factor within their local funding formulae which recognises the incidence of deprivation in distributing resources to local schools.

From April 2006, the Department is introducing a new ring fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in distributing resources directly to authorities based on authorities spending levels in 2005–06. Somerset will receive increases of 6.7 per cent. and 6.5 per cent. per pupil in the next two financial years. It will be for the local authority to decide how to distribute their resources to schools via the local funding formula.

Variable Top-up Fees

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment the Government have made of the impact of variable top-up fees on the number of UK-domiciled students taking up postgraduate courses. [40657]

Bill Rammell: Separate arrangements apply in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In England, there should be no impact on the take-up of postgraduate places as variable tuition fees apply only to undergraduate courses and designated initial teacher training courses, for which the Government will continue to provide non-means tested support in 2006/07.

Postgraduate tuition fees are unregulated. However eligible students may receive specific support for postgraduate study through the disabled students' allowance and awards funded by the Office of Science and Technology through the Research Councils and HE institutions.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of new claims for *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* incapacity benefit were determined to be fraudulent in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39472]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will estimate *(a)* how many instances of fraud there have been in each of the last five years that have arisen as a result of sending information to someone who has (i) died and (ii) moved house and *(b)* the resultant cost to his Department; [39888]

(2) if he will estimate *(a)* how many instances of fraud there have been in each of the last five years involving those who are falsely claiming pension credit for someone who has (i) died and (ii) moved house and *(b)* the resultant cost to his Department; [39890]

(3) if he will estimate how much correspondence was addressed by his Department to people who have *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house in each of the last five years. [39891]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not held and no estimate is available of the volume, value and cost of fraud linked to claims of persons who have died or moved house.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate *(a)* how many instances of fraud there have been in each of the last five years involving those who are falsely claiming housing benefit for someone who has (i) died and (ii) moved house and *(b)* the resultant cost to his Department. [39889]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not held and no estimate is available of the volume, value and cost of fraud linked to claims of persons who have died or moved house.

Benefit Payments

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of telephone calls to HM Revenue and Customs for the pension credit in Wales went unanswered in each year since the pension credit system began; and if he will make a statement. [39558]

Mr. Timms: Pension credit is administered by The Pension Service and tax credits by HM Revenue and Customs.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of *(a)* all pensioners and *(b)* eligible pensioners received the pension credit in Wales in each year since the system began; and if he will make a statement. [39560]

Mr. Timms: The available information is in the following tables:

ONS mid year pensioner population estimates for Wales 2003, 2004

	2004	*2003*
Total pensioner population	684,000	674,600
Proportion who are pension credit household recipients (percentage)	21.3	18.1
Proportion who are pension credit individual beneficiaries (percentage)	26.2	21.9

Pension credit recipients in Wales as at May 2004, 2005 and November 2003

	Household recipients	*Individual beneficiaries*
May 2005	158,300	195,100
May 2004	145,900	179,100
November 2003	121,900	147,600

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
3. The latest available population figures from ONS are mid year 2004.
4. Pension credit data are from the new WPLS and are taken as at 30 November 2003 and 31 May 2004, 2005.
5. Couples may include partners who are aged less than 60.
6. The pensioner population is defined as all males and females aged 60+.
7. Household recipients are those people who claim PC either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of PC. The number of beneficiaries is the claimants plus their partners.

Source:
Pension Credit Data: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) 100 per cent. data.
Mid year population estimates: ONS, Population Estimates Unit.

Latest estimates of the number of pensioners entitled to but not receiving the main income-related benefits relate to financial year 2002–03 and predate the introduction of pension credit. Estimates for minimum income guarantee—the predecessor to pension credit—can be found in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2002–2003". Copies of the publication are available in the Library.

Estimates of pension credit will be published in early 2006; this publication will include the first six months of pension credit. Estimates for the full year 2004–05 are expected to be published in May 2006. Information is not available below a national level.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time was from receipt of an *(a)* incapacity benefits, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance, *(c)* income support, *(d)* disability living allowance and *(e)* pension credit claim to payment of the benefit to the claimant in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39561]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following tables.

Average number of days from benefit claim to payment of benefit in Wales

Days

	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Incapacity benefit (IB) clearance rate	13.6	12.8	15.2	13.2
IB Clearance target	22	19		
Jobseekers allowance (JSA) clearance rate	9.2	9.5	10.0	10.5
JSA Clearance target	12			
Income support (IS) clearance rate	9.1	9.1	9.9	9.5
IS clearance target	12			

Notes:
1. Figures are only available from April 2002 when Jobcentre Plus came into being, replacing the former Employment Service and parts of the Benefits Agency.
2. Clearance times are measured up to the date of decision and referral for payment. The payment will be issued on the appropriate pay-day.

Disability living allowance (normal rules) new claims clearance times

	Target	*YTD*
1999/2000	Percentage cleared (85 per cent. in 53 days)	89.5
2000/01	Percentage cleared (95 per cent. in 73 days)	95.9
2001/02	Percentage cleared (95 per cent. in 73 days)	95.9
2002/03	Average clearance time (43 days)	34.1
2003/04	Average clearance time (42 days)	39.2
2004/05	Average clearance time (39 days)	35.4
As at November 2005	Average clearance time (39 days)	34.4

Disability living allowance (special rules) new claims clearance times

	Target	*YTD*
1999/2000	Percentage cleared (80 per cent. in 10 days)	88.9
2000/01	Percentage cleared (95 per cent. in 15 days)	92.1
2001/02	Percentage cleared (95 per cent. in 15 days)	91.3
2002/03	Average Clearance time (8 days)	5.8
2003/04	Average Clearance time (8 days)	6.7
2004/05	Average Clearance time (8 days)	6.4
As at November 2005	Average Clearance time (8 days)	5.5

Notes:
1. Each year runs from April to the following March, except for the current year where the YTD figure is up to and including 30 November 2005.
2. Up to 2001–02 the target was known as 'X percentage into Y days' but since 2002–03 it has been expressed as an Actual Average Clearance Time.
3. The target and YTD figure only relates to clearance times and not to payment of benefit. Although an assumption is made that payment will be authorised at the same time as the case is cleared, in a favourable award, there will always be exceptions to this.

Pension credit was introduced on 6 October 2003 and replaced minimum income guarantee (income support for people aged 60 or over). The vast majority of people who were previously in receipt of the minimum income guarantee transferred to pension credit in October 2003.

Clearance time data for pension credit is not available in the format requested. When The Pension Service was introduced the agency was organised into Government Office Regions. As The Pension Service caseload is managed by Pension Centre, it is not possible to trace clearance times to claims originating in Wales.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money has been spent in each of the last five years on sending information to incorrect addresses for those in receipt of benefits; and what the estimate is of the amount of money fraudulently claimed as a result. [39885]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department uses an automatic indicator that someone in receipt of benefit has *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house. [39886]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions uses automatic indicators to 'broadcast' to all its benefit systems changes of circumstances where someone in receipt of benefit has died or has moved house.

When a person dies, the Department is notified of the death by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for England and Wales, the General Registrar's Office for Scotland or the General Registrar's Office for Northern Ireland. This data is transmitted to a central point in DWP. It is recorded on the Departmental Central Index (DCI) and forwarded automatically to all benefit systems including the jobseeker's allowance payment system and the pension strategy computer system. Once the notification is received, payment of benefit will automatically be suspended on systems such as the pension strategy computer system and the disability living allowance/attendance allowance computer system. On other systems, such as the income support computer system and the jobseeker's allowance payment system staff will be notified of the need to take action on the cases affected.

When the Department is notified that someone has moved house, the data are automatically sent to the relevant benefit systems. This alerts staff to take the necessary action to update addresses and, where appropriate, notify the relevant local authority for housing benefit and council tax benefit purposes. A process is also in place where local authorities can notify DWP when a person in receipt of benefit has moved house and when this is received at a central point, automatic indicators are broadcast to other benefit systems.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how his Department traces an individual in receipt of benefit for whom it has an incorrect address. [39887]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer my right hon. Friend to the written answer I gave on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Carers

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to enhance the rights of carers. [37908]

Mrs. McGuire: This Government are the first ever to recognise the contribution and concerns of all carers formally and is supporting carers on a number of fronts through the work of several Departments.

The principle of fair outcomes for women and carers is central to the National Pensions Debate that the Government launched earlier this year.

The Department for Work and Pensions held a specific event focusing on women and pensions on 7 November, following the publication of the Government's report "Women and pensions: The evidence". The report provides a compendium of evidence that highlights the key influences on the level of women's retirement income, including consideration of the impact of parenthood and family caring responsibilities on pension entitlement.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on what basis applications for additional assistance for carers wishing to take a break in their care provision are selected for means-testing. [41721]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

A service that enables a carer to take a break from caring is viewed as a service for the cared for person. Carers cannot be charged for community care services provided to the people they care for. If the council charges for short break services, it is the service user who must be financially assessed.

Carers can only be charged for services they receive as a result of a carer's assessment under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000. It is for local authorities to determine their own charging policy for non-residential services for both carers and service users. For residential care, they must charge the service user in accordance with statutory regulations.

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what role his Department has in the regulation of child care; and if he will make a statement. [42120]

Margaret Hodge: The regulation of child care in England is the responsibility of Ofsted, under the policy direction of the Department for Education and Skills. The Department for Work and Pensions has no role in the regulation.

Regulation of child care in Scotland and Wales is the responsibility of the Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly respectively.

Civil Service Relocation (Scotland)

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many departmental civil service jobs have been relocated to Scotland in each year since 2001. [32261]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* A total of 50 posts have been relocated to Scotland from London and the South East as part of the Lyons Review of Public Sector Relocation. These relocations have taken place since June 2003. Information prior to this date is not available.

Claimant Behaviour

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on findings of research projects *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated by his Department on the efficiency of benefit sanctions in influencing claimant behaviour. [36726]

Mr. Plaskitt: Our administration database tells us that 14 per cent. of jobseeker's allowance customers are referred to a decision maker for consideration of a sanction. In total only 4 per cent. of customers are actually sanctioned. This would suggest that the threat of the application of sanctions leads the majority to comply with the conditions of receiving jobseeker's allowance. New evidence from a commissioned evaluation on jobseeker's allowance sanctions will be published in early 2006. This will help to shed light on customer understanding and knowledge of jobseeker's allowance sanctions.

In the case of lone parents, new research findings, to be published on 19 January 2006, will provide qualitative evidence on the efficiency of benefit sanctions for lone parents in influencing claimant behaviour.

Due to the low volumes, no evaluation has taken place of the efficiency of benefit sanctions in the pathways to work pilots.

Child Support Agency

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of maintenance applications to the Child Support Agency have been determined within *(a)* 22 weeks and *(b)* 12 months in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [10146]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the requested information.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 16 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what percentage of maintenance applications to the CSA have been determined within *(a)* 22 weeks and *(b)* 12 months in each of the last 5 years for which figures are available?

The information requested can be found in the attached tables. Recent improvements in management information for new-scheme cases allows the Agency to provide more meaningful information on the time taken to clear new scheme applications, which was published for the first time in the Departments Child Support Agency Quarterly Statistical Supplement on the DWP website on 27 October 2005.

It should be noted that, a new-scheme application is defined as determined (or cleared) if the case is closed, a maintenance calculation has been carried out and a payment arrangement is in place, the Parent with Care is identified as claiming Good Cause or subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision, or the application is identified as being a change of circumstances on an existing case.

For old-scheme cases on the old computer system (CSCS), the Agency is only able to measure clearances up to the point of closure or maintenance assessment.

As the definition of a clearance is slightly different for old and new-scheme cases, the numbers presented below are therefore broadly, but not directly, comparable.

I recognise that performance in this area is unsatisfactory, and that there is a need for real improvement in the near future. To this end, I am currently presenting proposals to Ministers aimed at making the Agency more effective in its role of ensuring that non resident parents take financial responsibility for their children.

Old scheme

Application received	*Percentage of maintenance applications cleared within:*	
March to February:	*22 weeks*	*12 months*
2000–01	34	56
2001–02	42	65
2002–03	52	70

New scheme

Application received	*Percentage of maintenance applications cleared within:*	
March to February:	*22 weeks*	*12 months*
2003–04	46	64
2004–05	46	—

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest whole per cent.
2. Figures for the new scheme exclude cases which have been progressed and cleared clerically and 161,000 potential applications that had come via the Jobcentre Plus interface (80,000 of which had been cleared and 81,000 which were still outstanding as of September 2005) and for which no management information is currently available.
3. It is not currently possible to provide figures in relation to old scheme cases received prior to the introduction of the new scheme, but migrated to the new IT system (CS2) prior to the application being cleared.
4. Comparable data are not available for the percentage of applications received between March 2004 and February 2005 that were cleared in 12 months as a full 12 months has not yet elapsed since the end of this period.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of non-resident parents have paid the full maintenance as determined by the Child Support Agency in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [10147]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the requested information.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 16 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what percentage of non-resident parents have paid the full maintenance as determined by the Child Support Agency in each of the last five years for which figures are available. I have provided the figures for the percentage of non-resident parents who have paid the full amount of maintenance as requested by the Agency, for the last five years for which data is available. These figures present a view as at August in each year the most recent point in time for which comparable information in earlier years is available.

The figures provided in the table for August 2004 and 2005 include both new and old scheme, on both systems.

Percentage of non-resident parents who paid the full amount of maintenance (Overall Agency)

Quarter ending August:	*Old scheme old system*	*New and old scheme*
2000	49	—
2001	47	—
2002	53	—
2003	55	—
2004	—	46
2005	—	46

Note:

New scheme was introduced 3 March 2003 but reliable data for the six months to August 2003 is currently not available for new and old scheme cases on the new computer system.

To place these figures into context, it should be noted that, whilst only 46 per cent. of non-resident parents paid their maintenance liability in full over the quarter ending August 2005, the Agency obtained a payment from 70 per cent. of cases in which maintenance was due via the collection service, with the remainder of non-resident parents, not taking any financial responsibility for their children. Where any such payment was obtained, on average, 90 per cent. of the amount due was collected.

I hope you find this response helpful and apologise for the delay in providing this response.

Departmental Data

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what methods his Department employs to ensure that its data are up-to-date, with particular reference to information on people who have *(a)* moved house and *(b)* died. [37790]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions makes every effort to ensure that its data is accurate, up-to-date and relevant. It employs different methods according to the type of data it holds in relation to change of address and death details.

Where people move house there is no obligation on them as individuals to notify my Department of such a change unless they are in receipt of benefit, where checks are made at the start of the claim and in certain benefits at specified points during the course of the claim. However, through closer working with other Government Departments, particularly Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), my Department receives on a daily

basis, changes of address notified to HMRC for their customers who are in employment, claiming tax credits or liable for income tax or national insurance contributions. In addition to this, my Department fully supports cross-government data sharing initiatives such as the setting up of a National Identity Register for ID Cards in order to maintain the integrity of its data. If the person moving home is in receipt of housing benefit or council tax benefit processes are in place for local authorities to notify my Department of the change.

When a person dies, my Department is notified of the death by the Office of National Statistics (for England and Wales), the General Registrar's Office (Scotland) and the General Registrar's Office (Northern Ireland). These data are recorded centrally and, where appropriate, forwarded to the relevant benefit system to suspend payment of benefit and alert staff to the need to take action on specific cases. In addition to this, many relatives, friends and next of kin of the deceased person notify the death direct to the Department when benefit is in payment or bereavement benefit claimed, providing copies of the death certificate. Between these processes my Department captures the death data within a matter of weeks. As modernisation programmes progress in registrations of death, plans are in place to automate the notifications from ONS (England and Wales) and GRO (Scotland), making the process quicker and more efficient.

Departmental Expenditure

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33204]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Research

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [32991]

Mrs. McGuire: Research projects currently being undertaken that have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions are outlined in the following list:

Project name:

The Pension Service Customer Survey 2005

Micro-employers attitudes to employee pension provision

Evaluation of automatic state pension forecasts

Design of the evaluation of the Pension Education Fund

Evaluation of The Pension Service Partnership Fund

Overcoming barriers to Pension Credit Take-Up

Overcoming barriers to Pension Credit Take-Up: Qualitative research with Pension Credit Eligible non-recipients

Attitudes to Pensions Survey

Pensions and Savings research: Focus Groups

The International Pensions Centre Customer Survey

Pensions and Savings research: Omnibus questions

Survey of Annuity pricing

Evaluation of Pension Increase Pledge

The effects of means-testing pensions on savings and retirement

Understanding older people's experiences of poverty and material deprivation—quantitative element

Understanding older people's experiences of poverty and material deprivation—qualitative element

The importance of incentives in influencing private retirement savings: known knowns and unknowns

Savings incentives—Understanding the interactions of long term savings and debt

Employers Pension Provision Survey 2005

Which pensioners don't spend their income and why?

Self-employed: Work and Saving for retirement

Retirement Planner: Proof of concept work

Qualitative evaluation of the Intensive Activity period for 50+

Transitions to and from activity for the over 50s

Work and Retirement Literature Review

Work and Retirement Literature Review

Age Legislation: Qualitative research with employers (and secondary dataset analysis subject to funding)

Intensive Activity Period for 50+—Qualitative

Macroeconomic Modelling of savings scenarios

Initial Evaluation of the Phase 1 Age Partnership Group "Be Ready" National Guidance Campaign products

Age and Training Phase 2

Encouraging Cultural Change: Communication about extending working life

Poverty and large families

Intergenerational Child Poverty

Understanding debt

Poverty—Bucking The Trend

Administrative Datasets for Measuring Impacts on Disadvantage

Families, Health and Work

Examining the position of the public sector in relation to the provisions of the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act (coming into force October 2004) and the new Disability Discrimination Bill

Disability Communications

Economic and Social Costs and Benefits to employers for recruiting, retaining and employing disabled people and/or people with health conditions or injury

Information needs for disabled people

Job Retention and Rehabilitation Evaluation

Fair Cities Evaluation

Jobcentre Plus National Customer Satisfaction Survey 2005 (Ethnic Minority Booster)

Overarching thematic analysis of Jobcentre Plus employment policies for ex-offenders

Jobcentre Plus Local Office Traffic Survey

Jobseekers Mandatory Activity Pilots Evaluation

Job Outcome Target quantitative evaluation strand

Evaluation of Jobcentre Plus Job Outcome Target Pilots: Stage Three

Job Outcome Target Pilots' Evaluation: Summary Report

Evaluation of the New Deal Plus Project

Clusters of workless couples and their employment transitions: Phase 1

Review of Action Teams for Jobs

Work Based Learning for Adults—Longer term outcomes of Work Based Learning for Adults customers

A methodological study of barriers to work

Annual Employer Research

Evaluation of Pathways to Work Expansion (to a further 14 Districts)

Evaluation of Multiple Provider Employment Zones

Employment Zones Extensions Qualitative (Single Provider)

Evaluation of Working Neighbourhoods Pilot

Maximising the Role of Outreach

Basic Skills Mandatory Training Pilots

Evaluation of Skills Coaching

Systematic Review of the Impact of Adult Learning

Base lining Survey for Financial Support for Adult Learners

Sanctions Quantitative

Repeat Spells

Evaluation Extensions to Personal Adviser meetings

Evaluation of Specialist Employment Advisers

Secondary Analysis of New Deal for Lone Parents /Work Focused interviews Datasets

Perceptions and Experiences in Jobcentre Plus

Part-time Work seminar

Customer Case Management

Survey of Employers Practices

Ethnic Minority Populations and the Labour Market: Analysis of the 2001 Census

Barriers to Employment: Pakistani and Bangladeshi

Ethnic Parity in Jobcentre Plus Programmes and Mainstream Services

Lone Parent and Partner Pilots: In Work Credit, Work Search Premium and Quarterly Work Focused Interviews Qualitative Evaluation

Lone Parent In Work Credit, Work Search Premium, Extended Schools Child Care , Childcare Tasters and Quarterly Work Focused Interviews Impact Evaluation

Work focused Interviews and New Deal for Partners Evaluation (Quantitative)

Work focused Interviews and New Deal for Partners Evaluation (Qualitative)

Family and Children's Survey

Review of Family and Children's Survey

Survey of New Deal for Disabled People Registrants, cohort three: additional analysis of dataset

Evaluation of New Deal for Disabled People Extensions

The impact of Incapacity Benefit Pilots (Condition Management Programme) on participants health related quality of life

Routes onto Incapacity Benefits—quantitative work

Statutory Sick Pay Feasibility Project

Literature review of the scientific evidence regarding chronic obstructive pulmonary disease on behalf of the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council

WORKSTEP Evaluation

WORKSTEP Modernisation Funds Evaluation

British Social Attitudes Survey (Welfare Module)

Contribution to the Millennium birth Cohort

Contribution to the General household survey

Attitudes to making adjustments to common parts in rented and leased residential accommodation

Claimants and advisers awareness of and attitudes to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit as an In-Work Benefit

Housing Benefit Control for Gypsy Site Rents

Claimants motivations for reporting changes of circumstances

Local Housing Authority Pathfinders

An Investigation of Child Support Agency Maintenance Direct payments—Qualitative research

An Investigation of Child Support Agency Maintenance Direct Payments—Quantitative research

European Social Fund Objective 3 Beneficiary Survey

Evaluation of the impact of co-financing on European Social Fund Objectives

Survey of European Social Fund Objectives

Update to the mid-term Evaluation of the European Social Fund Community Support Framework

Developing Policy: Positive Action Policies

Public Awareness Research

Conversion of PDF research files using ORC software and future conversion of hard copy research using ORC software

Evaluation Databases

What Works? Literature review and meta-analysis

Linking English Longitudinal Study of Ageing data to administrative data: documenting the process and access arrangements

Evaluation of CMS version3

Externally commissioned research findings are released publicly, the vast majority appearing in the Department's Research Report Series which is available both in hard copy and for download from the website (http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/)

Departmental Staff

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Department spent on activities relating to the recruitment of head count to the Department in each year from 1997; what the latest estimates are for *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [32432]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 28 November 2005]*: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

EU Directive on Working at Heights

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the implications for sport of the EU directive on working at heights. [42707]

Mrs. McGuire: While we are keen to promote all sporting activity on the basis of sensible risk, in this case no assessment is required. This is because the directive and regulations only apply to persons at work and not to private individuals participating in sports activities.

Gershon Review

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Gershon review in his Department. [34383]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department is on track to meet its Gershon review efficiency targets. Progress against the targets has been reported in the department's autumn performance report which was laid before Parliament on 15 December 2005.

Habitual Residence Test

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1048W, on the Habitual Residence Test, if he will change the rules for non-contributory benefits so that those who make sufficient contributions to a contributory benefit to enable them to obtain half of the maximum are deemed to have passed the habitual residency test. [38197]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Habitual Residence Test is only applied to income-related benefits and people who qualify for a contributory benefit such as contribution based jobseeker's allowance will not be subject to the test. There is already provision in regulations which allows EEA nationals who have been working in the UK to be treated as habitually resident if they claim an income-related benefit. In line with EC case law, a returning UK national who has previously worked in the UK is likely to pass the Habitual Residence Test immediately. Non-EEA nationals who work in the UK are usually subject to immigration control and have no recourse to public funds. As such they have no access to income-related benefits and therefore would not be subject to the Habitual Residence Test.

Job Vacancies (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many job vacancies there were in each London borough per 1,000 working age population on the most recent date for which figures are available; how many there were 12 months prior to this date; and what the current national vacancy rate is per 1,000 of working age population. [40680]

Margaret Hodge: The number of vacancies remains at a historically high level. More than 10,000 new vacancies are placed at Jobcentres every working day and at least as many again are filled through other recruitment channels.

The latest vacancy survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates there were 600.2 thousand unfilled vacancies in the quarter to November 2005, compared to 641.7 thousand this time last year. The ONS vacancy ratio for the UK for November 2005 (the latest data) is 2.3. This is the number of vacancies per 100 employee jobs.

The specific information requested for London is not available. The available information on recorded unfilled Jobcentre Plus vacancies for the London boroughs at November 2004 and 2005 is in the table.

	November 2004	*November 2005*
Barking and Dagenham	1,995	1,138
Barnet	3,946	2,313
Bexley	2,078	1,513
Brent	3,506	2,658
Bromley	2,578	2,275
Camden	3,704	1,746
City of London	732	772
Croydon	4,971	3,361
Ealing	3,854	3,071
Enfield	3,514	2,159
Greenwich	1,798	1,106
Hackney	1,522	1,096
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,439	1,406
Haringey	2,537	1,387
Harrow	2,035	1,267
Havering	2,683	1,693
Hillingdon	4,075	3,404
Hounslow	2,677	2,670
Islington	3,197	4,151
Kensington and Chelsea	1,316	1,280
Kingston-upon-Thames	2,011	1,664
Lambeth	2,823	1,732
Lewisham	2,021	1,561
Merton	2,776	1,815
Newham	2,386	1,733
Redbridge	2,045	1,411
Richmond-upon-Thames	1,547	1,239
Southwark	2,530	1,818
Sutton	2,298	1,471
Tower Hamlets	2,403	1,657
Waltham Forest	2,290	1,189
Wandsworth	3,146	3,305
Westminster, City of	8,598	4,118
Total	91,031	65,179

Pension Credit

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the change in take-up of pension credit has been in each quarter since it was introduced. [41569]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available. Latest estimates of pensioners' take-up of the main income-related benefits relate to financial year 2002–03 and predates the introduction of pension credit. Estimates for minimum income guarantee, the predecessor to pension credit, can be found in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2002/2003". Copies of the publication are available in the Library.

Estimates of pension credit will be published in early 2006; this publication will include the first six months of pension credit. Estimates for the full year 2004–05 are expected to be published in May 2006. This information is only available on an annual basis.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Hendon receive pension credit *(a)* savings element and *(b)* guarantee element; what the average award was in each case in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [41218]

Mr. Timms: The available information is in the table.

Pension credit recipients in the Hendon constituency as at 30 September 2005 with pension credit average amounts for recipients in the Hendon constituency as at 16 September 2005

	Household recipients	
	Recipients	*Average amounts (£ per week)*
All	4,300	64.55
Guarantee credit (GC) only	2,300	93.16
Savings credit (SC) only	600	10.58
GC and SC	1,500	40.63

Notes:

1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest hundred, average amounts are given to the nearest penny.

2. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
3. PC data from the Generalised Matching Service (CMS) 100 per cent. scan taken on 16 September 2005. The caseloads have been rated up to give month-end estimates, but the average amounts have been supplied in an un-adjusted form, therefore they are representative of 16 September 2005.
4. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.
Source:
Information Directorate 100 per cent. data

Post Office Card Accounts

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department allows the Post Office to recognise representatives acting under Power of Attorney with regard to accessing Post Office card accounts; and if he will make a statement. [40666]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account is a banking product owned by Post Office Ltd., and it is for them to set the terms by which they and the customer agree to operate the account under the usual Financial Services Authority licences and regulations. The Post Office card account does not support Power of Attorney.

Customers who are not capable of managing their own affairs may apply to have a person appointed by the Secretary of State to act on their behalf. An appointee can open a Post Office card account in their own name to receive any benefit or pension paid to them in respect of the customer.

Most banks and building societies have accounts (many of which are accessible at the Post Office) that will allow someone, including a person who holds Power of Attorney, to access a customer's account. The precise arrangements will depend on the type of account held and with which account provider.

Stakeholder Pensions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of stakeholder pensions. [41871]

Mr. Timms: Stakeholder pensions were introduced to provide a good value pension option for moderate earners who do not have access to an occupational pension scheme or to a cost effective personal pension plan. Figures from HM Revenue and Customs for the 2003–04 tax year, the latest available, show that around two-thirds of stakeholder pensions sales have been to people in work earning less than £20,000 a year.

Figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) show that at 30 September 2005 2,622,160 stakeholder pensions had been sold since their introduction in April 2001.

The impact of stakeholder pensions on saving for retirement may extend beyond their sales alone. There is evidence that annual management charges for other personal pensions fell by around a third between 1999 and 2001, to around the 1 per cent. level of stakeholder pension charges, suggesting that the stakeholder pension initiative has benefited the personal pension market as a whole.

Winter Fuel Payments

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with representatives of people of pensionable age on increasing the winter fuel payment in line with fuel prices. [40524]

Mr. Timms: The Department has had no such discussions. The winter fuel payment is intended to be a significant contribution towards fuel costs and has risen above the level of inflation from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01 and to £300 for those aged 80 or over from winter 2003–04. We have no plans to increase the winter fuel payment.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Bail Requests

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many police requests for denial of bail were received by Northamptonshire magistrates in the last year for which figures are available; and how many such requests were turned down. [38099]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not available. The Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform does not hold information on police requests for denial of bail.

Child Maintenance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many cases of separation where children are involved consent orders have been set by the courts on the level of child maintenance to be paid in each of the last 10 years. [40470]

Ms Harman: This information cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what proportion of each Civil Service grade in her Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if she will make a statement. [35915]

Ms Harman: My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Cabinet Office will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State will reply to the letter dated 22 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. S. Ali. [41839]

Ms Harman: The Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor wrote to the hon. Member on 21 December in response to his letter of 22 November.

Court House (Colchester)

Bob Russell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on proposals to build a new court house at Colchester. [41479]

Ms Harman: The Essex magistrates court scheme, of which Colchester is part, continues to be within the programme of new court projects. However, my Department is still finalising investment plans, as part of the development of a Business and Estates Strategy for Her Majesty's Court Service. A further announcement will be made once spending plans have been agreed with Treasury. As part of our continuing commitment to the Essex magistrates court scheme, we are currently in the process of purchasing a site for the new courthouse in Colchester. The purchase is expected to be completed by the end of March 2006.

Criminal Justice (Statistics)

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the requirement to collect data on women and the criminal justice system to enable criminal justice bodies to monitor the impact of policies on women under the proposed gender equality duty in the Equality Bill. [38370]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

The Office for Criminal Justice Reform is monitoring the passage of the Equality Bill and the duties it will place on criminal justice bodies, including the impact of policies on women. We will take forward our obligations once the regulations have been laid later this year.

Crown Court Hearings

Mr. Bone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many Crown court hearings were *(a)* held and *(b)* scheduled and then subsequently postponed in (i) England and Wales and (ii) Northamptonshire in each year since 1997. [41056]

Ms Harman: Figures relating to how many Crown court hearings were *(a)* held and *(b)* scheduled and then subsequently postponed in (i) England and Wales and (ii) Northamptonshire in each year since 1997, can be found in the tables.

The figures in the following tables show the number of hearings arranged, those which took place, and those which were removed from the list before the hearing date.

England and Wales

	Number of cases		
	Hearings fixed	*Effective hearings*	*Removed*
1997–98	368,140	340,243	27,897
1998–99	917,778	847,641	70,137
1999–2000	915,660	841,374	74,286
2000–01	895,241	822,468	72,773
2001–02	1,020,015	944,142	75,873
2002–03	1,153,383	1,066,030	87,353
2003–04	1,188,600	1,100,748	87,852
2004–05	1,177,854	1,089,488	88,366
2005–06	898,283	828,232	70,051

Northamptonshire

	Number of cases		
	Hearings fixed	*Effective hearings*	*Removed*
1997–98	2,556	2,159	397
1998–99	9,173	7,900	1,273
1999–2000	11,116	9,248	1,868
2000–01	9,042	7,498	1,544
2001–02	8,219	6,774	1,445
2002–03	11,618	9,424	2,194
2003–04	12,619	10,452	2,167
2004–05	12,473	10,342	2,131
2005–06	9,848	8,265	1,583

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39083]

Ms Harman: Since its inception in June 2003, my Department has used consultants to support its wide-ranging and fast-paced programme of modernisation and change, to increase efficiency, provide better customer service, and value for money for the taxpayer.

Information on consultancy expenditure is not held centrally, and is collected once a year for the previous financial year from the Department, its Executive agencies and NDPB's.

The exercise relating to expenditure in 2004–05 is under way, and on completion details will be sent to the hon. Member.

Expenditure with consultants in year 2003–04 was as follows:

	£
(a) DCA and Court Service	9,016,488
(b) (i) Legal Services Commission	319,800
Information Commissioner	417,429
(ii) Public Guardianship Office	766,200
Court Service	[1]

[1] Included in DCA figure.

(c) Information on expenditure by independent statutory bodies is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much her Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40341]

Ms Harman: My Department has a contract for the provision of chilled water and water coolers. The cost of this contract in 2004–05 was £16,734.00 but this is solely for mains fed water machines. Bottled water is occasionally supplied by our caterers for meetings; it is not possible to separate the cost of this from overall refreshment costs.

This answer relates solely to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, HQ Estate and not to Her Majesty's Court Service, related agencies or NDPB's as to gather this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Electoral Administration

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of returning officers submitted their form Ks after the general election on time and with all the information supplied; which returning officers failed to submit a form K; and if she will make a statement. [40813]

Ms Harman: Election Commission collate and publish data held on the form Ks, as part of their remit to report on UK parliamentary elections.

In their report "Election 2005: turnout", the Commission noted that some or all the data on postal voting take-up was missing for 35 constituencies in England and one constituency in Wales.

Electoral Register

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how local authority registration officers keep the electoral register up to date regarding deaths. [41025]

Ms Harman: Under the representation of the People Regulations 2001, electoral registration officers (EROs) have access to the records of the local registrar of births, marriages and deaths for the purpose of their registration duties. EROs will also act upon any information received from other sources, such as the family of a deceased person.

Fine Defaulting

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether Operation Payback Two was used in the Southend West constituency. [41742]

Ms Harman: All 42 magistrates court areas took part in Operation Payback Two. Essex ran Operation Payback Two from 29 November through to 3 December, with visits to Southend West taking place on 1 December.

Essex collected £65,790 during the initiative.

Innovations Fund

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what criteria were used in making the decision not to make a statement to Parliament on the Department's plans to introduce an Innovations Fund for elections. [41241]

Ms Harman: The Innovations Fund is a small funding programme that is now available from the Democratic Engagement Branch of the DCA.

The Innovations Fund will provide seed funding of £10,000 to up to 10 projects that will build, test and evaluate new tools, both online and offline, that will facilitate democratic engagement between Government and the public or between members of the public.

The Innovations Fund is a small, trial project with a maximum budget of £100,000 that is not directly related to the election process. It was therefore not considered to be of a large enough scale to announce in Parliament.

All projects funded by the Innovations Fund will have robust contracts in place to ensure that funding is allocated appropriately. The Innovations Fund is separate from proposals for administrative pilots at the May 2006 elections.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what types of projects may be funded under the Department's elections Innovations fund pilots. [41242]

Ms Harman: The Innovations fund is a small funding programme that is now available from the Democratic Engagement Branch of the DCA.

The Innovations fund will provide seed funding of approximately £10,000 to up to 10 projects that will build, test and evaluate new tools that will facilitate democratic engagement between elections, either online or offline, between government and the public or between members of the public.

The Innovations fund is not related to elections per se, but instead will fund projects that will explore ways of motivating and mobilising citizens to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives and their communities in between elections.

The Innovations fund is separate from proposals for administrative pilots at the May 2006 elections.

Judges

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* Crown court and *(b)* appeal court judges were convicted of a criminal offence in each year since 1975. [37549]

Ms Harman: Convictions for serious criminal offences (i.e. those potentially or actually carrying a sentence of imprisonment) are considered by the Lord Chancellor as incompatible with holding judicial office. In the period since 1975, there has only been one such conviction (for smuggling) and the circuit judge in question was removed by the Lord Chancellor in 1983. The information on other convictions is not held centrally.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the judiciary in Chelmsford on the reform of the judges' lodging system; and if she will make a statement. [41013]

Ms Harman: I have had no discussions with the judiciary in Chelmsford on the reform of the judges' lodgings system.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost was of each judge's lodging housing a judge sitting in Chelmsford Crown court in each of the last five years for which figures are available; on how many nights they were used by judges in each year; how many staff were employed in such lodgings in each year; and what the *(a)* capital value is of each freehold property and *(b)* surrender value is of each leasehold property. [41014]

Ms Harman: There is only one judges' lodgings used by the High Court Judiciary sitting at Chelmsford Crown court. The property is owned by Essex county council and is hired as serviced accommodation under the terms of a license. I am therefore unable to supply the information on staffing, capital value, and the surrender value. The other information is given as follows.

	Total spend (£)	*Judge nights occupation*
2000-01	107,853.64	69
2001-02	114,388.17	145
2002-03	138,406.16	142
2003-04	103,069.09	115
2004-05	87,192.20	66

Judicial Pension Schemes

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the written statement of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 162WS, on judicial pensions, what the evidential basis is for the deregistering of judicial pension schemes having no net cost; and if she will give an estimate for the *(a)* cost and *(b)* saving of each component of the reforms. [40475]

Ms Harman: Changes in payments to, and contributions payable by, judges will be balanced by tax revenue; and higher employers national insurance contributions will be payments within Government.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what proportion of judges she estimates will have pension funds larger than £1.5 million in each of the next five years. [40477]

Ms Harman: No information is held on judges' personal pension arrangements and it is therefore not possible to provide such an estimate.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate she has made of the tax yield from judges' pensions if they were subject to the provisions of the Finance Act 2004. [40478]

Ms Harman: It is not possible to provide an estimate of any lifetime allowance charge liability as this would depend on a number of factors, including the level of personal pension benefits, the effect of any relief under the transitional provisions of the Finance Act and the order in which judges chose to vest their personal and judicial pensions.

Magistrates

Mr. Bone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the criteria are for appointing magistrates. [40986]

Ms Harman: Candidates for the magistracy must be between 18 and 65 years of age and must demonstrate at interview each of the following six key qualities: good character, understanding and communication, social awareness, maturity and sound temperament, sound judgment, and commitment and reliability. Details of those factors which will act as a bar to appointment are set out in the Lord Chancellor's directions to Advisory Committees, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Voting Systems

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the outcome of the Government review of the proportional voting systems used for the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and European Parliament elections. [41390]

Ms Harman: The Government review of the experiences of the new UK voting systems introduced for the devolved Administrations, the European Parliament and London assembly elections being conducted by officials within my Department is under way, and any decisions on any next steps, if necessary, will be taken in due course.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when her Department last undertook an evidence review into the long-term consequences of abortion on women, with particular reference to *(a)* depression, *(b)* drug misuse, *(c)* anxiety, *(d)* attempted suicide and *(e)* alcoholism, that drew on (i) UK and (ii) international research; and if she will make a statement; [41635]

(2) if she will commission an independent study of the long-term effects of abortion on the health of women, with particular reference to *(a)* depression, *(b)* drug misuse, *(c)* anxiety, *(d)* attempted suicide and *(e)* alcoholism; and if she will make a statement. [41704]

Caroline Flint: The safety and psychological effects of abortion were considered by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) in its updated evidence-based guideline, "The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion" (2004). In updating the guidance, the RCOG took account of the most recent national and international evidence. This is taken into account in the recommendations concerning information for women and abortion aftercare.

The Department has no current plans to commission an independent study of the long-term effects of abortion on the health of women, but keeps all new and emerging evidence under review.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what methodology was used by her Department to make the estimate of 25,000 in paragraph 4.10.5 of the partial regulatory impact assessment on the Prohibition of Abortion (England and Wales) Bill; and if she will make a statement; [41752]

(2) what methodology her Department used to make the conclusion in paragraph 4.10.4 of the partial regulatory impact assessment on the Prohibition of Abortion (England and Wales) Bill that 15,000 illegal abortions would take place in the United Kingdom if the Bill were passed; and if she will make a statement. [41753]

Caroline Flint: When developing the partial regulatory impact assessment (PRIA) on the Prohibition of Abortion (England and Wales) Bill officials contacted a diverse range of stakeholders to get the best possible understanding of the Bill. The number of possible illegal abortions, and abortions granted under risk to life clause of the Bill, shown in the PRIA was a best estimate based on the information provided by those stakeholders responding to the consultation and from examining what happened in other countries where access to abortion is restricted or illegal. The PRIA highlights that any outcomes would evolve over time, requiring around five years to become established.

Alcohol Misuse

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to provide *(a)* screening, *(b)* education and *(c)* early intervention for children and young people at risk of alcohol misuse. [39430]

Caroline Flint: The Department for Education and Skills have lead responsibility for ensuring that school pupils are educated about the effects of drinking. Alcohol education must be addressed at key stages two, three and four within the science curriculum.

Alcohol education is a statutory part of the national curriculum, which requires all children to learn about the risks of alcohol. This sits within a broader programme of drug education since many of the attitudes and skills to enable young people to make informed choices will be the same.

The guidance requires schools to emphasise alcohol education within their drug education programmes. It makes clear that the message should be about promoting sensible drinking and reducing the harm related to alcohol misuse. The guidance encourages schools to look at the influence of the media on attitudes towards alcohol.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has developed drug, alcohol and tobacco education schemes of work as part of the education training package for teachers. We are now working with QCA on end of key stage assessment materials that would help teachers assess progress in personal social and health education including alcohol education.

Blueprint is the largest research programme ever run in this country to evaluate the effectiveness of a multi-component approach to school-based drug education. The programme covered illegal drugs, legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco, and medicines.

The programme was delivered in spring term 2004 and 2005 to 4,500 young people in 23 schools. Full results of the research will be available in 2008 although the intention is to use the experience of the programme to inform practice in the interim.

The Department plans to commission a programme of trailblazer pilots for alcohol screening and brief interventions mainly aimed at adults but including young adults. Although the contract has still to be finalised, we have selected a consortium led by St. George's Medical School (University of London) and Newcastle University to operate these pilots and extract the learning from them to apply to a larger roll-out programme planned for the future.

These trailblazer pilots will operate in three settings; primary care, accident and emergency (A&E) and criminal justice settings. This gives the best spread of settings to offer screening and brief interventions across the whole adult population. Young adults, particularly young men, are less likely to attend their general practice than their older counterparts but their drinking behaviour is more likely to bring a number of them into contact with A&E and the criminal justice system.

Alzheimer's Disease

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the implications for neuroleptic prescribing of a withdrawal of Alzheimer's disease drugs; [39553]

(2) whether concerns raised by the Department about National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence draft guidance on drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease have been addressed. [39554]

Jane Kennedy: I have not made such an assessment. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently reviewing its guidance on drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease. The institute plans to publish its revised guidance on 23 January 2006. Information about NICE'S current work programme is available on the NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk.

Aylesbury Vale PCT

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the difference between the rate of change in death rates for men and women in Aylesbury Vale between 1995 and 2004. [39676]

Caroline Flint: The information requested on the number of death rates for men and women in Aylesbury Vale is shown in the table.

Death rates, per 100,000 population standardised to the European standard population, for males and females in Aylesbury Vale local authority, based on usual residence, from 1995 to 2004

	Males	*Females*
1995	845	634
1996	937	587
1997	824	608
1998	772	582
1999	780	592
2000	793	558

Death rates, per 100,000 population standardised to the European standard population, for males and females in Aylesbury Vale local authority, based on usual residence, from 1995 to 2004

	Males	Females
2001	729	533
2002	727	534
2003	690	515
2004	684	514

Source:

Compendium of clinical and health indicators, Department of Health/National Centre for Health Outcomes Development. Based on death registrations and population estimates from the Office for National Statistics.

Death rates are subject to random fluctuation from year to year, but the underlying trend is for an improvement in death rates for both males and females. Analysis of the underlying trend shows a slightly larger annual decrease in the death rate for males than for females, from a higher starting point.

The overall death rates for men and women combined is 7 per cent. lower than the national average.

Cancelled Operations (Devon)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been cancelled by hospitals in Devon since 1997; and what percentage of these patients had their operations rescheduled within 28 days. [38416]

Caroline Flint: The number of operations cancelled by hospitals in Devon since 1997 is shown in the table. However, the Department only collects the number of patients admitted within one month of a cancellation and not the number rescheduled. This information is also included in the table.

Cancelled operations for non clinical reasons, 2001-02 to Q2 2005-06

		2001-02			2002-03		
Org Code	*Organisation*	*Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons*	*Patients not admitted within one month of last minute cancellation*	*Proportion of last minute cancellations admitted within one month (%)*	*Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons*	*Cancellations on the day of surgery*	*Patients not admitted within 28 days of a cancellation on the day of surgery*
5FT	East Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FR	Exeter PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FV	Mid Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FQ	North Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5CV	South Hams and West Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FY	Teignbridge PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5CW	Torbay PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
RWV	Devon Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—
RBZ	Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	33	1	97.0	95	95	4
RH8	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust	579	155	73.2	735	699	136
RA9	South Devon Health Care NHS Trust	691	194	71.9	431	295	38
	Total	1,303	350	73.1	1,261	1,089	178

		2003-04			2004-05		
		Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons	*Patients not admitted within 28 days of a last minute cancellation*	*Proportion of last minute cancellations admitted within 28 days (%)*	*Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons*	*Patients not admitted within 28 days of a last minute cancellation*	*Proportion of last minute cancellations admitted within 28 days (%)*
5FT	East Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FR	Exeter PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FV	Mid Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FQ	North Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5CV	South Hams and West Devon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5FY	Teignbridge PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5CW	Torbay PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
RWV	Devon Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—
RBZ	Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	97	1	99.9	168	1	99.4
RH8	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust	445	2	99.6	372	0	100.0
RA9	South Devon Health Care NHS Trust	488	1	99.8	352	0	100.0
	Total	1,030	4	99.6	892	1	99.9

		2005-06		
		Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons	*Patients not admitted within 8 days of a last minute cancellation*	*Proportion of last minute cancellations admitted within 28 days (%)*
5FT	East Devon PCT	—	—	—
5FR	Exeter PCT	—	—	—
5FV	Mid Devon PCT	—	—	—

		2005–06		
		Last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons	*Patients not admitted within 8 days of a last minute cancellation*	*Proportion of last minute cancellations admitted within 28 days (%)*
5FQ	North Devon PCT	—	—	—
5CV	South Hams and West Devon PCT	—	—	—
5FY	Teignbridge PCT	—	—	—
5CW	Torbay PCT	—	—	—
RWV	Devon Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	—
RBZ	Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	53	2	96.2
RH8	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust	218	0	100.0
RA9	South Devon Health Care NHS Trust	100	1	99.0
	Total	371	3	99.2

Notes:
Data are not collected for individual hospitals. Data were collected by health authority only prior to 2001–02. Trust level data were collected from 2001–02 onwards. The 2005–06 data are upto Q2 2005–06.
We collect the number of patients admitted within one month or 28 days of a cancellation, not the number rescheduled.
From 2002–03, the number of patients not admitted within one month was replaced by the number of patients not admitted within 28 days.
In 2002–03, the number of patients not admitted within 28 days of a last minute cancellation was not collected.
The number of patients not admitted within 28 days of a cancellation on the day of surgery was collected instead.
A last minute cancellation is one that occurs on the day the patient was due to arrive, after they have arrived in hospital or on the day of their operation.
For example, you are to be admitted to hospital on a Monday for an operation scheduled for the following day(Tuesday).
If the hospital cancels your operation for non-clinical reasons on the Monday then this would count as a last minute cancellation.
This includes patients who have not actually arrived in hospital and have been telephoned at home prior to their arrival.
An operation which is rescheduled to a time within 24 hours of the original scheduled operation should be recorded as a postponement and not as a cancellation.
The QMCO collection does not record the number of postponements.
Some common non-clinical reasons for cancellations by the hospital include: ward beds unavailable; surgeon unavailable; emergency case needing theatre; theatre list over-ran; equipment failure; admin error; anaesthetist unavailable; theatre staff unavailable; and critical care bed unavailable.
Source:
Department of Health dataset QMCO

Care Homes

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many recorded incidents of *(a)* theft, *(b)* physical abuse and *(c)* bullying in care homes for the elderly there were in each of the last eight years, broken down by county. [40521]

Mr. Byrne: I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the information requested is only available from April 2004, when CSCI took over the work of care homes inspection and regulation from the National Care Standards Commission.

The information is not recorded on a county basis, but by CSCI region. The number of recorded incidents of theft, physical abuse and bullying in care homes for older people between April 2004 and December 2005 in the nine CSCI regions are shown in the table.

CSCI region	*Theft*	*Physical abuse*	*Emotional and psychological abuse*
North East	41	67	19
East Midlands	26	25	8
South West	78	93	63
West Midlands	70	63	28
North West	92	114	49
London	54	28	32
South East	92	412	36
Eastern	30	90	41
Yorkshire and Humberside	53	87	32
Total	536	979	308

Note:
A recorded incident of abuse does not mean that abuse actually took place. Upon investigation of a complaint, it might be found to be upheld, not upheld or unresolved.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action the Government are taking to encourage an increase in the provision of care homes for the elderly; [40602]

(2) what steps the Government are taking to encourage provision of care homes for the elderly. [41688]

Mr. Byrne: The Government believe that care homes are only one of a range of options that should be available for supporting people with long-term care needs. The Green Paper, 'Independence, Well-being and Choice', published in March 2005, set out the vision for adult social care. To make that vision a reality, domiciliary care must become an increasingly important element of social care provision. Domiciliary care services can help people to remain in control of their own lives. There has been substantial investment in other care settings for older people, such as domiciliary care and extra care housing. The Government recognise that most people want to live in their own homes for as long as possible.

The Government are promoting better planning and commissioning of care services at a local level to stabilise the long-term care sector in a way that will allow it to meet future demand.

It is for local councils to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to meet the needs of local people.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the cost to the NHS of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [39530]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Coeliac Disease

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Morley and Rothwell (Colin Challen) of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2131W, on coeliac disease, if she will commission research into whether there is an adverse reaction upon coeliacs caused by consumption of genetically-modified foodstuffs. [42225]

Mr. Byrne: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC does not normally allocate funds to particular topics: research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available. When appropriate, high quality research in particular areas of strategic importance may be given priority in competition for funds, but research excellence and importance to health continues to be the primary considerations in funding decisions. The MRC always welcomes high quality applications for support into any aspect of human health and these are judged in open competition with other demands on funding.

Correspondence

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter from Mark Heyes dated 23 October 2002 about matters relating to his employment at Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust, which was referred to her Department by the Prime Minister's Office; and what measures she is taking to ensure that her Department's policy on whistleblowing is adhered to. [28144]

Jane Kennedy: A reply from my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Health, Alan Milburn was sent on 17 December 2002 to Mark Heyes's letter dated 23 October 2002.

Guidance on whistleblowing was issued by the Department in 1999 (HSC198). This was followed by a letter of 25 July 2003 to all national health service trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities, enclosing a policy pack on whistleblowing and setting out the need for all NHS organisations to develop and review their policies.

NHS Employers now provides guidance and support on whistleblowing. In addition, the Department funds the Public Concern at Work helpline, which offers independent legal advice to NHS employees and advises them how to raise their concerns appropriately. The Healthcare Commission assesses NHS trusts against the national standards and ensures that all trusts have a whistleblowing policy in place, with effective monitoring processes.

Cotswold and Vale PCT

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* terms of reference and *(b)* powers are of the turnaround team sent into the Cotswold and Vale primary care trust; and when she expects it to report. [41508]

Caroline Flint: The first stage of engagement with the turnaround teams in Cotswold and Vale primary care trust (PCT) has been to undertake an assessment of the current position.

Following this initial assessment the strategic health authority is currently agreeing a tailored package of turnaround support with the PCT.

The turnaround teams will support and advise the management team of the PCT on delivering the organisation's statutory duties and key national targets.

Countess of Chester Foundation Hospital

Andrew Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients in the Countess of Chester Foundation hospital in the last period for which figures are available were normally resident in Wales. [39682]

Mr. Byrne: In 2004–05, the total number of unique patients with a finished admission episode in the Countess of Chester Hospital National Health Service Foundation Trust was 37,746. Of these, 6,759 (or 17.91 per cent.) unique patients were resident in Wales.

Notes:

Patient counts:

Patient counts are based on the unique patient identifier HESID. This identifier is based on a patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Each patient is only counted once, irrespective of the number of times that patient has been admitted within the year. Where data is incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

Finished admission episodes:

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Data quality:

Hospital episode statistics (HES) are compiled from data sent by over 300 NHS trusts and primary care trusts in England. The health and social care information centre liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of complete and valid data and seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data via HES processes. Whilst this brings about improvement over time, some shortcomings remain.

Ungrossed data:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Dentistry

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to assess the budget for the provision of NHS dentistry in *(a)* Portsmouth and *(b)* other primary care trust areas on the basis of need. [28284]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) were notified of their budget allocations for 2006–07 in early December, taking into account the current provision of services and the recent expansion of personal dental services. In both Portsmouth and other PCT areas, the recent budget allocations for local commissioning of dentistry in 2006–07 onwards reflect the current provision of services in each PCT area. These budgets are ring fenced for three years and can only be used by the PCT for the provision of primary care dental services.

In the future, the distribution of these resources within a PCT area will be a matter of local discretion. When a dentist leaves the local area or reduces his or her national health service commitment, the resources will return to the PCT to re-deploy according to local needs. PCTs may also commit additional funds from their overall allocation to augment the ring fenced dental budget and address local dental needs. The Department will continue to keep future budget allocations for dentistry under review.

Emergency Calls

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many emergency calls were answered within the Tees, East and North Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust in each of the last five years; [39952]

(2) what proportion of emergency calls resulted in an ambulance arriving at the scene of the reported incident within the Government's target response times for Tees, East and North Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust in each of the last five years. [39953]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Emergency calls and response times, Tees, East and North Yorkshire, 2000–01 to 2004–05

Thousand

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Incidents (calls resulting in response arriving at the scene)	131.6	126.6	136.7	143.2	153.4
Category A incidents					
Percentage response within 8 minutes	52.8	71.9	73.4	73.7	77.1
Percentage response within 19 minutes	96.4	97.8	97.6	97.9	98.5
Category B/C incidents					
Percentage response within 8 minutes	49.3	55.8	57.1	58.1	[1]57.5
Percentage response within 19 minutes	96.1	96.5	95.4	95.7	[1]94.8
Category B incidents					
Percentage response within 8 minutes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[2]55.6
Percentage response within 19 minutes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[2]94.8

[1] Data for April 2004 to September 2004.
[2] Data for October 2004 to March 2005; prior to this, category B data not available separately.
Source:
HSCIC return KA34

Equity Audits

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what equity audits have been undertaken by her Department to assess the health of vulnerable groups. [39401]

Caroline Flint: The Department have not undertaken any health equity audits. Health equity audit is a key tool to be used by the national health service to embed evidence of local inequalities into mainstream activity such as planning, commissioning and service delivery. Health equity audit is a mandatory part of primary care trust planning and the topic for each health equity audit is down to local determination by the NHS trust and their partners. The Choosing Health White Paper "Delivering Choosing Health (2005)" set out the intention to extend health and wellbeing equity audits to other NHS trusts and local authorities.

Healthy Living Centres

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the range of services provided by healthy living centres. [39663]

Caroline Flint: Healthy living centres (HLCs) in England provide, or host, a wide range of services for their local communities. These include mainstream health promotion services local facilities including community cafes and activities such as dance and tai chi. The mix of services and facilities varies widely between individual HLCs.

Hearing Services

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how long the waiting times are for *(a)* a hospital hearing test and *(b)* the fitting of a hearing aid in the health districts covering Sedgefield and Worthing; and what the equivalent waiting times were in 1997. [38923]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available centrally. However, from January 2006, a new monthly commissioner-based diagnostic data collection will be introduced. This will look at waiting times and activity for 15 diagnostic tests or procedures, including pure tone audiometry.

Hypothermia

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to make the elderly more aware of hypothermia. [40607]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are engaged in a large number of initiatives designed to make older people more aware of the dangers of hypothermia. These are the same as those designed to heighten awareness of the dangers of cold generally and include:

The 'Keep Warm Keep Well' campaign launched this year with the flu immunisation campaign and a leaflet and helpline-based advice on what simple measures older people can take to preserve their health in winter time.

Flu and pneumococcal immunisation programmes. The United Kingdom has the highest uptake of flu immunisation among eligible groups of any in Europe.

Helping to set up the health, housing and fuel poverty forum in March 2005, to raise the profile of cold, damp homes and to mainstream the many innovative activities the national health service is engaged in to address this issue.

Establishing the £60 million Partnerships for Older People Projects fund. The focus of these projects is on improving outcomes for older people through preventive interventions. Fuel poverty reduction forms a part in several of these.

Direct encouragement to the NHS to increase further the many fuel poverty reduction partnerships between the NHS, local authorities and, for example, Warm Front. These lead to primary care staff being trained and supported, simplified referral routes and rapid response from Warm Front and others.

Influenza Vaccinations

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1571W, on influenza inoculations, whether any priorities for the recipients of the two to three million doses of the H5N1 vaccine being purchased have been determined in addition to the healthcare workers referred to. [40864]

Caroline Flint: We are in the process of gathering expert advice on the optimal strategy for use of H5N1 vaccine. No decisions have yet been made.

IVF Treatment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many primary care trusts restrict funding for IVF treatment to women aged 30 years and over; [41500]

(2) what action she is taking to ensure that primary care trusts meet the clinical criteria set out in the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's clinical guidelines on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems. [41501]

Caroline Flint: Information about the number of primary care trusts restricting funding for in-vitro fertilisation treatment for women aged 30 years and over is not collected centrally. We are discussing with Infertility Network UK, the leading voluntary organisation representing the interests of fertility patients, ways in which they can work with primary care trusts to help ensure that the patients' voice is heard when decisions about the provision of services are made at local level.

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what improvements have been made to the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* treatment of mal de debarquement syndrome on the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [42044]

Mr. Byrne: We are not aware of any improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of this rare condition.

Maternity Centres

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment her Department has made of the level of use of midwife-led maternity centres; [39633]

(2) how many midwife-led maternity centres have been in operation in each of the last 10 years; [39634]

(3) how many midwife-led maternity centres have shut in each of the last 10 years; [39635]

(4) what assessment her Department has made of the impact on mothers of travelling further while in labour as a result of the closure of local maternity services; [39698]

(5) what proportion of births took place in midwife-led maternity centres in the last year for which figures are available. [39962]

Mr. Byrne: It is for primary care trusts and national health service trusts to determine the level of midwife-led maternity care required locally. A survey of patients conducted on behalf of the Department[1] asking for a preference as to where the next delivery would take place found 20.4 per cent. wanted to give birth in a midwife-led unit.

Under the maternity standard of the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services, published in September 2004, NHS maternity care providers and primary care trusts (PCTs) are required to ensure that the range of antenatal, birth and post-birth care services available locally constitutes real choice for women.

Information on the number of midwife-led maternity centres that have been in operation or shut in each of the last 10 years is not collected centrally.

It is for local PCTs and NHS trusts to assess the impact reconfiguring maternity services will have on mothers to be.

Information on the proportion of births that took place in midwife-led maternity centres is not collected centrally.

[1] "Different models of maternity care: an evaluation of the roles of primary health care workers", Hewison J, Renfrew M J, Gregson B, Young G, Braunholtz D, Dowswell T, Hirst J, Ross-McGill H. 2003

Mobility Equipment

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many outstanding requests for mobility equipment for children under the age of 16 there are; what the average waiting time for mobility equipment is; how many children are registered as requiring disability equipment; how many children are on the waiting list for disability equipment; if she will break down the information in each category by parliamentary constituency; and what procedures are in place to ensure mobility equipment is provided to similar cases. [40671]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

MRI Scans

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received regarding waiting times for MRI scans. [29278]

Mr. Byrne: Written representations have been received from hon. and right hon. Members and the public.

New-born Children (Low Birth Weight)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of children were born with a low birth weight in each year from 1975–76; and if she will make a statement. [41309]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what percentage of children were born with a low birthweight in each year from 1975–1976 to 2005–2006. (41309)

The attached table shows the information requested. The latest available figures are for 2004. Birthweight information for liveborn babies is currently provided by primary care organisations to Registrars of births, deaths and marriages in their area for recording on the draft birth entry. This is then made available to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for statistical purposes. Prior to 1982 this birthweight information was not made available to Registrars for a large proportion of liveborn babies. For this reason figures for the period 1975 to 1981 are taken from the DHSS annual summaries of LHS 27/1 low birthweight returns. On the returns for these years, low birthweight was defined as 2,500 grams and under.

Figures from 1982 are based on the information available to ONS and is based on the World Health Organisation's definition of low birthweight (under 2,500 grams).

Percentage of live born babies with low birth weight[1,2], England and Wales 1975–2004

	Percentage
1975[1]	6.4
1976	6.4
1977	6.5
1978	6.5
1979	6.7
1980	6.8
1981	6.8
1982[2]	6.7
1983	6.7
1984	6.7
1985	6.8
1986	6.9
1987	6.8
1988	6.6
1989	6.7
1990	6.8
1991	6.9
1992	6.8
1993	6.9
1994	7.0
1995	7.3
1996	7.3
1997	7.4
1998	7.5
1999	7.6
2000	7.6
2001	7.6
2002	7.7
2003	7.7
2004	7.6

[1] For the years 1975–81: low birth weight was defined as 2,500g and under.
[2] For the years 1982–2004: low birth weight was defined as less than 2,500g.
Sources:
Birth Counts volume 2, The Stationery Office. Published 2000. ISBN 0 11 620917 8
Table A3.4.1 1975–1981, Table A3.4.2 1982–1992
ONS Series FM1 Birth statistics 1993–2004

NHS Finance

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial position of *(a)* the Thames Valley strategic health authority, *(b)* Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust, *(c)* Wycombe primary care trust, *(d)* Buckinghamshire mental health trust and *(e)* Two Shires ambulance trust was during 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [41719]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The 2004–05 audited financial position of all national health service organisations, strategic health authorities (SHAs) primary care trusts and NHS trusts is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en.

A copy of this information is available in the Library.

NHS Rationing (BMJ Correspondence)

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received about the recent letter published online in the *British Medical Journal*, on rationing in response to NHS deficits: by Professor Sheena Asthana. [38540]

Mr. Byrne: We have received only one representation and that was from the hon. Member.

NHS Staff (Overseas Recruitment)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on the levels of recruitment of doctors from overseas of her proposal to abolish the register of medical practitioners with limited registration. [27552]

Jane Kennedy: Abolishing the provisions for limited registration will make little or no difference to numbers. Its main effects will be to reduce bureaucracy, freeing resources for patient care, and remove a source of potential discrimination.

Non-emergency Operations

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2737W, on non-emergency operations, (1) if she will list other providers in England, including independent hospitals and treatment centres, which treat NHS patients for *(a)* knee replacement surgery, *(b)* cataract surgery, *(c)* hernia repair and *(d)* hip replacement surgery; [18887]

(2) when she will answer the question tabled by the hon. Member for Northavon on 12 October 2005, on non-emergency operations, reference 18887. [40901]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the services provided in England by providers contracted to set up independent sector treatment centres under the central procurements is shown in the table.

Information on other independent sector providers commissioned locally is not collected centrally.

Programme name	*Strategic health authority*	*Specialties*	*Provider*	*Operational status*
East Cornwall	South West Peninsula	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, ENT, Oral surgery, General medicine, Gastroenterology, Cardiology, Dermatology, Thoracic medicine, Rheumatology, Paediatrics, Gynaecology, Dietetics, Physio assessment, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery	Capio	Interim
East Lincs	Trent	Ophthalmology, urology, hernias, varicose veins, colonoscopies, and minor skin	Capio	Full service
West Lincs	Trent	Ophthalmology, gastroscopies, colonoscopies, orthopaedic, urology and minor skin	Capio	Full service
North Oxford (Horton)	Thames Valley	Orthopaedics	Capio	Full service
NEYNL	North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	General Surgery, Trauma and orthopaedics	Capio	Interim
Southampton	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Orthopaedics	Capio	Full service
Northumberland	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Upper scopes, hernias, varicose veins, minor skin	Capio	Full service
TV3500	Thames Valley	General Surgery, Urology Trauma and orthopaedics, Dermatology, Gynaecology	Capio	Interim
GC4 West Surrey (tba)	Surrey and Sussex	Orthopaedics	Capio	Under negotiation
Kidderminster	West Midlands South	Orthopaedics	InterHealth	Full service
Cheshire and Merseyside	Cheshire and Merseyside	Orthopaedics	InterHealth	Not operational
Nottingham	Trent	Orthopaedic, Gynaecology, General surgical, Dermatology, Endoscopies, Oral Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Chronic Pain	Nations	Not operational
Maidstone	Kent and Medway	Chemotherapy, minor surgery and endoscopes	PHG	Not operational
Outer North East London (BHRT)	North East London	Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, ENT, Oral, General Surgery, Urology	PHG	Not operational
Brighton	Surrey and Sussex	Orthopaedics	Mercury Health	Interim
Medway	Kent and Medway	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Orthopaedics, Urology, Diagnostics—endoscopy only	Mercury Health	Full service
Portsmouth	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Walk in centre/minor injuries unit, day surgery, diagnostics, ophthalmology	Mercury Health	Not operational
Lister Surgical centre	Beds and Herts	Paediatrics, Paediatric ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	—	Under negotiation
Hemel Hampstead Surgical centre	Beds and Herts	Paediatrics, Paediatric ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	—	Under negotiation
Bradford	West Yorkshire	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Gynae, Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Ultrasound scans—general, Ultrasound scans—Doppler, CT scans, MRI scans, Plain films and x-rays, Fluoroscopy	Nations	Full service

Programme name	Strategic health authority	Specialties	Provider	Operational status
Burton	Shropshire and Staffordshire	General Surgery, ENT, Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Rheumatology, Pain procedures, Ophthalmology	Nations	Not operational
Trent and South Yorkshire	Trent	Orthopaedics	PHG	Full service
Daventry	Leicestershire, Northampton and Rutland	Ophthalmology, Upper GI endoscopies, Sigmoidscopy, Orthopaedics, Dermatology, Urology	Birkdale Clinic	Full service
Shepton Mallet	Dorset and Somerset	Orthopaedics, ophthalmology, general surgery and endoscopy	UK Specialist Hospitals	Full service
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester	Orthopaedic, general surgery and ENT	NetCare	Full service
Plymouth	South West Peninsula	Orthopaedics	PHG	Full service
Ophthalmic Chain	Cheshire and Merseyside; Cumbria and Lancashire; Dorset and Somerset; Hampshire and Isle of Wight; Kent and Medway; Northumberland, Tyne and Wear; South West Peninsula; Surrey and Sussex; Thames Valley	Ophthalmology	Netcare	Full service
GSUP1	n/a	Orthopaedic, ophthalmic, general surgery, ENT, plastic surgery	Capio/Nuffield	Completed
GSUP2	n/a	Orthopaedic, general surgery	BMI/BUPA/ Nuffield	Full service

Obesity

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many patients were referred to weight management clinics in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [39563]

(2) what the average waiting time for obese patients to receive treatment at a weight management clinic was in the most recent period for which figures are available. [39564]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally, as data are only collected at trust level and not specialist clinic level.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the effectiveness of the Body Mass Index in assessing the health effects of being overweight. [40660]

Caroline Flint: Trends in overweight and obesity and their relationship to other risk factors are monitored each year through the Health Survey for England. Body fatness is most commonly assessed by body mass index (BMI). A BMI of 25 to 30 is considered overweight and greater than 30, obese. There is a graded increase in the risk of total mortality and cardiovascular mortality with increasing BMI above 25. BMI combined with waist measurement is a good indicator of obesity and associated health risks. Waist circumference levels of greater than 102 centimetres in men and greater than 80 centimetres in women are associated with increased risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Paymaster

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what contracts Paymaster has within her Department. [26423]

Jane Kennedy: The Department contract Paymaster to provide pension administration for the principal civil service pension scheme, to which the majority of established civil servants within the Department are members. The contract has been in place since April 2004 and will be due for renewal in April 2009. The Department has no other contracts with Paymaster.

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned into genetic susceptibility to illness following contact with pesticides. [25498]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not commissioned any research into genetic susceptibility to illness following contact with pesticides.

However, in deriving the acceptable exposure levels for pesticides from the required animal data, variation within the human population is part of the assessment carried out by the pesticides safety directorate, for consideration by the advisory committee on pesticides. A 100 fold factor is routinely applied to the critical dose that produces no adverse effects in the test species. The 100 is made up of 10 to extrapolate from the animals to humans (humans are considered more sensitive) and 10 to account for variation in response within the human population (individuals that are more sensitive than the norm).

Podiatry Provision (Gray Report)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library a copy of the report published by the taskforce chaired by Dr. Muir Gray on podiatry provision. [40630]

Mr. Byrne: The report called "Feet First", published by the NHS executive in 1994, is available in the Library.

Polio

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been identified as having had an episode of polio at some time in their life in each primary care trust. [39262]

Caroline Flint: This information is not available centrally. Annual notifications of acute poliomyelitis since 1912 and a summary of cases occurring between 1985–2003 in the United Kingdom can be found at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/polio/data.htm.

Pre-term Labour

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance is given on the appropriate clinical definition of pre-term labour. [39246]

Mr. Byrne: Pre-term labour is defined as the onset of labour when the foetus is viable and before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has not specifically given guidance on the incidence of pre-term labour but has produced guidelines on the administration of corticosteroids and tocolytic drugs to try and arrest pre-term labour.

The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services published in September 2004 requires maternity care service providers and trusts to ensure that a comprehensive high quality ante-natal screening and diagnostic service, based on the current recommendations of the National Screening Committee and designed to detect maternal or foetal problems at an early stage, is offered to all women.

Primary Care Staff

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received concerning the impact of the proposals within "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS" on the morale of primary care staff, with particular reference to representations on the prospect of staff leaving or retiring early; and if she will make a statement. [18896]

Mr. Byrne: The Department, NHS Employers and the national health service trade unions have produced a joint framework setting out how the human resources (HR) changes, arising form "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS", should be managed. The framework identifies the processes that organisations are expected to follow to ensure the changes are managed fairly, with national support underpinning local decision making.

Following publication of the framework on 1 December, a number of questions have been received from people seeking more detailed guidance on the implications of the anticipated organisational changes. NHS Employers is providing responses to those questions through its website. In addition, NHS Employers is playing a key role in supporting NHS organisations and staff during these changes, including issuing best practice guidelines, providing employment opportunities for NHS staff through the on-line clearing house "NHS Jobs", and advising on redeployment support. Local support will be provided by HR cluster leads, who will provide advice and guidance, drawing upon best practice.

School Nursing/Health Visiting

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the development of *(a)* school nursing and *(b)* health visiting services. [39442]

Mr. Byrne: Though the detail of developing school nursing and health visiting services rests with primary care trusts (PCTs), we recognise the important role these nurses play in addressing health priorities. This was reinforced in the children's national service framework and the chief nursing officer's review of the nursing, midwifery and health visiting contribution to vulnerable children and young people, as well as in the White Paper, Choosing Health.

Additionally, we are providing new funding so that by 2010 every PCT, working with children's trusts and local authorities, will have at least one full-time, year-round, qualified school nurse working with each cluster or group of primary schools and the related secondary school. Revenue allocations to PCTs covering the period 2006–07 and 2007–08 were announced in February. For the two years covered by this allocation, a total of £62 million has been identified nationally to invest in the school nurses, £20 million in 2006–07 and £42 million in 2007–08.

Choosing Health also commits the chief nursing officer to work with nurse leaders and the Department for Education and Skills to modernise and promote school nursing and to develop a national programme for best practice that includes reviewing children's and young people's health and supporting the use of children's personal health guide.

Sexual Health

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of diagnosed sexually transmitted diseases there were in each primary care trust in London in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [33309]

Jane Kennedy: The number and rates of diagnoses of sexually transmitted diseases made at genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics in each of the London strategic health authorities (SHAs) are shown on the Health Protection Agency website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/national2000_2004_Final.pdf.

The dataset used to compile these data is based on diagnoses made in GUM clinics. Testing undertaken in other clinical settings, such as general practice, is not recorded in the dataset.

The release of small area statistics is being reviewed and sexually transmitted infections data is currently only published at SHA level. The data are shown in calendar years. Data are not available for 2005.

Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned into where smokers under the age of 16 years obtain their tobacco. [39369]

Caroline Flint: Data on smoking among young people are available from a series of surveys of secondary school children. The main purpose of the surveys are to monitor smoking, drinking and drug use among secondary school pupils in years seven to 11, where the majority are aged 11 to 15.

We have provided an example of data available from the "Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England 2004" report, chapter 5 "Where children get cigarettes" which is shown in the table. This survey and chapter is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/34/32/04123432.pdf.

Usual sources of cigarettes[1], by age, England 2004—Current smokers

Percentage

	Age 11–12 years	*13 years*	*14 years*	*15 years*	*Total*
Bought from any shop	28	53	63	78	66
Bought from supermarket	5	13	16	30	21
Bought from newsagent/tobacconist/sweet shop	24	45	54	70	58
Bought from garage shop	9	15	25	38	29
Bought from other type of shop	3	9	9	16	12
Bought from street markets	2	8	5	4	5
Bought from machine	14	14	17	22	19
Bought through the internet	—	—	0	—	0
Bought from other people	40	38	41	33	37
Bought from friends/relatives	28	29	30	25	27
Bought from someone else	24	22	22	15	19
Given by other people	62	67	67	61	63
Given by friends	51	64	61	56	58
Given by brother/sister	18	17	12	11	13
Given by father/mother	3	2	7	9	7
Found or taken	11	9	7	4	6
Other	15	5	6	6	7
Bases	123	214	388	628	1,353

[1] Percentages total more than 100 because pupils could give more than one answer.

Note:
The survey from which the results are taken are from secondary school pupils in years 7 to 11. The majority of pupils questioned are therefore aged between 11 and 15.

Source:
Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England 2004. Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Social Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of *(a)* the recent report by the Association of Directors of Social Services on learning disabilities services and *(b)* the likely impact of its recommendations on social care in North Yorkshire. [39693]

Mr. Byrne: The Department welcomes this report as a useful piece of work, particularly in its emphasis on the importance of maintaining support for people with learning disabilities to lead their lives as independently as possible.

It is for North Yorkshire to consider the contents of the report in relation to their local service provision.

Sorafenib

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely timescale for introducing Sorafenib following successful clinical trials. [27480]

Jane Kennedy: A press statement issued by the applicant pharmaceutical company indicates that an application for a marketing authorisation for Sorafenib has been submitted to the European medicines agency (EMEA) in September 2005 for the treatment of patients with advanced renal cell cancer. As with all medicinal products, before Sorafenib is granted a marketing authorisation and becomes available in the United Kingdom it must be fully evaluated in relation to the appropriate standards required in the relevant European rules and regulations on medicinal products. Data submitted in support of the application will need to demonstrate that the safety, quality and efficacy of the product are satisfactory for its intended use. Under European procedures, it takes up to 210 days for an opinion on licensing to be given by the scientific committee of the EMEA, the Committee for human medicinal products, excluding time taken by the company to provide further information or data to support any questions which may arise during the assessment process. Should the assessment consider that the quality, safety and efficacy are satisfactory and a

positive opinion be given, the European Commission will consider the opinion and decide upon granting a marketing authorisation, valid across the community.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 5 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2843W, on waiting times, whether the Department has agreed local delivery plans with every strategic health authority; where the Department is piloting data collections to support the 18-week waiting time target; where these pilots are taking place; whether she has taken a decision on whether data drawn from the pilots will be published; and when she intends to begin monitoring waiting times across England for the purpose of measuring the 18-week waiting time target. [31895]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1579W.

Measurement of the total patient pathway, from referral to treatment, will be in place in advance of 2008 to help support delivery of 18 weeks. In the meantime, all strategic health authorities (SHAs) have developed plans, based upon the three stages of treatment, outpatients, diagnostics and inpatients, which have been signed off by the Department.

Primary care trusts and SHAs have recently been asked to refresh their plans for cutting long waits for outpatients, diagnostics and inpatients, in order to reflect their latest thinking on achievement of the 18-week target. We plan to monitor referral-to-treatment times across England from early 2007.

Winter Deaths

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Department has made of the strength of the correlation between excess winter deaths and the average outdoor temperature. [32642]

Mr. Byrne: It is well known that there is a linear relationship of temperature and mortality, 1.4 per cent. increase in mortality for every one degree centigrade fall in temperature from 18 degrees centigrade. This means that all winter days, not just the coldest, create some excess mortality.

This message is spelt out in the materials for the Keep Warm Keep Well campaign, a campaign run every winter for the last 17 winters in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Age Concern, Help the Aged, National Energy Action, and WRVS.

Source:
The Eurowinter group. *Lancet*, 1997, May 10; 349 (9062): 1341–6.

Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the reasons for Yorkshire Wolds and Coast primary care trust's budget deficit. [39585]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for managing the financial position for their local health communities, which includes assessing the reasons for organisations incurring deficits. SHAs are charged with ensuring that every organisation achieves financial balance.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Parliamentary Questions

Peter Law: To ask the Leader of the House what assessment he has made of the merits of arranging for 'will write answers' to hon. Members to be published in full in an annex to the *Official Report*. [41535]

Mr. Hoon: Improvements to the way Government Departments handle replies to parliamentary questions, to reduce the number and increase the accessibility of 'I will write' replies, were announced by written ministerial statement on 21 July 2004.

I have recently conducted a review of how these new arrangements have been working, in response to a report recommendation from the Public Administration Select Committee. I am content that the arrangements at the time of Prorogation are working well.

I have sent a memorandum to the Committee today.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Wildlife Crime

13. **Martin Horwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the resources available to police officers for tackling wildlife crime. [41781]

Fiona Mactaggart: All Police forces have a policy for dealing with wildlife crime and the chief constable and police authority are responsible for allocating resources to deliver that policy. The enforcement capability of officers on the ground is supported by the Partnership Against Wildlife Crime; a multi-agency body comprising representatives of all the organisations involved in wildlife law enforcement in the UK. In addition, the National Criminal Intelligence Service houses the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit, which supports all forces.

Police

14. **Adam Afriyie:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the likely costs of police force amalgamation. [41782]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Further to a previous reply, we are currently analysing the proposals put forward to ensure that we understand fully the real costs of change and the future benefits. Until that analysis is complete, I am not prepared to comment further on the likely costs.

19. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received from the Association of Police Authorities about the merger of police forces. [41787]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary has received a number of representations from the APA both in writing and in person on the review of police force structures. The issues raised by the APA are important and will continue to be considered carefully in the light of the proposals we have received from police forces and authorities and as we move into the implementation phase of the review. The APA has been and will continue to be fully involved in our deliberations.

23. **Anne Main:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that local communities are consulted about police force amalgamations. [41792]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As part of developing options for change forces and authorities were asked to consult with all relevant local stakeholders including local communities so as to ensure their views were taken into consideration. There will also be further consultation at a national and local level as the final proposals for change in each region become clear.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of policing per head of population in Surrey in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2005–06, broken down by (i) council tax, (ii) police grant, (iii) national business rates, (iv) revenue support grant and (v) other funding sources. [34200]

Hazel Blears: The information is set out in the table. The figures are not directly comparable because in April 2000 the area covered by the Surrey police authority was increased as a result of a boundary change with the Metropolitan Police area.

We do not distribute grant to police authorities purely on the basis of population. The police funding formula uses a range of socio-demographic data to reflect reasonably the relative needs of each authority. Grant allocations take into account the relative resources of each authority. They are also adjusted to limit year-on-year variations.

Cost of policing per head of population in Surrey

		£	
		1997–98	*2005–06*
(i)	Council tax per head of population	19.51	69.33
(ii)	Home Office police grant per head of population	57.80	54.29
(iii)	National non domestic rates per head of population	19.72	16.25
(iv)	Revenue support grant per head of population	20.01	15.39
(v)	Other funding sources per head of population[1]	3.09	12.28

[1] Approximately half the 'other' funding for 2005–06 is from Home Office specific grants.

Source:
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Figures of 'other' income provided by Surrey police.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the tendering process which led to the drug testing equipment being supplied to the police by Cozart Bioscience Ltd. was. [40319]

Paul Goggins: The Department tendered for the provision of drug testing equipment to the police by issuing an advertisement in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) in 2003. Interested companies were short-listed against the criteria specified in the OJEU advertisement, with the contract being awarded to Cozart Bioscience Ltd.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the drug testing equipment supplied to the police by Cozart Bioscience Ltd. [40344]

Paul Goggins: The Cozart drug testing equipment was assessed against the criteria specified in the procurement notice advertised in the *Official Journal* of the European Union in 2003. In accordance with contractual arrangements, the Home Office monitors the performance of the equipment provided by Cozart Bioscience Ltd.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been employed in Rayleigh, Essex, in each year since 2002. [40033]

Hazel Blears: Rayleigh is a basic command unit (BCU) within Essex. The deployment of police officers to the Rayleigh BCU is a matter for the chief constable of Essex.

In 2002, there were 154 police officers in Rayleigh. In 2003 there were 148 officers, 165 in 2004 and 163 in 2005.

The numbers of police officers are based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures are as at 31 March.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the police are from ethnic minorities. [39792]

Hazel Blears: As at 31 March 2005, 3.5 per cent. of the total number of police officers, full-time equivalent, in England and Wales were from an ethnic minority background.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there have been in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1997. [39956]

Hazel Blears: Data on police officers are not collected centrally at constituency level. Data for the number of police officers in the London borough of Hillingdon is provided in the following table. Data are available only from 2000–01 onwards.

Number of police officers in Hillingdon (full-time equivalent)—2001–05

As at 31 March	*Full-time equivalent*
2001	398
2002	418
2003	458
2004	484
2005	498

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers have been introduced in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon; and what assessment he has made of their impact on (i) crime and (ii) antisocial behaviour. [39957]

Hazel Blears: As at 30 June 2005, there were 56 community support officers (CSOs) assigned to Hillingdon. Data on CSOs is not available for constituencies. The allocation of CSOs to individual Borough Operational Command Units is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Initial findings from the Home Office evaluation on CSOs, published on the Home Office website (http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publication/community-policing/) on 28 October 2005 confirm that CSOs are providing a valuable service to the police and public alike in terms of visibility and a reassurance presence in the community. They are being used to tackle low level crime and antisocial behaviour as well as youth disorder and alcohol-related issues. I have no information specifically about the impact of CSOs in Hillingdon.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list police buildings which operate under private finance initiative contracts; and if he will make a statement. [39060]

Hazel Blears: The following list shows all grant supported police private finance initiatives (PFI) projects which are in operation or under construction. Information is not held on any PFI projects developed without grant support.

Police Force	*PFI Project*
Cleveland	Rationalised Custody
Kent	Divisional HQ—Medway
Cheshire	Centralised Custody Suites
GMP	Property Review—Divisional/Sub Divisional HQ and Police Stations
Cleveland/Durham	Firearms Facility
Cumbria	Workington Police Station
Derbyshire	Ilkeston Police Station
Derbyshire	Divisional HQ and City Police Station
Dorset	Divisional HQ and 3 New Police Stations
Dyfed Powys	Ammanford Police Station
Gloucestershire	Force HQ
Gwent	Ystrad Mynach Police Station
N Wales	Divisional HQ and Major Incident Unit
Norfolk	HQ, Operations and Communications Centre
Northumbria	Mounted Facilities
Notts	Traffic Wing and Vehicles Services
Sussex	Centralised Custody Suites
TVP	Abingdon Area Divisional HQ
Wiltshire	Divisional HQ and Satellite Facilities
Wiltshire	Air Support

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to process Police Community Volunteer applications in *(a)* the East Midlands and *(b)* England was in the most recent period for which figures are available, broken down by constabulary. [40883]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many records on the Police National DNA database fall within the voluntary category. [41878]

Andy Burnham: As at 10 January 2006, there were 15,316 voluntary records on the National DNA Database.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he will take to ensure that the extra costs of police forces with relatively large budgets which are merged with police forces with smaller budgets will not be met by council tax payers; what transitional financial arrangements he proposes to introduce; and if he will make a statement. [39930]

Hazel Blears: The Government will be considering grant arrangements for police authorities in the light of changes to police authority boundaries and in the way the new larger authorities might operate.

My Department, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Welsh Assembly Government, Her Majesty's Treasury and police representative bodies are currently participating in examining the financial aspects of reorganisation, including the impact of restructuring on budgets, grant and council tax.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has had discussions with police authorities on the suspension of further appointments to high level vacancies in police forces, subject to their possible restructuring. [40687]

Hazel Blears: I have had no specific discussions with police authorities on this matter. However, in his capacity as chair of the Senior Appointments Panel Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC), recently wrote to police authorities addressing the implications of HMIC's "Closing the Gap" report on the current structure of policing.

Reflecting the views of the Senior Appointments Panel, the letter advised police authorities that, except where specific approval had already been granted, the common sense approach would be not to proceed with existing or future plans to recruit new chief constables during the restructuring process. Where police authorities wished to recruit deputy or assistant chief constables, the panel would exercise its professional judgement on a case by case basis and decide whether or not there was merit in filling the post at that point in time.

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police hours were worked *(a)* in total and *(b)* per police officer in post (i) in the period immediately before the implementation of the European Working Time Directive on policing and (ii) in the period following that date. [39568]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in each police authority area in England and Wales in each of the last 20 years, grouped according to region and listed in descending order according to the percentage change over that period. [39297]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is set out in the following table.

Police force	March 1985	March 1986	March 1987	March 1988	March 1989	March 1990	March 1991	March 1992
East Midlands								
Leicestershire	1,695	1,737	1,712	1,735	1,745	1,769	1,818	1,845
Northamptonshire	1,015	1,025	1,047	1,093	1,095	1,126	1,139	1,158
Derbyshire	1,752	1,753	1,777	1,790	1,784	1,795	1,741	1,706
Nottinghamshire	2,150	2,210	2,226	2,252	2,298	2,316	2,336	2,331
Lincolnshire	1,146	1,139	1,173	1,168	1,194	1,188	1,209	1,196
Eastern								
Hertfordshire[1]	1,562	1,565	1,579	1,603	1,638	1,657	1,666	1,695
Norfolk	1,248	1,263	1,312	1,308	1,340	1,363	1,405	1,414
Cambridgeshire	1,137	1,136	1,142	1,171	1,187	1,193	1,201	1,250
Bedfordshire	990	985	984	999	1,025	1,050	1,105	1,093
Essex[1]	2,650	2,666	2,718	2,728	2,746	2,822	2,889	2,898
Suffolk	1,129	1,121	1,166	1,188	1,181	1,194	1,209	1,218
London								
Metropolitan[1]	26,751	26,813	26,890	27,688	28,058	28,362	28,230	28,154
London, City of	789	774	771	787	801	799	813	808
North East								
Durham	1,279	1,293	1,307	1,329	1,351	1,375	1,368	1,389
Northumbria	3,295	3,357	3,402	3,467	3,508	3,529	3,541	3,464
Cleveland	1,446	1,470	1,462	1,466	1,470	1,467	1,489	1,477
North West								
Cheshire	1,799	1,806	1,830	1,837	1,879	1,870	1,895	1,874
Greater Manchester	6,736	6,768	6,780	6,965	6,935	6,992	7,014	7,061
Lancashire	3,029	3,021	3,134	3,139	3,177	3,201	3,212	3,198
Cumbria	1,092	1,127	1,118	1,141	1,135	1,166	1,184	1,179
Merseyside	4,588	4,543	4,598	4,647	4,689	4,714	4,689	4,621
South East								
Kent	2,833	2,870	2,879	2,908	2,985	2,984	3,005	3,074
Thames Valley	3,259	3,297	3,421	3,490	3,600	3,659	3,714	3,772
Hampshire	3,057	3,062	3,098	3,103	3,167	3,154	3,179	3,211
Surrey[1]	1,590	1,614	1,609	1,649	1,636	1,645	1,657	1,706
Sussex	2,803	2,790	2,830	2,894	2,946	2,949	2,969	2,984
South West								
Dorset	1,160	1,199	1,202	1,234	1,251	1,269	1,281	1,289
Devon and Cornwall	2,722	2,739	2,774	2,787	2849	2,852	2,873	2,898
Wiltshire	1,034	1,043	1,044	1,095	1,101	1,130	1,165	1,221
Gloucestershire	1,132	1,146	1,152	1,153	1,166	1,170	1,162	1,174
Avon and Somerset	2,982	2,958	3,009	3,013	3,014	3,094	3 092	3,081
Wales								
Gwent[2]	964	978	973	979	996	1,008	999	1,009
North Wales	1,271	1,253	1,286	1,300	1,327	1,337	1,349	1,347
Dyfed Powys	910	930	932	917	931	935	935	947
South Wales[2]	3,073	3,066	3,100	3,126	3,102	3,135	3,137	3,168
West Midlands								
West Mercia	1,919	1,939	1,929	1,946	1,948	1,991	2,026	2,034
West Midlands	6,544	6,520	6,656	6,639	6,761	6,855	6,876	6,941
Staffordshire	2,066	2,087	2,113	2,135	2,164	2,187	2,217	2,176
Warwickshire	921	929	965	979	969	975	1,020	990
Yorkshire and the Humber								
Humberside	1,913	1,933	1,964	1,953	1,992	1,995	1,998	2,026
North Yorkshire	1,332	1,361	1,353	1,372	1,370	1,379	1,387	1,398
South Yorkshire	2,866	2,848	2,862	2,912	2,940	2,923	2,991	3,008
West Yorkshire	4,991	5,145	5,142	5,184	5,278	5,260	5,268	5,087

Police force	March 1993	March 1994	March 1995	March 1996	March 1997	March 1998	March 1999
East Midlands							
Leicestershire	1,805	1,825	1,839	1,908	1,949	1,983	1,993
Northamptonshire	1,199	1,170	1,156	1,153	1,177	1,169	1,137
Derbyshire	1,830	1,820	1,797	1,763	1,791	1,772	1,759
Nottinghamshire	2,327	2,328	2,319	2,318	2,323	2,323	2,225
Lincolnshire	1,200	1,205	1,199	1,145	1,196	1,191	1,140
Eastern							
Hertfordshire[1]	1,700	1,682	1,703	1,712	1,759	1,740	1,724
Norfolk	1,440	1,447	1,395	1,401	1,432	1,430	1,381
Cambridgeshire	1,265	1,263	1,261	1,238	1,302	1,291	1,274
Bedfordshire	1,168	1,151	1,126	1,128	1,094	1,079	1,041
Essex[1]	2,936	2,937	2,921	2,884	2,961	2,928	2,891
Suffolk	1,241	1,208	1,191	1,138	1,180	1,186	1,190

Police force	March 1993	March 1994	March 1995	March 1996	March 1997	March 1998	March 1999
London							
Metropolitan[1]	27,867	27,699	27,480	27,343	26,677	26,094	26,073
London, City of	825	893	885	869	859	825	778
North East							
Durham	1,381	1,383	1,353	1,401	1,461	1,515	1,568
Northumbria	3,563	3,598	3,606	3,668	3,677	3,769	3,840
Cleveland	1,478	1,429	1,438	1,42[illegible]	1,459	1,483	1,416
North West							
Cheshire	1,908	1,902	1,932	1,998	2,046	2,042	2,071
Greater Manchester	7,060	6,967	7,037	6,938	6,922	6,949	6,810
Lancashire	3,207	3,170	3,212	3,171	3,247	3,257	3,245
Cumbria	1,196	1,174	1,167	1,115	1,144	1,164	1,126
Merseyside	4,669	4,693	4,659	4,411	4,230	4,216	4,211
South East							
Kent	3,146	3,145	3,117	3,120	3,260	3,251	3,201
Thames Valley	3,840	3,908	3,854	3,674	3,695	3,776	3,748
Hampshire	3,275	3,270	3,256	3,347	3,452	3,490	3,473j
Surrey[1]	1,693	1,669	1,676	1,644	1,620	1,608	1,662
Sussex	3,008	3,009	2,931	3,074	3,085	2,996	2,847
South West							
Dorset	1,302	1,297	1,288	1,263	1,284	1,310	1,279
Devon and Cornwall	2,910	2,914	2,877	2,899	2,865	2,962	2,887
Wiltshire	1,265	1,264	1,261	1,218	1,154	1,156	1,151
Gloucestershire	1,149	1,159	1,163	1,133	1,133	1,104	1,104
Avon and Somerset	3,068	3,033	3,000	2,981	2,989	2,976	2,999
Wales							
Gwent[2]	1,004	993	997	1,044	1,243	1,233	1,247
North Wales	1,360	1,352	1,366	1,378	1,369	1,396	1,391
Dyfed Powys	967	965	976	991	1,005	1,002	1,026
South Wales[2]	3,176	3,131	3,014	3,027	2,976	2,986	2,981
West Midlands							
West Mercia	2,054	2,059	2,046	2,017	2,040	2,010	2,025
West Midlands	6,953	7,014	7,019	7,145	7,113	7,156	7,321
Staffordshire	2,179	2,208	2,231	2,209	2,211	2,292	2,238
Warwickshire	1,020	1,046	1,013	979	926	924	908
Yorkshire and the Humber							
Humberside	2,032	2,039	2,029	2,041	2,045	2,021	1,974
North Yorkshire	1,393	1,318	1,300	1,324	1,338	1,367	1,337
South Yorkshire	3,032	3,023	3,040	3,073	3,159	3,182	3,168
West Yorkshire	5,037	5,046	5,050	5,142	5,209	5,155	4,982

Police force	March 2000	March 2001	March 2002	March 2003	March 2004	March 2005	Percentage change
East Midlands							
Leicestershire	1,993	2,033	2,100	2,114	2,277	2,283	35
Northamptonshire	1,117	1,157	1,214	1,210	1,239	1,267	25
Derbyshire	1,777	1,823	1,848	2,003	2,070	2,070	18
Nottinghamshire	2,204	2,212	2,330	2,411	2,484	2,502	16
Lincolnshire	1,115	1,202	1,198	1,221	1,228	1,221	7
Eastern							
Hertfordshire[1]	1,767	1,922	1,825	1,957	2,086	2,104	35
Norfolk	1,381	1,420	1,468	1,499	1,510	1,544	24
Cambridgeshire	1,237	1,296	1,362	1,384	1,400	1,402	23
Bedfordshire	1,028	1,036	1,069	1,106	1,181	1,215	23
Essex[1]	2,806	2,887	2,946	2,989	3,098	3,190	20
Suffolk	1,145	1,133	1,203	1,253	1,304	1,313	16
London							
Metropolitan[1]	25,485	24,878	26,223	27,984	29,735	30,710	15
London, City of	732	703	764	808	853	876	11
North East							
Durham	1,558	1,595	1,614	1,651	1,685	1,718	34
Northumbria	3,788	3,857	3,929	3,943	4,040	4,048	23
Cleveland	1,404	1,407	1,461	1,582	1,687	1,676	16
North West							
Cheshire	2,011	2,002	2,059	2,119	2,179	2,186	22

Police force	March 2000	March 2001	March 2002	March 2003	March 2004	March 2005	Percentage change
Greater Manchester	6,795	6,909	7,217	7,343	8,042	8,041	19
Lancashire	3,179	3,255	3,304	3,339	3,550	3,551	17
Cumbria	1,084	1,048	1,100	1,140	1,222	1,232	13
Merseyside	4,085	4,081	4,125	4,099	4,122	4,317	-6
South East							
Kent	3,204	3,319	3,355	3,487	3,576	3,586	27
Thames Valley	3,740	3,703	3,762	3,833	4,034	4,114	26
Hampshire	3,419	3,435	3,480	3,668	3,706	3,725	22
Surrey[1]	1,785	2,066	1,992	1,906	1,913	1,915	20
Sussex	2,822	2,855	2,893	2,989	3,039	3,044	9
South West							
Dorset	1,306	1,354	1,381	1,416	1,433	1,450	25
Devon and Cornwall	2,841	2,934	3,053	3,202	3,298	3,369	24
Wiltshire	1,118	1,120	1,157	1,158	1,217	1,222	18
Gloucestershire	1,114	1,173	1,183	1,227	1,284	1,291	14
Avon and Somerset	2,934	2,960	3,096	3,149	3,401	3,384	13
Wales							
Gwent[2]	1,264	1,274	1,333	1,341	1,372	1,438	49
North Wales	1,403	1,444	1,506	1,539	1,603	1,652	30
Dyfed Powys	1,040	1,055	1,132	1,149	1,167	1,174	29
South Wales[2]	2,926	3,100	3,222	3,239	3,279	3,281	7
West Midlands							
West Mercia	1,887	1,951	2,018	2,256	2,355	2,367	23
West Midlands	7,194	7,423	7,681	7,751	7,887	8,056	23
Staffordshire	2,170	2,129	2,133	2,202	2,266	2,280	10
Warwickshire	900	926	969	997	1,008	1,011	10
Yorkshire and the Humber							
Humberside	1,932	1,917	2,058	2,105	2,213	2,230	17
North Yorkshire	1,283	1,305	1,417	1,444	1,529	1,543	16
South Yorkshire	3,163	3,197	3,199	3,183	3,278	3,265	14
West Yorkshire	4,822	4,815	4,889	5,029	5,275	5,631	13

[1] Boundary changes on 1 April 2000 tranferred resources from the Metropolitan Police to Essex, Hertfordshire and Surrey forces.
[2] Boundary changes on 1 April 1996 moved resources for the policing of the Rhymney Valley from South Wales Police to Gwent Police.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers and *(b)* civilian support staff to the police there are in (i) each of the English regions and (ii) Wales. [40046]

Hazel Blears: The numbers of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police staff in each of the English and Welsh regions are provided in the following table.

Police officer and police staff strength by English Government office regions and Wales (full-time equivalents) as at 31 March 2005

English Government office regions and Wales	Police officers	Police officers less staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave[2]	Police staff	Police staff less staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave[2]
North East	7,515	7,442	2,976	2,948
Cleveland	1,689	1,676	748	742
Durham	1,738	1,718	736	735
Northumbria	4,088	4,048	1,491	1,470
North West	19,510	19,327	9,012	8,892
Cheshire	2,207	2,186	1,137	1,125
Cumbria	1,260	1,232	730	718
Greater Manchester	8,119	8,041	3,303	3,248
Lancashire	3,586	3,551	1,715	1,686
Merseyside	4,339	4,317	2,126	2,114
Yorkshire and the Humber	12,790	12,669	6,706	6,650
Humberside	2,252	2,230	1,034	1,026
North Yorkshire	1,560	1,543	928	928
South Yorkshire	3,307	3,265	1,729	1,698
West Yorkshire	5,671	5,631	3,016	2,998
East Midlands	9,437	9,343	5,165	5,066
Derbyshire	2,082	2,070	1,165	1,129
Leicestershire	2,311	2,283	1,033	1,009
Lincolnshire	1,234	1,221	678	671
Northamptonshire	1,289	1,267	973	958
Nottinghamshire	2,522	2,502	1,318	1,299
West Midlands	13,854	13,714	6,549	6,454
Staffordshire	2,309	2,280	1,325	1,313
Warwickshire	1,012	1,011	590	587
West Mercia	2,380	2,367	1,492	1,471

Police officer and police staff strength by English Government office regions and Wales (full-time equivalents) as at 31 March 2005

English Government office regions and Wales	Police officers	Police officers less staff on career breaks or maternity/ paternity leave[2]	Police staff	Police staff less staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave[2]
West Midlands	8,154	8,056	3,143	3,083
Eastern	10,902	10,767	6,723	6,649
Bedfordshire	1,232	1,215	713	706
Cambridgeshire	1,418	1,402	832	821
Essex	3,230	3,190	1,968	1,955
Hertfordshire	2,145	2,104	1,414	1,382
Norfolk	1,554	1,544	984	982
Suffolk	1,323	1,313	813	803
London	31,954	31,586	13,859	13,425
London, City of	881	876	298	298
Metropolitan Police	31,073	30,710	13,561	13,127
South East	16,676	16,384	10,226	10,110
Hampshire	3,803	3,725	1,965	1,944
Kent	3,630	3,586	2,228	2,198
Surrey	1,959	1,915	1,472	1,461
Sussex	3,094	3,044	1,950	1,935
Thames Valley	4,189	4,114	2,611	2,573
South West	10,808	10,717	6,394	6,321
Avon and Somerset	3,398	3,384	2,005	1,984
Devon and Cornwall	3,399	3,369	2,034	2,007
Dorset	1,475	1,450	881	871
Gloucestershire	1,308	1,291	663	648
Wiltshire	1,228	1,222	811	811
Wales	7,613	7,545	3,597	3,519
Dyfed Powys	1,183	1,174	531	525
Gwent	1,438	1,438	688	688
North Wales	1,676	1,652	867	841
South Wales	3,316	3,281	1,510	1,465
Total of all 43 forces	141,060	139,495	71,207	70,032
National Crime Squad (NCS)	1,059	1,059	674	674
National Crime Intelligence Squad (NCIS)	121	121	121	121
Central Service Secondments	555	555	—	—
Total strength	142,795	141,230	72,002	70,827

[1] This table contains full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Because of rounding, there may be an apparent discrepancy between totals and the sums of the constituent items.
[2] Comparable with previously published figures.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a conviction for the *(a)* use of and *(b)* possession of cocaine while a teenager continues to disqualify a person from successfully applying to become a police officer in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [39601]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office provides guidance to police forces on vetting applicants who have a criminal record but it is for the police force concerned to make decisions on individual cases.

Guidance is provided in HOC 54/2003. Forces are advised that convictions which will lead to rejection unless there are exceptionally compelling circumstances include serious involvement in drugs including possession of a Class A drug or more than one Class B drug and/or supplying drugs of any kind.

Each case is treated on its own merits, and if the offence is deemed sufficiently serious, a person will be rejected irrespective of age at the time of offending.

Generally, a juvenile conviction within the last five years for any recordable offence will lead to rejection.

However, any offence committed as an adult or a juvenile which results in a prison sentence (including custodial, suspended or deferred sentence and sentences served at a young offenders' institution or community home) will lead to rejection unless there are exceptionally compelling circumstances.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average waiting time has been in each of the last five years between police recruits applying to and starting training in the Thames Valley Police Force, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* ethnic origin. [39639]

Hazel Blears: This information is not held centrally.

This is an operational matter for the chief constable and the question should be directed to Thames Valley police.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on charging the organisers for policing of events which do not fall within his definition of normal policing which *(a)* are and *(b)* are not organised with the intention of making a profit; what his definition is of normal policing for this purpose; and what events which do not constitute normal policing are taken into account in determining his Department's financial support for police forces. [39567]

Hazel Blears: Section 25 of the Police Act 1996 enables Chief Officers of Police to provide special police services upon request and in return for payment at a rate set by the police authority. Home Office guidance is that where the police charge for special services arrangements should be made for full recovery of costs, but authorities may decide to recover a lesser amount.

The Association of Chief Police Officers has produced guidance to encourage a consistent and transparent approach to the calculation of policing costs.

The provision of special police services is not taken into account in determining the provision of grant for police forces.

Where a force has to meet an exceptional level of expenditure that affects its financial position to the extent that normal operational policing is at risk, the Authority can make a special grant request to the Home Secretary. In such circumstances the approval of such a grant is entirely at the discretion of the Home Secretary.

Respect Action Plan

15. **Mr. Kidney:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what contribution he expects neighbourhood watch schemes to make to the Government's Respect Action Plan. [41783]

Hazel Blears: I am pleased to be able to say that Neighbourhood Watch is thriving in Staffordshire. Neighbourhood Watch schemes have an important role to play in empowering local people to help reduce crime, tackle antisocial behaviour and reduce the fear of crime in communities throughout the country.

We would like to see Watch groups engage more with people living in higher-crime areas, with young people and with members of minority ethnic communities and ensuring the accountability of police and local authorities to the community.

Parliament (Protests)

16. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been arrested for protesting within a mile of Parliament since 1 August 2005. [41784]

Paul Goggins: The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has informed me that there have been 28 arrests for taking part in an unauthorised demonstration in the designated area since 1 August 2005.

Probation (Private Sector)

18. **David Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his Department's plans to allow the private sector to bid for probation work. [41786]

Fiona Mactaggart: A consultation paper setting out the Government's proposals to restructure the probation service was published on 20 October 2005. We intend to publish a prospectus later this year which will outline our proposals for phasing contestability.

DNA Database

20. **Lynne Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the inclusion of people on the police DNA database who have not been charged or convicted: [41788]

Andy Burnham: The Government believe firmly that the measures taken to retain the samples of persons who have been arrested, albeit not charged or convicted, are proportionate and justified in the interests of preventing and detecting crime. It is a fact that the police arrest more persons than they charge but for those who may go on to commit a crime it is important that the police have this information available. Law abiding citizens have nothing to fear from having their DNA retained on the national DNA database.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to the national DNA database *(a)* he has received and *(b)* have been successful; and if he will make a statement. [35297]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 6 December 2006]:* The Home Office has received one request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 concerning the national DMA database. In responding to the request; information was released setting out who was operating the national DMA database, additional funding budget, and the number of suspect offender profiles stored. It also set out the powers that the police were given under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to take, without consent, a non-intimate DMA sample. However, further information on how policy officials determined the guidelines on how a national DMA database would operate was withheld under Section 35(1)*(a)* of the Freedom of information Act 2000 as it would stifle future debate and damage the quality of advice provided.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many records were held on the Police DNA Database in each of the last five years. [41471]

Andy Burnham: Records on the National DNA Database represent DNA profiles taken from individuals and from crime scenes. Profiles taken from individuals are usually retained whereas those taken from crime scenes are usually deleted when the crime has been solved. The number of profiles is not the same as the number of individuals, because 10 per cent. of the profiles are estimated to be duplicates. The figures for each of the last five years are shown in the following table.

	Number of profiles relating to:	
	individuals at end of financial year[1]	*crime scenes held at end of financial year*[1]
2000–01	1,186,000	103,000
2001–02	1,695,000	142,000
2002–03	2,102,000	193,000
2003–04	2,516,000	228,000
2004–05	3,086,000	240,000
2005–06 (at 10 January 2006)	3,596,000	264,000

[1] *nearest thousand, England, Wales and Scotland*

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints have been received by the Independent Police Complaints Commission regarding *(a)* the collection of DNA evidence from arrested persons and *(b)* the voluntary collection of DNA. [41668]

Hazel Blears: The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is responsible for the management of the police complaints system. I will ensure that the chairman receives a copy of the question and replies to you directly. Copies of the letter containing the IPCC's response will be placed in the House Libraries.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of people arrested in each year since 1995 had their DNA added to the National DNA Database. [41676]

Andy Burnham: The answer is shown in the following table.

Year (financial)	*Number arrested for notifiable offences in England and Wales (nearest 100)*	*Number of people added to database, England and Wales*	*Proportion (percentage)*
1995–96	[1]—	35,741	[2]—
1996–97	[1]—	77,365	[2]—
1997–98	[1]—	123,445	[2]—
1998–99	1,301,000	242,746	18.7
1999–2000	1,277,900	205,279	16.1
2000–01	1,264,200	419,900	33.2
2001–02	1,271,900	509,423	40.1
2002–03	1,313,100	439,667	33.5
2003–04	1,330,400	389,973	29.3
2004–05	1,353,800	469,005	34.6

[1] Not recorded
[2] Not available

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people voluntarily gave DNA samples to be kept in the national police DNA database in each year since 2000. [41677]

Andy Burnham: No volunteer records were loaded on the National DNA Database before 2004–05, for technical reasons. In that year 12,095 volunteer records were loaded. Some of these were given during previous years, but there is no record of the date they were given, as opposed to the date they were loaded. Between 1 April 2005 and 10 January 2006, a further 3,221 volunteer profiles have been loaded.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many entries on the National DNA Database were destroyed in each year since 1995. [41702]

Andy Burnham: The number of profiles relating to individuals deleted from the National DNA Database since 1995 is:

	Number
2006 (to 10 January)	1,232
2005	22,605
2004	19,126
2003	23,901
2002	18,499
2001	44,664
2000	66,149
1999	68,816
1998	45,170
1997	21,587
1996	12,564
1995	675

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from whom DNA was taken following arrest for inclusion in the National DNA Database were arrested for *(a)* summary, *(b)* indictable including either-way and *(c)* indictable only offences. [41703]

Andy Burnham: It is not possible to provide the information requested as statistical data are not kept in this form.

When a person in police custody has a DNA sample taken, the sampling police officer completes a DNA form giving demographic details of the arrested person and details of the offence type by 12 broad offence categories. These are: Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Other violent crime, Other sex offences, Domestic Burglary, Other Burglary, Theft of Vehicle, theft from vehicle, Criminal damage, Drugs offences; and All other recordable offences. As the specific offence is not recorded, it is not possible to determine how many offences are summary, indictable or triable either way.

Cannabis

21. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to ensure teenagers are fully aware of the possible dangers associated with cannabis use. [41789]

Paul Goggins: The Government will continue to make it clear that all controlled drugs, including cannabis, are harmful and no one should take them. The FRANK campaign provides young people and their families with information about the risks from drugs and where to get further help. FRANK has distributed almost one million leaflets and promoted radio adverts about the risks associated with cannabis. In 2005 there were 300,000 visits to the cannabis section of the FRANK website.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

22. **Mr. McFadden:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in Wolverhampton since their introduction; and if he will make a statement. [41791]

Hazel Blears: The number of ASBOs issued, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 June 2000 to 30 June 2005 (latest available), in the local government authority area of Wolverhampton city council, is 66.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of antisocial behaviour orders. [41858]

Hazel Blears: In 2002 we published a research paper entitled "A review of anti-social behaviour orders" (commonly referred to as the Campbell Review) which followed a commitment made during the passage through Parliament of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Antisocial behavioural orders (ASBOs) have now reached sufficient numbers to necessitate further research.

The Home Office is conducting an evaluation of ASBOs, the findings of which will be available in spring 2006 and will provide information on the effectiveness of ASBOs in tackling anti-social behaviour within our neighbourhoods and communities. In addition, the Home Affairs Select Committee, in their report on antisocial behaviour published last year, recommended that research was necessary to establish the reasons for the inappropriate issuing of ASBOs or the issuing of ASBOs with inappropriate conditions. We are currently considering the best way to meet this recommendation.

People Trafficking (Sex Trade)

24. **Mr. MacShane:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the steps being taken to combat the trafficking of women from abroad to be forced to work in the sex trade. [41793]

Paul Goggins: The Government are committed to strong action against all forms of human trafficking. Our strategy includes comprehensive legislation, appropriate support for victims, co-operation with international partners, and enforcement action. An EU action plan on trafficking was adopted in December 2005.

The Government have also just published a consultation document on an action plan for the UK.

"Closing the Gap"

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will summarise the material which was redacted in the published version of the HM Inspectorate Constabulary report "Closing the Gap". [37940]

Hazel Blears: The preface to the public version of the "Closing the Gap" report addressed this issue and in particular stated that the redacted material in no way impacted either the substance, or the spirit of the original report and its conclusions. Furthermore please be assured that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) made every effort to keep the redactions to an absolute minimum.

The only chapter that was affected by the decision to redact material was chapter five, the national assessment of police organisational fitness. 10 paragraphs were redacted from the section that presented HMIC's findings in relation to Counter-Terrorism and Domestic Extremism. These dealt with operational issues in relation to the command, control, deployment and resilience of existing resources in this critical, yet often covert area of policing. One sentence was redacted from the paragraphs that addressed Serious and Organised Crime, together with a composite map and the supporting narrative from the concluding section of the chapter, that identified risk in relation to specific operational issues, the release of which would be of interest to organised crime. It was HMIC's professional judgment that the publication of this material was not in the public interest.

I have raised the issue of producing the requested summary with HMIC and it is their view that, given the relative brevity and sensitivity of the material in question, it would not be possible to do so without exposing the issues at hand. I am, of course, sighted on this material and I agree with this assessment.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many acceptable behaviour contracts have led to an application for *(a)* an antisocial behaviour order and *(b)* a possession order; [42232]

(2) how many acceptable behaviour contracts have been issued in the past two years; and what proportion has been breached; [42234]

(3) how many acceptable behaviour contracts have contained a statement that the continuation of unacceptable behaviour may lead to an application for *(a)* an antisocial behaviour order and *(b)* a possession order. [42233]

Hazel Blears: Data on the number of acceptable behaviour contracts are not collected by the Home Office as they are voluntary agreements and therefore unsuitable for central data collection.

Aliens (Removal)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of aliens in the country who are removable but are not required to sign on regularly at his Department or at police stations. [38500]

Mr. McNulty: No government has ever been able to produce a precise estimate for the number of people who remain who are in the country illegally. A number will have entered unlawfully and go to considerable lengths to remain undetected, others leave without informing the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), and it is therefore impossible to quantify precisely how many people in this position are not required to report regularly.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the feasibility of removing all those individuals in the country who do not have leave to remain but who have not yet had removal action taken against them. [38501]

Mr. McNulty: We have not carried out an assessment on whether it is feasible to remove all those individuals in the country who do not have leave to remain but who have not yet had removal action taken against them.

No Government have ever been able to produce an accurate estimate for the number of people who remain in the country illegally. A number will have entered unlawfully and go to considerable lengths to remain undetected, others leave without informing the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), and it is therefore impossible to quantify accurately.

Appeals (Foreign Evidence)

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 427W, on appeals (foreign evidence), if he will take steps to include the Criminal Cases Review Commission as an investigative body that could raise a letter of request to another European jurisdiction under section 9(2) of the Crime (International Co-operation) Act 2003. [35661]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have agreed in principle that we will seek to amend the Crime (International Co-operation) Act to allow the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) to issue letters of request for release of information to another European jurisdiction as soon as a suitable legislative vehicle becomes available.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes to the asylum system his Department has introduced as a result of representations from the Scottish Executive. [34009]

Mr. McNulty: Discussions are ongoing between the Home Office and Scottish Executive at ministerial and official level on the removal of failed asylum seeking families from Scotland and ways of promoting legal migration routes. Any improvements to the asylum system identified through these discussions will be implemented on a UK wide basis.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers in Leeds, North West have qualified for support under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 in the last 12 months. [38214]

Mr. McNulty: Since January 2005 we have supported 2,151 people under section four in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region. The number in receipt of support as at 20 December is 1,105.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the implications of the political situation in Iran for his policy of repatriation of Iranian asylum seekers; and if he will make a statement. [38321]

Mr. McNulty: We continue to monitor closely the political and human rights situation in Iran through key governmental, non-governmental and other human rights organisations. The asylum determination process assesses the protection needs of individual claimants and where the political situation in Iran impacts directly on the circumstances of an individual claimant then it is duly considered as part of that individual's claim.

All Iranian asylum and human rights applications are considered by the Home Office on their individual merits, in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Refugee status or other forms of leave are granted in appropriate cases. We enforce the return of an individual only where we are satisfied that the person concerned will not be at risk and has been unsuccessful in any appeals against the decision in their particular case.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many removals to the Democratic Republic of the Congo have occurred in each of the last 24 months. [39615]

Mr. McNulty: Removals to the Democratic Republic of Congo are shown in the following table. Asylum removals are shown to September 2005 and non-asylum removals to December 2004. Asylum removals for the fourth quarter 2005 will be published in February 2006. Non-asylum removals for 2005 will be published in November 2006.

Information on the destination of asylum removals has been recorded since the start of 2004 and is routinely given out to answer queries. This is published on the Home Office Research and Development and Statistics Directorate website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Removals and voluntary departures[1] to the Democratic Republic of Congo January 2004 to September 2005[2,3]

	2004 Asylum[5,6]	*2004 Non-asylum[7]*	*2005 Asylum[5,6]*	*2005[4] Non-asylum[7]*
January	—	•	5	n/a
February	•	—	5	n/a
March	•	—	•	n/a
April	5	—	•	n/a
May	•	•	5	n/a
June	—	•	—	n/a
July	•	—	•	n/a
August	—	5	5	n/a
September	•	5	5	n/a
October	•	•	n/a	n/a
November	5	5	n/a	n/a
December	•	•	n/a	n/a
Total	15	20	[8]25	n/a

n/a = Data not available.

[1] Includes persons departing 'Voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them.

[2] Figures rounded to the nearest five, with • = 1 or 2 and — = 0, may not sum due to rounding.

[3] Provisional figures.

[4] Non-asylum data for 2005 will be published in the Control of Immigration United Kingdom 2005 in November 2006.

[5] Includes persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration. May include some on-entry cases and some cases where enforcement action has been initiated.

[6] Persons who had sought asylum at some stage, excluding dependants.

[7] Includes a small number of people leaving under the Assisted Voluntary Return for Irregular Migrants Programme run by the International Organisation for Migration.

[8] Total January to September 2005.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what monitoring of UK removals of failed asylum seekers to the Democratic Republic of Congo is undertaken; and if he will make a statement. [39616]

Mr. McNulty: As with returns to all countries, the Home Office does not routinely monitor the treatment of individual Congolese nationals once removed from the UK. We would not remove them if we considered

that they were likely to suffer persecution on their return. If specific allegations are made that any returnee has experienced ill-treatment on return from the UK, then these are followed up through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the British Embassy in Kinshasa as a matter of urgency.

Embassy staff are regularly in contact with a wide range of domestic and international sources in Kinshasa including local lawyers, press and human rights activists, Ministers from the Transitional National Government and other western embassies.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Coventry, South are *(a)* registered as asylum seekers and *(b)* registered migrants awaiting a decision on the granting right to remain. [39740]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) is published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority. The most recent publication covering the third quarter of 2005, and further historical publications are available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Data on asylum seekers supported by NASS broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library of the House.

Statistics on the location of persons awaiting a decision on their application for leave to remain in the UK is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by the examination of individual case records

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what support is provided to Zimbabweans who have been refused asylum; [39754]

(2) what representations he has received regarding the situation of Zimbabweans living in the UK who have been refused asylum. [39755]

Mr. McNulty: We have received representations from the public and from Members of both Houses regarding the situation of Zimbabweans who have been refused asylum. Most have been concerned primarily with the issue of enforced return of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe, with a number of these proposing that failed Zimbabwean asylum seekers be allowed to work in the UK "until it is safe for them to return to Zimbabwe". We have also received representations from UK voluntary sector organisations about support for failed Zimbabwean asylum seekers under section four of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

As I explained in my statement on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 134WS, the recent Asylum and Immigration Tribunal determination did not find that Zimbabwe generally was unsafe for failed asylum seekers to return to or that voluntary returnees are at risk, only that the method by which we were at that time enforcing returns put enforced returnees at risk. As a consequence, we will not enforce the return of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe until we have addressed the concerns of the tribunal. In the meantime, voluntary returns to Zimbabwe are possible and are continuing. We therefore expect failed asylum seekers to return voluntarily to Zimbabwe and will assist them in doing so through the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Asylum seekers from Zimbabwe who have been refused asylum can apply for support under section four of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Support is available under this provision to unsuccessful asylum seekers who are destitute and who satisfy one or more of a number of conditions, for example that the person is taking all reasonable steps to leave the UK, or to place himself in a position in which they are able to leave the UK.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his current estimate is of the number of failed asylum seekers living in the UK. [40362]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the total number of asylum seekers currently in the UK, including failed asylum seekers, is not available.

As in other countries, the number of "unauthorised" or "illegal" migrants—including failed asylum seekers—in the UK is unknown. The Migration Research Unit (MRU) report published last year reviewed the methods used in other countries and assessed their viability for use in the UK. That report suggested that a method which could be applied in the UK is the "residual method" used in the United States. The new report details how that method has been applied in the UK.

It must be emphasised that, while this method is one that can be used with data available for the UK, over-reliance must not be placed on this result in the absence of the means to produce other estimates using different methods. The report can be found at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/notes/june_summaries.html.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress he has made on introducing faster non-detained processes for new asylum claimants; and if he will make a statement. [40363]

Mr. McNulty: As mentioned in the immigration and nationality directorate (IND) five year strategy, "Controlling our borders: making migration work for Britain" [Cm 6472] published in February 2005, we have been testing a non- detained, tightly-managed approach in north-west England, where applicants are interviewed and receive decisions on their claims quickly and are closely managed either to removal or leave to remain in the UK.

This has been in place since December 2004 and is part of the new asylum model (NAM) which is designed to introduce:

- faster tightly-managed processes for all new asylum claimants, including those not detained;
- close contact management for all non-detained claimants with access to support dependent on compliance; and
- a specialist case owner responsible for managing each claimant from the start to either integration or removal.

Two segments of the new asylum model, dealing with potentially non- suspensive appeals cases and with late and opportunistic claims having low barriers to

removal, became operational in June 2005 via complete case management teams based at Liverpool and Croydon.

Under this system, claimants presenting at the asylum screening units at Liverpool and Croydon who do not go into the detained fast track are judged against objective criteria (which have been shared with external stakeholders) as to whether their claims are "late and opportunistic". If they are, or, based on their country of origin, their claims are potentially "non-suspensive appeal" cases and they require national asylum seeker support (NASS) accommodation, they are moved to Liverpool. Non- detained, non-NASS accommodated claimants in either segment are managed by a Croydon-based team using reporting centres as close as possible to where they are living.

This is the first phase of the proposed implementation which we expect to see all new asylum cases from the end of this year dealt with as part of the new asylum model.

For the next phase we are planning to introduce case management teams in West Midlands and Leeds to manage the asylum applicants in those regions. These are expected to be in operational form in May of this year. Decisions will be made later about locations of other teams.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of applications for leave to remain included correspondence from hon. Members in each of the last five years. [40379]

Mr. McNulty: Information about the percentage of leave to remain applications received by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate which included correspondence from hon. Members is not available. It could be obtained only by examination of individual case files at a disproportionate cost.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his latest estimate is of the number of failed asylum seekers in the UK who are unable to *(a)* work and *(b)* claim benefit. [40387]

Mr. McNulty: All failed asylum seekers who have no leave to remain in the UK do not have the right to work and are expected to leave the country. Support under section four of the 1999 Act is available for those unsuccessful asylum seekers unable to leave the country immediately who are co-operating with the process for return. As at the end of September 2005 there were 7,630 applicants, excluding dependants, in receipt of section four support.

However, as in other countries, the number of "unauthorised" or "illegal" migrants—including failed asylum seekers—in the UK is unknown. The Home Office published on 30 June, the outcome of the assessment of the applicability to the UK of the methods used by researchers and government agencies in other countries to estimate the size of the illegal population. The methods had been identified in the report by the Migration Research Unit (MRU) of University College London on "Sizing the Illegally Resident Population in the UK".

A copy of the Research Development and Statistics (RDS) On-line report 29/05—"Sizing the unauthorised (illegal) migrant population in the United Kingdom in 2001" can be found at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/notes/june_summaries.html

The MRU report published last year reviewed the methods used in other countries and assessed their viability for use in the UK. That report suggested that a method which could be applied in the UK is the "residual method" used in the United States. The new report details how that method has been applied in the UK.

It must be emphasised that, while this method is one that can be used with data available for the UK, over-reliance must not be placed on this result in the absence of the means to produce other estimates using different methods.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the safety and security of asylum seekers returned to the Democratic Republic of Congo. [40585]

Mr. McNulty: As with returns to all countries, the Home Office does not routinely monitor the treatment of individual Congolese nationals once removed from the UK. We would not remove them if we considered that they were likely to suffer persecution on their return. If specific allegations are made that any returnee has experienced ill-treatment on return from the UK, then these are followed up through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British embassy in Kinshasa as a matter of urgency.

Embassy staff are regularly in contact with a wide range of domestic and international sources in Kinshasa including local lawyers, press and human rights activists, Ministers from the Transitional National Government and other western embassies.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department takes against individuals who have obtained leave to remain in the United Kingdom by fraud. [40665]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999 gives the Secretary of State power to remove any individual who obtains leave to remain the UK by deception, section 10(8) of the Act automatically invalidates that leave.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid to the London borough of Barnet for special circumstances claims for asylum support costs in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [41214]

Mr. McNulty: The National Asylum Support Service is responsible for administering the grant paid to local authorities supporting both adult and family asylum seekers under the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999, as amended and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) under the Children Act 1989.

The grant is intended to meet direct costs incurred by local authorities. Where there is a shortfall an authority can seek a special circumstance payment. To qualify the authority must show that it has taken all reasonable steps to live within its grant ceiling.

For 2004–05 the London borough of Barnet was paid £29,770 to meet its bid for a special circumstance payment in respect of adults and families only. This met the authority's bid in full. The London borough of Barnet did not bid for a special circumstances payment for UASCs.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will review the refusal to grant Ms Hussaini Begum asylum in the UK. [41230]

Mr. McNulty: I have written to Ms Begum's constituency MP on this matter.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Tamworth are *(a)* registered as asylum seekers and *(b)* registered migrants awaiting a decision on the granting of a right to remain. [42098]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) is published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority. The most recent publication covering the third quarter of 2005, and further historical publications are available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Data on asylum seekers supported by NASS broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library of the House.

Statistics on the location of persons awaiting a decision on their application for right to remain in the UK is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by the examination of individual case records.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether immigration officers dealing with removals of families of failed asylum seekers in Scotland have been given clearance to undertake work that involves contact with children under the Children (Scotland) Act 2005. [35098]

Mr. McNulty: All immigration officers, including those removing families of failed asylum seekers, are subject to a range of routine pre-employment checks, including checks against the Police National Computer. No additional checks are required by The Children (Scotland) Act 1995; the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 or the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department has made with handling the immigration appeal submitted by Mr. M.A.S., husband of Mrs. N.N. of Aylesbury (reference 868672; passport KD701035); and if he will make a statement. [38951]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The appeal papers for a Mr. M.A.S were received by the Appeals Processing Centre of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) on 25 May 2005.

Appeals arising from an application, refused by the entry clearance officer (ECO) prior to the commencement of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) on 4 April 2005, are forwarded to IND by the ECO before being sent to the AIT to be determined.

The AIT received the appeal papers on 22 December 2005, and a notice of hearing was sent to all parties on 29 December 2005. The appeal has been listed for hearing before an immigration judge on 20 March 2006.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received from the Scottish Executive about attracting new immigrants to Scotland. [39936]

Mr. McNulty: I have been working closely with the Scottish Executive and am in regular discussions with colleagues there about a variety of issues surrounding their Fresh Talent Initiative, which seeks to counter Scotland's falling and ageing population.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are detained under Immigration Act powers; and how many of these are *(a)* asylum seekers whose asylum applications have yet to be determined and *(b)* asylum seekers whose asylum applications have been refused. [39518]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers is available from a snapshot taken on the last Saturday of the quarter and is published in the Quarterly Asylum Statistics publications on the Home Office research development and statistics directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

It is not possible to say which stage of the asylum process people are at when they are detained. The decision to detain is made on a case by case basis and may be appropriate in one or more of the following circumstances: to effect removal; to establish a person's identity and claim; where a person presents a risk of absconding or where the application is capable of being considered quickly.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children are detained under Immigration Act powers. [39519]

Mr. McNulty: The number of children detained with their families under Immigration Act powers will change from day to day. However, internal management information shows that, as at 4 January 2006, there were 31 children detained with their families under Immigration Act powers: 28 at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre and three at Tinsley House Immigration Removal Centre. These individuals were all detained as part of families whose detention, as a group was considered necessary. The figures provided do not constitute part of the national statistics and are based on management information.

Information on the number of persons detained, as at 24 September 2005, broken down by those who are under 18 years of age, are published in the Quarterly Asylum Bulletin, on the Home Office research development and statistics directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Cannabis

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the change in the numbers of people who would be *(a)* arrested, *(b)* brought to court and *(c)* imprisoned if cannabis was re-classified as a class B drug. [41724]

Paul Goggins: The Home Secretary is currently considering the report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs on the classification of cannabis. Any proposal to change the classification of a controlled drug would require a regulatory impact assessment to be drawn up which would include consideration of all relevant enforcement issues.

Children's Commissioners (Child Asylum Seekers)

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the Children's Commissioners in the United Kingdom on the impact of section nine of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 on the welfare of children. [38762]

Mr. McNulty: There have been no written representations received from any of the four children's commissioners in the United Kingdom on the impact of section nine of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 on the welfare of children. The director general of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, hosted a meeting in December with all four Children's Commissioners at which a number of matters were discussed including section nine.

Cocaine

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to tackle the increased use of cocaine in the United Kingdom. [40443]

Paul Goggins: Since 2000, the British Crime Survey (BCS) shows that cocaine use has remained broadly stable both for those aged 16–59 and for young people aged 16–24. There is also some evidence of a more recent reduction in use. Data from the BCS show that, between 2003–04 and 2004–05, there was a fall from 2.4 per cent. to 2.0 per cent. in the proportion of respondents aged 16–59 reporting the use of cocaine on at least one occasion during the year preceding the survey. This equates to a 17 per cent. drop. However, the Government are not complacent about any of these figures and, through the Drug Strategy, are working to reduce the harms caused by all illicit drugs.

The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) operates in the 97 areas with the highest levels of drug-related acquisitive crime. Individuals charged with certain offences are tested for class A drugs under the programme: one of several interventions to identify drug-misusing offenders and divert them into treatment and support services. From 1 December, three selected police forces have had powers to test for class A drugs on arrest. Those testing positive are required to attend an assessment with a drug worker. These new powers will be expanded further from 31 March.

Heroin misuse has historically been the main the focus of treatment provision. However, the number of stimulant users presenting for treatment is increasing. Flexible treatment packages are being adopted in line with the National Treatment Agency's Effectiveness Strategy.

For young people, the Government provide universal drugs education and targeted interventions for the vulnerable young people most likely to develop drug misuse problems.

Internationally, UK law enforcement agencies work with overseas partners and between April 2001 and December 2004, 52 tonnes of cocaine bound for the UK market were seized.

Community Service Sentences

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been given community service-based sentences on more than one occasion. [39592]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on offenders given community sentences on more than one separate occasion is not routinely collated.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* Parliamentary Questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Lords were dealt with by his Department in each year since 1995 in respect of the percentage his Department took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if he will make a statement. [37384]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Correspondence from Members and Peers

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence.

The report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS. Reports for earlier years are available in the Library of the House. (A) In the period 1 January to 31 October 2005 the department (including the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) but excluding the agencies) received 41,299 letters from Members and Peers and responded to 56 per cent. of them within 20 working days.

The department, excluding IND, replied to 95 per cent. of the Members and Peer's letters received in October 2005 within the target of 15 working days.(B) The cost of establishing the proportion of letters that took over three months to answer would be disproportionate.

(b) Correspondence from the public

(A) The department holds correspondence performance data for two years only. The data relates to centrally received correspondence i.e. letters addressed to Ministers or 'the

Home Office' and e-mails addressed to public.enquiries @ homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk but excludes correspondence about IND and the agencies.

The department aims to reply to correspondence from the public within 20 working days. In the period one June to 31 December 2003 the department received 7,864 letters from the public and replied to 85 per cent. within target. In 2004 the department received 17,133 letters and replied to 87 per cent. within target. In the period 1 January to 31 October 2005 the department received 13,724 letters and replied to 90 per cent. within target. (B) The cost of establishing the proportion of letters that took over three months to answer would be disproportionate.

(c) Parliamentary Questions.

The information requested is not held in this format and to collate this would incur disproportionate costs. Ministers give serious attention and make every effort to answer questions substantively and in accordance with the performance guidelines set.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter of 25 November 2005 from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green; when Mr. Independencio So (Home Office reference S668821) will be granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom in accordance with the ruling of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal; and if he will make a statement. [37576]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate replied to the hon. Members letter of 25 November addressed to the head of Member of Parliament's Correspondence Section on 6 December 2005. Mr. Independencio So was granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom on 9 January 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 13 September on behalf of Jamail Singh of Shakespeare Road, Smethwick. [40536]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate (IND) replied to the right hon. Member for Warley on 10 January 2006.

Crime Detection Rates

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what crime detection rates were recorded for offences of *(a)* violence against the person, *(b)* sexual offences, *(c)* robberies, *(d)* burglaries and *(e)* theft of a vehicle in (i) Greater London and (ii) Ruislip-Northwood constituency in the last year for which figures are available. [39959]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available centrally for the Ruislip-Northwood constituency. This constituency comes within the Hillingdon Basic Command Unit (BCD) and figures for that BCU and for Greater London are given in the table.

Detection rates for recorded crime—2004–05

Offence	Greater London[1]	Percentage Hillingdon Basic Command Unit
Violence against the person	43	50
Sexual offences	35	32
Robbery	19	17
Domestic burglary	14	14
Theft of a vehicle	9	6

[1] Covers the Metropolitan police force area.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of *(a)* speeding cases and *(b)* reported violent crimes led to (i) prosecution and (ii) conviction in each of the last two years for which figures are available. [39713]

Hazel Blears: The information is not available in the form requested. Because recorded crime and speeding data refers to offences and court proceedings refers to defendants, the data are not directly comparable. In addition, recorded crime data is on a financial year basis and speeding offences and court proceedings data is on a calendar year basis.

The available information relating to speeding offences and violent crime is provided in the table.

Defendants[1] proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for violent crime offences[2], England and Wales

	Proceeded against	Number Found guilty
2003	102,465	49,694
2004	93,735	51,415

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Violent crime includes violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery offences

Criminal Injuries Compensation

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for transferring the cost of compensation for criminal injuries at work to employers. [37167]

Fiona Mactaggart: We are currently consulting on the issue of removing from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme cases where someone is injured while at work. We are considering if employers, whether in the public or private sector, are best placed to protect their employees, minimise the risk to them and bear the risk of compensating them for their injuries if they fail to do so.

In our Green Paper "Rebuilding Lives; supporting victims of crime" we ask for views on this issue.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employees of rail companies in England and Wales have claimed criminal injuries compensation in relation to incidents in the course of their employment in 2005. [35064]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) record applications arising from injuries connected with the railway by type of incident rather than by occupation. The available

information is that in the period 1 January 2005 to 30 November 2005 CICA received 172 applications from England and Wales where the incident type was listed as suicide or trespass on the railway or the London underground. Without going through each file individually it is not possible for CICA to say definitively whether all such claimants were in fact employees of rail companies and whether the injuries were sustained in the course of their employment.

Departmental Assets

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by his Department. [27383]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The list of the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by the Home Department is in the following tables:

Moveable assets

Directorate	*Moveable asset name*	*Net book value @ 31 March 2005 (£)*
1. Criminal Justice	Snaresbrook Pilot Development and Set Up	11,583,568.46
2. Immigration & Nationality	Gloucester Data Centre	8,433,768.13
3. Crime Reduction & Community Services Group	Computer Systems Under Construction—Networks	7,748,133.01
4. Immigration & Nationality	System Development For Programme Plan	7,467,472.85
5. Criminal Justice	Snaresbrook Exchange Development and Set Up	5,582,251.87
6. Criminal Justice	Construction and Infrastructure of Snaresbrook Exchange	4,925,437.77
7. Immigration & Nationality	Computer Equipment Relating to Semaphore and E-borders	3,673,172.23
8. Crime Reduction & Community Services Group	Computer Systems Under Construction—Project	2,594,909.99
9. Crime Reduction & Community Services Group	Computer Systems Under Construction—Forensics	2,453,689.47
10. Criminal Justice	Snaresbrook Pilot Development and Set Up (2)	2,150,474.19

Notes:
1. The definition of a movable asset is taken as all assets that are not Land and Buildings.
2. Assets are shown at their individual asset values based on their Net Book Value at 31 March 2005.

Immoveable assets

Directorate	*Immoveable asset name*	*Net book value @ 31 March 2005 (£)*
1. Correctional Services	HMP Doncaster	92,617,364.60
2. Correctional Services	HMP Altcourse (Fazakerly)	67,266,506.38
3. Correctional Services	HMP Peterborough	64,292,666.67
4. Correctional Services	HMP Dovegate (Marchington)	61,766,013.55
5. Correctional Services	HMP Wolds	53,808,308.64
6. Correctional Services	HMP Ashford (Bronzefield)	46,445,833.33
7. Correctional Services	HMP Parc (Bridgend)	44,306,598.43
8. Correctional Services	HMP Agecroft (Forest Bank)	43,920,924.16
9. Correctional Services	HMP Rye Hill (Onley)	37,295,794.75
10. Immigration & Nationality	Harmondsworth Detention Centre	28,638,663.33

Note:
Assets are shown at their individual asset values based on their Net Book Value at 31 March 2005.

Departmental Finance

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40076]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department generally self-insures its buildings and its staff liabilities. The remaining information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40333]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However I can confirm that on the Department's central London headquarters' estate the amount spent on bottled water dispensers for financial year 2004–05 was £46,665.34. Bottled water dispensers are provided in only a few selected areas in 2 Marsham Street and so this cost will reduce substantially for subsequent years.

Deportations

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of extreme Islamic groups have been deported to *(a)* Jordan and *(b)* Libya since the Government signed memoranda of understanding with those countries. [28628]

Mr. McNulty: A memorandum of understanding was signed with Jordan on 10 August 2005, and a second memorandum was signed with Libya on 18 October 2005.

To date, no-one has been removed to either country in reliance on assurances obtained under those documents. There are several cases where we intend to deport on the strength of assurances, but removal cannot take place while an appeal against the decision to make the deportation order is pending.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with which countries his Department is in negotiation concerning Memoranda of Understanding on deportation; and if he will make a statement. [41340]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend announced at the start of last year that we were seeking to negotiate Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with certain key middle-eastern and North African countries.

Since then we have signed MoUs concerning the provision of assurances in respect of persons subject to deportation with Jordan, with Libya and with the Lebanon. We are also negotiating with Algeria.

Our discussions with other countries are less advanced, and it would not be helpful to identify the countries concerned.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what medical checks are carried out before the removal of deportees from the UK; and what steps are taken to ensure their wellbeing *(a)* during and *(b)* following their journey home. [38813]

Mr. McNulty: If a person subject to removal is not detained prior to removal, it is the responsible of that individual to notify the Immigration Service (IS) of any medical conditions which might be a reason to delay or discontinue their removal from the UK.

Immigration staff will then (with the person's consent) get from the individual's doctor or hospital details of the specific medical condition, the treatment being prescribed, and the fitness of the person to travel. Immigration staff will also make checks to establish the availability of treatment in the person's country of origin and an assessment of any diminution of life expectancy if removal takes place.

If the person being removed is in detention they will receive a medical examination within 24 hours of their arrival at a removal centre. During detention individuals have access to the centre's healthcare team which includes a medical practitioner as well as nursing professionals. When there are concerns about an individual's health, the healthcare team will indicate to the Immigration Service whether or not an individual is fit to travel.

DNA Profiles

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 748W, on DNA profiles, when he expects technical changes to the link between the police national computer and the national DNA database to be made. [40773]

Andy Burnham: The changes to the police national computer (PNC) system and its link to the national DNA database are currently being considered by Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and an impact assessment is being made. A meeting is scheduled for 13 January between PITO, the database custodian and the Forensic Science Service (FSS) to discuss the prioritisation of this and several other technical changes. Until the impact assessment is complete it is not possible to say precisely when the work will be scheduled, but would anticipate completion by the end of the calendar year.

On 1 December the original question asked:

"How many people under 18 years have DNA profiles stored in the police national database without having been charged or cautioned for any offence?"

It was not then possible to provide the answer. A transitional solution provided by the police now enables this information to be compiled, though not as easily as the proposed PNC-national DNA database linkage would permit. On 1 December 2005 there were around 24,000 DNA person profiles on the DNA database which related to persons under 18 who had not been charged or cautioned for any offence.

Domestic Violence

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that the sex of persons prosecuted for domestic violence cases is recorded by the Crown Prosecution Service. [36990]

Fiona Mactaggart: The sex of persons prosecuted is recorded for all cases handled by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) including domestic violence cases. However, this data is not collated and reported centrally.

The hon. Gentleman has previously asked a question concerning the sex of persons prosecuted for domestic violence on 29 November 2005, official report, column 437W. The response to this question provided the total number of persons prosecuted (from a centralised performance management system) but concluded that:

"The gender of the persons prosecuted for domestic violence cases is not collected by the CPS".

This conclusion was incorrect and should have stated that:

"Regular flagging of all domestic violence cases has been monitored since April 2005. However, the gender of the persons prosecuted for domestic violence cases has not been collated and reported (centrally) by the CPS".

Snapshot surveys since 2002 have collected one month of more detailed data annually, in relation to domestic violence, including gender. In 2002, 94 per cent. of defendants were male, in 2003–95 per cent. and in 2004–93 per cent. For 2004, the overwhelming majority of offences were perpetrated by a male defendant (93 per cent.) on a female (89 per cent.).

Discussions are under way in relation to future possible systematic collation and reporting of such data.

Drunkenness (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders have been found guilty of *(a)* drunkenness and *(b)* drunkenness with aggravation in Coventry, South since 1997. [40230]

Hazel Blears: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of offenders found guilty for drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravation in Coventry petty sessional area 1997 to 2004 is given in the following table. It is not possible to identify those convicted in Coventry, South as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Number of offenders found guilty for drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravation in Coventry petty sessional area, 1997 to 2004[1]

	Drunkenness[2]	*Drunkenness with aggravation*[3]
1997	20	84
1998	6	65
1999	5	46
2000	13	64
2001	8	77
2002	11	62
2003	25	42
2004	20	66

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

[2] Includes offences under S.12 Licensing Act 1872, Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985 SS.1(4), 1A(4), 2.(2) and S.12 Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001

[3] Includes offences under S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967.S.12 Licensing Act 1872, S.174 Licensing Act 1964, S.9(4) Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969, S.28 London Hackney Carriage Act 1843, SS.101(1)*(a)*(*b*), (4) and (5) Merchant Shipping Act 1995, S.2 Licensing Act 1902 and S.61 Town Police Clauses Act 1847

e-Borders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects e-borders to be fully operational. [42052]

Andy Burnham: E-borders is expected to become fully operational by March 2014.

E-borders capabilities began to roll out to selected air routes through Project Semaphore in December 2004. They will roll out incrementally to major air sea and rail ports to ensure complete coverage of international services in and out of the UK by 2010. The remaining small air and sea ports will be covered in the last stage of the programme from 2010–14.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish the results of the pilot studies into the e-borders project. [40364]

Andy Burnham: The e-Borders programme is designed for delivery in three stages from 2004 to 2014.

Stage One (2004–05 to 2007–08) consists of two projects: Project Semaphore which de-risks and informs the e-Borders programme by testing services, while delivering operational benefits to the border agencies and project IRIS which trials automated entry controls using biometrics.

Key findings from the Project IRIS and Project Semaphore pilots will be reported to the House.

EU Migration

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding is available to *(a)* Peterborough city council and *(b)* other organisations in Greater Peterborough to meet the costs of the provision of extra services needed as a result of the migration of EU accession country migrants since May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [40991]

Mr. McNulty: There is no additional funding available exclusively for the provision of services for migrants from EU accession countries. But Peterborough currently benefits from Government investment of over £1.5 million over three years in the Peterborough Invest to Save Asylum and Migration Programme project which seeks to help new arrivals in the city to integrate successfully.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made during the British presidency of the EU in implementing the action plan to deal with migration flows across the Mediterranean; and if he will make a statement. [40358]

Mr. McNulty: Substantial progress was made during the UK presidency to implement EU initiatives to tackle illegal migration across the Mediterranean.

The EU Border Agency (FRONTEX) became fully operational in October 2005 and identified the Mediterranean as a priority area for action. EU member states conducted various joint exercises to detect and intercept irregular migrants, and to reinforce controls in sea ports.

Important progress was made on strengthening co-operation with transit countries in North Africa. The 10th anniversary Euromed Summit in November 2005 adopted a five year work programme covering enhanced co-operation on all aspects of migration, including reducing illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. A ministerial meeting on migration will be held in 2006 to drive forward this agenda.

In addition, the UK presidency advanced work with Libya on an action plan on illegal migration, due to be adopted early in 2006. A European Commission mission made recommendations for practical co-operation with Morocco and Algeria following the tragic events in Ceuta and Melilla. Key Mediterranean transit countries were involved in ED sea operations.

On source countries in Africa, agreement was reached at the EU Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Troika in November and the EU Africa Troika in December to enhance and strengthen dialogue and practical cooperation on migration between ECOWAS, African countries, Pan-African institutions and the EU.

At the end of the presidency, the December European Council adopted a paper "Global approach to migration: Priority actions focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean", drawing together all strands of EU migration work in the Mediterranean and Africa and setting priority actions for 2006.

Building on our presidency achievements, we will continue to encourage the EU to work in closer partnership with transit and source countries to tackle illegal migration across the Mediterranean and for improved migration management globally.

Forensic Science Service

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role the Forensic Science Service (FSS) had in the decision to award the contract to supply drugs testing equipment to the police to Cozart Bioscience Ltd.; and what assessment he has made of the link between the privatised arm of the FSS and Cozart Bioscience. [40343]

Paul Goggins: The Forensic Science Service's (FSS) role in the decision to award the contract to supply drugs testing equipment to Cozart Bioscience Ltd. was limited to the provision of impartial, expert scientific and technical advice to the Home Office's Drug Interventions Programme (DIP). This was in order to evaluate the products from all companies arising from a tender issued by the DIP via an advertisement in the Official Journal of the European Union in 2003 for the supply of drugs testing equipment for police forces to use in custody suites.

The FSS does not have a privatised arm and, having been incorporated as a Government owned company on 5 December 2005, remains a public authority. However, it has a commercial collaboration arrangement in place with Cozart, which is managed by a distinct unit within the FSS that is completely separate and has no connection with any activities relating to the FSS' role in the provision of impartial expert and technical advice, performance testing, quality assurance and independent evaluation of test kits and equipment to the Home Office. The Department is satisfied that ethical walls have been established within the FSS to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent the disclosure of any information relating to the DIP, and commercial or otherwise technical data between the different areas of the organisation concerned.

Homophobic Crime

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated relating to homophobic crime; [28328]

(2) what guidelines for police forces his Department has published on *(a)* homophobic-related crime and *(b)* racially motivated crime; [28329]

(3) what recent discussions he has had on homophobic crime; and if he will make a statement; [28330]

(4) what duty is placed on police forces to *(a)* collect and *(b)* publish statistics related to reported incidences of homophobic crime. [28331]

Paul Goggins: The Metropolitan Police Service conducted a six-month study "Understanding and Responding to Hate Crime" which analysed hate crime incidents, including homophobic crime reported in that period. However, the Home Office has not commissioned any research on homophobic crime. Similarly a number of discussions have been held with stakeholders. These are being used in developing policy to tackle hate crime more effectively including homophobic crimes.

In May this year the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Home Office jointly published a hate crime manual, 'Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service'. This builds on the code of practice on reporting and recording racists incidents published and distributed in 2000.

At present no duty is placed on police forces to collect or publish incidents of hate crime.

Humberside Police

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the burden of paperwork faced by Humberside police. [39417]

Hazel Blears: The National Bureaucracy Adviser provides practical assistance to all forces, including Humberside, in the timely and effective implementation of their work on reducing bureaucratic burdens on police officers. This includes visiting forces to spread good practice; challenging, where necessary, existing practices; and driving force-led reductions in bureaucracy. We have made good progress in reducing the bureaucratic burdens on police officers by cutting nearly 9,000 unnecessary forms; civilianising posts; rolling out the penalty notice for disorder scheme; and ensuring that forces have the best scientific and technological support like video identity parades and electronic fingerprinting so that officers spend more time in communities tackling crime and antisocial behaviour and reassuring the public.

Identity Cards

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department estimates the cost to public funds of introducing identity cards will be by 2012. [41785]

Andy Burnham: The average annual running costs are estimated as £584 million for issuing passports and identity cards to UK nationals.

We expect that any integration costs for other Government Departments will not be significant before 2012, as they will want to see the identity cards scheme achieve significant coverage before investing in readers and other equipment.

Identity Fraud

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances of identity fraud by applicants using a deceased person's details for a new passport have taken place in each of the last five years; and at what cost to his Department. [41049]

Andy Burnham: The figures for the number of passport applications detected by the UK Passport Service in which a deceased person's details have been used are as follows.

	Number of applications
2001	214
2002	288
2003	173
2004	171
2005	81

The cost to my Department of detecting these cases is contained within the overall cost of processing a passport application, through examination and fraud investigation techniques which are covered by the passport fee.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances of identity fraud by applicants using false address details for a new passport have taken place in each of the last five years; and at what cost to his Department. [41050]

Andy Burnham: Figures relating to the number of fraudulent passport applications detected in which a false address is given are not routinely collated by the UK Passport Service and are not therefore available.

The cost to my Department of detecting these cases is contained within the overall cost of processing a passport application, through examination and fraud investigation techniques which are covered by the passport fee.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of staff work on the hotline for hon. Members at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. [40388]

Mr. McNulty: In 2005–06 the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's (IND) MPs' Hotline is funded for 20 posts. Four of these posts are currently vacant but should be filled early in 2006 through an internal selection process.

London Bombings

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to extend changes made to the criminal injuries compensation scheme to the victims of the 7 July bombings. [39532]

Fiona Mactaggart: The question of making any scheme changes retrospective was addressed in the Home Office consultation paper 'Rebuilding Lives: supporting victims of crime' published on 7 December 2005. The relevant passage, at page 19, reads:

"We recognise that changes to the scheme mean that some cases would be dealt with differently in future and that some applicants who have already received their compensation would have received more under a new scheme. However, we do not believe that it would be fair or workable to apply changes retrospectively. Changes also need to be approved by Parliament, which could mean that it could be at least a year before any changes could come into effect. We would welcome views on whether changes to the scheme should apply from the date of the incident or the date of the application.

Potential applicants to the scheme should not alter their decision on whether or when to apply to the scheme as a result of anything in this paper."

The full text of the consultation document can be found on the Home Office website through http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/the_cjs/whats_new/news-3258.html.

London County Council (General Powers) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under section 20(1) of the London County Council (General Powers) Act 1954. [40978]

Hazel Blears: Persons proceeded against and found guilty at the magistrates courts of offences under section 20(1) of the London County Council (General Powers) Act 1954 cannot be separately identified on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as they form part of a miscellaneous group which cannot be analysed.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females aged (i) under 16 years, (ii) 16 to 18 years, (iii) 19 to 24 years, (iv) 25 to 30 years, (v) 30 to 40 years and (vi) 40 years and over found guilty of an offence under section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 were sentenced to (A) five years' imprisonment, (B) four years' imprisonment, (C) three years' imprisonment, (D) two years' imprisonment, (E) one year's imprisonment, (F) six months' imprisonment, (G) community service and (H) a fine only in (1) Essex, (2) the Metropolitan police part of London, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [37550]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is contained in the following tables.

Sentencing overview for persons convicted of wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm, 2000 to 2004

Number of offenders

	2000			
	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*Fine*
Male				
Essex				
Under 16	5	3	2	0
16–18	5	3	2	0
19–24	24	20	3	0
25–30	10	7	2	1
31–40	9	6	2	1
41+	4	3	1	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	9	2	6	0
16–18	69	30	34	0
19–24	95	65	20	2
25–30	55	47	6	0
31–40	74	45	15	0
41+	40	22	11	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	3	0	3	0

Sentencing overview for persons convicted of wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm, 2000 to 2004

Number of offenders

	2000			
	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*Fine*
16–18	8	6	2	0
19–24	19	12	5	0
25–30	5	4	1	0
31–40	9	7	0	0
41+	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	165	38	94	0
16–18	739	327	364	8
19–24	1,359	814	452	24
25–30	746	459	216	17
31–40	724	413	211	23
41+	339	151	112	9
Female				
Essex				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	1	1	0	0
19–24	0	0	0	0
25–30	4	1	3	0
31–40	0	0	0	0
41+	2	1	1	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	3	1	2	0
16–18	6	4	2	0
19–24	5	2	2	1
25–30	2	0	1	0
31–40	3	2	1	0
41+	3	3	0	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	0	0	0	0
19–24	4	0	4	0
25–30	0	0	0	0
31–40	0	0	0	0
41+	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	24	3	19	0
16–18	89	24	59	0
19–24	116	35	68	2
25–30	77	31	35	0
31–40	79	25	35	1
41+	38	14	17	0
Persons				
Essex				
Under 16	5	3	2	0
16–18	6	4	2	0
19–24	24	20	3	0
25–30	14	8	5	1
31–40	9	6	2	1
41+	6	4	2	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	12	3	8	0
16–18	75	34	36	0
19–24	100	67	22	3
25–30	57	47	7	0
31–40	77	47	16	0
41+	43	25	11	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	3	0	3	0
16–18	8	6	2	0
19–24	23	12	9	0
25–30	5	4	1	0
31–40	9	7	0	0
41+	2	0	2	0

Sentencing overview for persons convicted of wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm, 2000 to 2004

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*Fine*
		2000		
England and Wales				
Under 16	189	41	113	0
16–18	828	351	423	8
19–24	1,475	849	520	26
25–30	823	490	251	17
31–40	803	438	246	24
41 +	377	165	129	9

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2001 Fine*
Male				
Essex				
Under 16	1	0	1	0
16–18	8	4	4	0
19–24	18	10	8	0
25–30	8	8	0	0
31–40	12	6	1	0
41 +	5	4	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	19	5	14	0
16–18	48	21	25	0
19–24	86	63	14	1
25–30	53	37	11	0
31–40	61	39	13	0
41 +	50	27	12	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	2	0	2	0
16–18	6	3	2	1
19–24	15	12	3	0
25–30	7	7	0	0
31–40	9	8	0	0
41 +	5	2	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	189	41	127	0
16–18	649	299	317	9
19–24	1,354	866	414	17
25–30	734	472	204	10
31–40	716	406	217	14
41 +	362	180	116	6
Female				
Essex				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	3	2	1	0
19–24	0	0	0	0
25–30	1	0	1	0
31–40	1	0	1	0
41 +	1	0	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	4	0	4	0
16–18	5	2	3	0
19–24	9	5	3	0
25–30	5	2	2	0
31–40	5	3	2	0
41 +	0	0	0	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	1	1	0	0
16–18	1	1	0	0
19–24	2	1	1	0
25–30	0	0	0	0
31–40	1	0	1	0

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2001 Fine*
41 +	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	22	1	20	0
16–18	81	24	52	1
19–24	108	44	50	2
25–30	64	25	29	0
31–40	80	26	43	0
41 +	38	6	23	0
Persons				
Essex				
Under 16	1	0	1	0
16–18	11	6	5	0
19–24	18	10	8	0
25–30	9	8	1	0
31–40	13	6	2	0
41 +	6	4	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	23	5	18	0
16–18	53	23	28	0
19–24	95	68	17	1
25–30	58	39	13	0
31–40	66	42	15	0
41 +	50	27	12	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	3	1	2	0
16–18	7	4	2	1
19–24	17	13	4	0
25–30	7	7	0	0
31–40	10	8	1	0
41 +	6	2	2	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	211	42	147	0
16–18	730	323	369	10
19–24	1,462	910	464	19
25–30	798	497	233	10
31–40	796	432	260	14
41 +	400	186	139	6

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2002 Fine*
Male				
Essex				
Under 16	1	0	1	0
16–18	14	10	4	0
19–24	19	16	3	0
25–30	10	6	3	0
31–40	14	11	1	0
41 +	3	3	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	12	4	8	0
16–18	47	25	18	0
19–24	93	63	26	0
25–30	53	39	10	0
31–40	102	78	13	2
41 +	39	26	7	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	5	1	4	0
16–18	19	9	9	0
19–24	23	16	5	0
25–30	10	7	3	0
31–40	10	8	2	0

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	Immediate custody	Community sentence	2002 Fine
41 +	3	2	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	182	38	134	0
16–18	713	320	354	5
19–24	1,420	841	495	27
25–30	722	456	202	10
31–40	789	460	236	13
41 +	361	162	131	8
Female				
Essex				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	2	0	2	0
19–24	1	1	0	0
25–30	0	0	0	0
31–40	1	0	1	0
41 +	0	0	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	3	1	2	0
16–18	9	7	2	0
19–24	13	6	6	0
25–30	8	5	3	0
31–40	11	4	5	0
41 +	6	2	3	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	1	0	1	0
16–18	2	2	0	0
19–24	0	0	0	0
25–30	1	1	0	0
31–40	1	0	1	0
41 +	1	1	0	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	27	2	24	1
16–18	79	28	47	0
19–24	124	39	69	2
25–30	57	27	27	0
31–40	107	28	56	0
41 +	52	12	26	0
Persons				
Essex				
Under 16	1	0	1	0
16–18	16	10	6	0
19–24	20	17	3	0
25–30	10	6	3	0
31–40	15	11	2	0
41 +	3	3	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	15	5	10	0
16–18	56	32	20	0
19–24	106	69	32	0
25–30	61	44	13	0
31–40	113	82	18	2
41 +	45	28	10	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	6	1	5	0
16–18	21	11	9	0
19–24	23	16	5	0
25–30	11	8	3	0
31–40	11	8	3	0
41 +	4	3	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	209	40	158	1
16–18	792	348	401	5

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2002 Fine*
19–24	1,544	880	564	29
25–30	779	483	229	10
31–40	896	488	292	13
41+	413	174	157	8

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2003 Fine*
Male				
Essex				
Under 16	4	2	2	0
16–18	13	8	5	0
19–24	17	11	6	0
25–30	8	5	2	0
31–40	12	8	2	0
41+	4	2	1	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	10	2	8	0
16–18	43	15	26	1
19–24	89	59	29	1
25–30	59	43	12	0
31–40	74	46	23	1
41+	57	28	17	1
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	3	0	3	0
16–18	9	4	5	0
19–24	11	9	2	0
25–30	8	6	2	0
31–40	6	4	2	0
41+	0	0	0	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	184	24	144	0
16–18	659	239	383	7
19–24	1,339	819	471	10
25–30	663	418	196	8
31–40	767	422	270	9
41+	411	191	151	7
Female				
Essex				
Under 16	1	1	0	0
16–18	1	0	1	0
19–24	4	2	1	0
25–30	0	0	0	0
31–40	0	0	0	0
41+	0	0	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	2	1	1	0
16–18	6	1	5	0
19–24	9	4	4	0
25–30	6	1	2	1
31–40	7	1	3	0
41+	2	1	1	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	0	0	0	0
19–24	0	0	0	0
25–30	1	1	0	0
31–40	1	0	1	0
41+	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	35	5	28	0
16–18	57	10	45	0

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	Immediate custody	Community sentence	2003 Fine
19–24	149	54	78	1
25–30	54	14	33	1
31–40	88	26	44	0
41 +	49	11	25	1
Persons				
Essex				
Under 16	5	3	2	0
16–18	14	8	6	0
19–24	21	13	7	0
25–30	8	5	2	0
31–40	12	8	2	0
41 +	4	2	1	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	12	3	9	0
16–18	49	16	31	1
19–24	98	63	33	1
25–30	65	44	14	1
31–40	81	47	26	1
41 +	59	29	18	1
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	3	0	3	0
16–18	9	4	5	0
19–24	11	9	2	0
25–30	9	7	2	0
31–40	7	4	3	0
41 +	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	219	29	172	0
16–18	716	249	428	7
19–24	1,488	873	549	11
25–30	717	432	229	9
31–40	855	448	314	9
41 +	460	202	176	8

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	Immediate custody	Community sentence	2004 Fine
Male				
Essex				
Under 16	3	0	3	0
16–18	8	6	2	0
19–24	19	17	1	0
25–30	13	10	2	0
31–40	6	6	0	0
41 +	6	4	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	10	1	9	0
16–18	47	26	19	1
19–24	98	72	22	1
25–30	61	43	12	1
31–40	69	54	8	0
41 +	51	27	16	0
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	2	0	2	0
16–18	4	3	1	0
19–24	11	9	2	0
25–30	8	5	1	1
31–40	5	3	2	0
41 +	3	3	0	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	180	24	146	0
16–18	665	307	327	3
19–24	1,400	848	489	13

Number of offenders

	Sentenced	*Immediate custody*	*Community sentence*	*2004 Fine*
25–30	627	377	195	16
31–40	674	408	199	9
41 +	386	192	130	8
Female				
Essex				
Under 16	1	1	0	0
16–18	0	0	0	0
19–24	2	2	0	0
25–30	2	2	0	0
31–40	1	1	0	0
41 +	0	0	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	2	0	2	0
16–18	2	0	2	0
19–24	3	1	1	0
25–30	3	1	0	0
31–40	7	6	0	0
41 +	6	3	1	1
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	0	0	0	0
16–18	1	1	0	0
19–24	2	2	0	0
25–30	1	0	1	0
31–40	0	0	0	0
41 +	1	0	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	26	5	20	0
16–18	66	14	50	0
19–24	114	38	65	2
25–30	69	27	30	0
31–40	80	28	40	0
41 +	44	10	22	1
Persons				
Essex				
Under 16	4	1	3	0
16–18	8	6	2	0
19–24	21	19	1	0
25–30	15	12	2	0
31–40	7	7	0	0
41 +	6	4	0	0
Metropolitan Police				
Under 16	12	1	11	0
16–18	49	26	21	1
19–24	101	73	23	1
25–30	64	44	12	1
31–40	76	60	8	0
41 +	57	30	17	1
Hertfordshire				
Under 16	2	0	2	0
16–18	5	4	1	0
19–24	13	11	2	0
25–30	9	5	2	1
31–40	5	3	2	0
41 +	4	3	1	0
England and Wales				
Under 16	206	29	166	0
16–18	731	321	377	3
19–24	1,514	886	554	15
25–30	696	404	225	16
31–40	754	436	239	9
41 +	430	202	152	9

Source:
RDS NOMS 14 December 2005

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have been (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted in England and Wales of offences under sections (A) 4, (B) 5, (C) 9, (D) 17, (E) 22, (F) 24, (G) 29, (H) 30, (I) 32, (J) 33, (K) 34, (L) 35, (M) 36, (N) 57 and (O) 60 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 in 2004. [39745]

Hazel Blears: Information taken from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of males and females proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty of the sections under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 as mentioned in the question at all courts England and Wales, 2004 is contained in the following table.

Number of males and females proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for certain sections under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, England and Wales, 2004[1]

Offence description	*Principal statutes*	*Male Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Female Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Conspiracy or soliciting, etc., to commit murder	Criminal Law Act 1977 S.1; Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.4	51	9	8	1
Manslaughter	Common Law; Offences against the Person Act 1861 SS.5, 9 & 10	119	239	18	26
Murder of persons aged one year or over	Common Law; Offences against the Person Act 1861 SS.1, 9 & 10	681	340	73	17
Murder of infants under one year of age	Common Law; Offences against the Person Act 1861 SS.1, 9 & 10	4	3	1	1
Impeding the saving of life from shipwreck	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.17	—	—	—	—
Using Chloroform, etc., to commit or assist uncommitting an indictable offence	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.22	8	1	1	—
Administering poison with intent to injure or annoy	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.24	15	9	5	3
Causing, explosions or casting corrosive fluids with intent to do grievous bodily harm	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.29	4	7	3	2
Placing, etc., explosives in or near ships or buildings with intent to do Offences against the Person Act bodily harm, etc.	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.30	—	2	—	—
Endangering railway passengers by placing, etc., anything on railway, taking up rails, changing points and signals etc.	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.32	9	1	—	—
Endangering railway passengers by throwing anything at railway carriages, etc.	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.33	1	—	—	—
Endangering railway passengers by unlawful acts, or by omission or neglect	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.34	41	21	1	1
Causing bodily harm by furious driving	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.35	19	11	2	2
Obstructing, assaulting or arresting upon civil process clergymen performing service	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.36	8	3	1	—
Concealment of birth	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S60	—	—	1	—
Bigamy	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S57	18	17	4	5

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.

Organised Crime

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the geographical distribution of organised crime. [40965]

Paul Goggins: The UK Threat Assessment for 2004–05 to 2005–06, which is published by the National Criminal Intelligence Service, sets out the threat to the UK from organised crime. The assessment does not attempt to apportion the distribution of organised crime by region. It is, however, geographically widespread with major distribution hubs for criminal commodities found in areas of high population.

Press Releases

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place copies of documents to which press releases relate on his Department's website at the same time that the press release is issued; and if he will ensure there is a full link to the document's URL as contained in the press release. [37752]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office always aims to publish press releases, and related documents, simultaneously on the Home Office website. Press Releases are located in the press office section of the website http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/ and include in the 'Notes to Editors' links to related Home Office publications or statistics. Systems have been developed and implemented over the past three months since the launch of the new websites to enable the process of ensuring full URL links to documents are in the press releases.

Preventing Extremism Working Groups

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people were considered for membership of the Preventing Extremism working groups; [39770]

(2) whether *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials had discussions with people considered for membership of the Preventing Extremism working groups concerning the criteria according to which candidates for membership of the Preventing Extremism working groups were assessed; [39771]

(3) what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials had with people considered for membership of the Preventing Extremism working groups concerning the suitability of other people considered for membership of the working groups; [39772]

(4) according to what criteria candidates for membership of the Preventing Extremism groups were assessed; [39773]

(5) on what dates the criteria for selecting members of the Preventing Extremism working groups were revised; [39774]

(6) on what date criteria were first drawn up for selecting the members of the Preventing Extremism working groups; [39775]

(7) what criteria were drawn up for selecting members of the Preventing Extremism working groups. [39776]

Paul Goggins: The Preventing Extremism Together working groups were created as part of an exercise which was carried out informally as part of our immediate response to the July bombings.

Suggestions as to possible members came both orally and in writing from Ministerial visits which took place over the summer, through a designated email account, from the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives, and following the Prime Minister's and my own meetings with key faith leaders and others.

Members of the working groups were invited to participate because of their expertise and experience. A key factor was to ensure that the groups had credibility with the Muslim communities. In selecting these individuals consideration was given to those who were both challenging voices and well established figures who have the support of their community. To ensure a broad spectrum of representation, high profile and internationally known individuals were invited alongside individuals who hold a variety of different views. They were invited in a personal, unpaid capacity, rather than as representatives of their organisations and held no official status. The result of this was seven working groups with a membership total of 104.

Prisoner Licences

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are being held beyond their licence expiry date following recall to prison; and how many times in the last two years prisons have failed to release recalled prisoners on time. [37764]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Early Release and Recall Section of the National Offender Management Service monitors the performance of individual prisons in releasing recalled prisoners before their licence expiry date (LED); and what action is taken where a prison is known to have held a prisoner beyond their LED. [37765]

Fiona Mactaggart: It is the responsibility of Prison Service senior managers to monitor the performance of individual prisons.

Recalled prisoners can only be re-released if their sentence has expired or the Parole Board has recommended release. In taking into account whether to re-release a recalled prisoner sentenced under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, the Parole Board is required to have regard to the prisoner's licence expiry date.

If it comes to the attention of the Release and Recall Section or the Prison Service that a recalled prisoner is, for any reason, being held beyond the date of their re-release, staff are required to take immediate steps to facilitate the release process.

Prisons

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the provisions of section 2.17 of the Prison Act 1952 covering location and accommodation applies to *(a)* Broadmoor and *(b)* other secure hospitals. [38255]

Fiona Mactaggart: The secure hospitals, including the high secure hospitals, are the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Health. The provisions of the National Health Service Act 1977 applies to them and not the Prisons Act 1952.

Probation Service

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been employed in the probation service in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1997. [40250]

Fiona Mactaggart: Comparative information on staffing numbers is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 is unreliable and is not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented below show full-time equivalent (FTE) figures at the close of each quarter from 1 April 2003 to 30 September 2005.

Staffing information is collected by probation area, and is not collected centrally in a format that allows figures for the London borough of Hillingdon to be presented separately. The staffing figures are provided for London probation area only.

London probation area

	FTE in post
30 June 2003	2,170.5
30 September 2003	2,238.0
31 December 2003	2,510.0
31 March 2004	2,538.0
30 June 2004	2,479.2
30 September 2004	2,458.5
31 December 2004	2,398.3
31 March 2005	2,377.3
30 June 2005	2,394.5
30 September 2005	2,394.3

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who is the director of *(a)* the probation service, *(b)* the Southend probation service and *(c)* the Essex probation service; what relevant specialist qualifications each holds; and what the career of each has been to date. [37770]

Fiona Mactaggart: The director of probation is Roger Hill. Roger Hill holds a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) and an MBA.

He has served as a probation officer, senior probation officer, assistant chief probation officer and chief officer of two local probation areas.

Mary Archer is the chief officer of Essex probation area. She was appointed in 2003, having been an assistant chief officer in another area. She also holds a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work, and a Chartered Management qualification.

Essex probation area includes Southend.

Rates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the Prison Service in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid *(a)* in each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* in London. [39161]

Fiona Mactaggart: The rates paid by the Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004–05 is shown in the following table by:

Overall Total

English Regions

Billing Authority

London figures are included under English Regions. Wales is not divided into regions.

Prison Service rates

Location	*Rates payable 2004–05 (£)*
England and Wales-Overall	25,504,569.79
England	24,905,308.19
Wales	599,261.60
English Regions	
North East	1,678,937.96
North West	3,789,121.47
Yorkshire and Humberside	3,034,637.78
East Midlands	1,800,313.98
West Midlands	2,822,056.77
East of England	1,830,972.35
South East	5,491,333.96
South West	1,813,880.34
London	2,644,053.58
Billing Authority	
Arun District Council	135,888.00
Ashford Borough Council	228.00
Aylesbury Vale District Council	360,240.00
Bassetlaw District Council	177,840.00
Bedford Borough Council	131,100.00
Birmingham City Council	386,688.00
Blaby District Council	232,090.45
Boston Borough Council	31,350.00
Breckland District Council	235,288.53
Bridgend County Borough Council	217,412.00
Bristol City Council	186,960.00
Bromsgrove District Council	459,475.14
Canterbury City Council	78,432.00
Cardiff County Council	174,020.00
Castle Morpeth District Council	367,080.00
Chelmsford Borough Council	133,152.00
Cherwell District Council	494,357.27
Chorley Borough Council	583,969.02
City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council	378,024.00
City of York Council	37,392.00
Copeland Borough Council	138,487.20
Dacorum Borough Council	325,128.00
Daventry District Council	301,416.00
Derbyshire Dales District Council	117,192.00
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	1,037,023.32
Dover District Council	229,368.00
Durham City Council	706,924.80
East Riding of Yorkshire District Council	716,410.06
East Staffordshire Borough Council	247,266.00
Exeter City Council	129,960.00
Fenland District Council	362,520.00
Fylde Borough Council	148,656.00
Gloucester City Council	91,200.00
Gosport District Council	52,896.00
Greenwich London Borough Council	808,882.57
Guildford District Council	60,739.20
Hambleton District Council	63,840.00
Hammersmith and Fulham London Borough Council	533,698.79
Harborough District Council	128,820.00
Hounslow London Borough Council	312,864.22
Huntingdonshire District Council	227,238.23
Isle of Wight Borough Council	402,648.00
Islington London Borough Council	541,728.00
Kennet District Council	83,231.99
Kingston upon Hull City Council	243,504.00
Lambeth London Borough Council	119,472.00
Lancaster City Council	477,896.60
Leeds City Council	558,444.40
Leicester City Council	66,120.00
Lewes District Council	144,552.00
Lichfield District Council	123,148.11
Lincoln City Council	139,764.00
Liverpool City Council	760,152.00
Macclesfield Borough Council	109,440.00
Maidstone Borough Council	169,860.00
Manchester City Council	446,424.00
Medway Towns, The Council	181,075.35
Mendip District Council	82,080.00
Milton Keynes Borough Council	621,153.52
Monmouthshire County Council	102,513.60
Newark and Sherwood District Council	208,152.45
North Dorset District Council	182,400.00
North Kesteven District Council	89,131.81
North Shropshire District Council	145,236.00
Norwich City Council	164,757.05
Nottingham City Council	101,360.69
Peterborough City Council	3,148.27
Portsmouth City Council	76,380.00
Preston City Council	108,072.00
Reading Borough Council	86,298.00
Reigate and Banstead District Council	547,200.00
Richmond Upon Thames London Borough Council	60,192.00
Rochdale Borough Council	125,400.00
Rochford District Council	60,648.00
Rugby Borough Council	115,596.00
Rushcliffe Borough Council	60,648.00
Rutland District Council	315,096.00
Salford City Council	223,440.00
Shrewsbury and Atcham District Council	61,031.54
South Derbyshire District Council	28,324.58
South Gloucestershire District Council	364,700.35
South Oxfordshire District Council	140,676.00
South Staffordshire District Council	408,209.98
Spelthorne District Council	169,417.12
St. Edmundsbury Borough Council	248,520.00
Stafford Borough Council	207,480.00
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council	80,256.00
Stockton on Tees Borough Council	390,145.16
Suffolk Coastal District Council	165,984.00
Surrey Heath Borough Council	173,280.00
Swale Borough Council	873,709.50
Swansea County Council	105,316.00
Teesdale District Council	215,688.00
Teignbridge District Council	194,256.00
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	44,688.00
Wandsworth London Borough Council	267,216.00
Warrington Borough Council	449,444.66
Waveney District Council	98,616.27
Wellingborough District Council	104,424.00
West Devon Borough Council	144,324.00
West Dorset District Council	57,000.00
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council	297,768.00

Prison Service rates

Location	*Rates payable 2004–05 (£)*
Wigan Borough Council	217,740.00
Winchester City Council	123,120.00
Wychavon District Council	286,254.00

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the *(a)* Forensic Science Service, *(b)* Criminal Records Bureau and *(c)* UK Passport Service in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [39165]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The rates payments made by Forensic Science Service, Criminal Records Bureau and UK Passport Service during financial year 2004–05 are given in the following table:

£

Local authority	*Forensic science service*	*Criminal records bureau*	*UK passport service*
Durham county council	—	—	204,030
NI rate collection	—	—	68,971
Liverpool city council	—	161,274	660,000
Newport city council	—	—	80,195
Westminster city council	—	—	831,500
Glasgow city council	—	—	184,886
Peterborough city council	—	—	173,936
Birmingham city council	110,016	—	—
London borough of Lambeth	384,020	—	—
Leeds city council	83,556	—	—
Solihull Met borough council	294,134	—	—
Monmouthshire county council	86,726	—	—
Huntingdon district council	105,642	—	—
Chorley borough council	64,686	—	—
Sandwell Met borough council	66,043	—	—
Blackburn with Darwen local authority	—	45,264	—
Total paid	1,194,823	206,538	2,203,518
(A) region			
Scotland	—	—	184,886
Wales	86,726	—	80,196
Northern Ireland	—	—	68,971
North West	148,242	—	660,000
North East	—	206,538	204,030
Yorkshire and the Humber	—	—	—
East Midlands	—	—	—
West Midlands	470,193	—	—
East of England	—	—	173,935
South East	105,642	—	—
South West	—	—	—
London	384,020	—	831,500
(B) nation			
England	1,108,097	206,538	1,869,465
Scotland	—	—	184,886
Wales	86,726	—	80,196
Northern Ireland	—	—	68,971
(ii) London	384,020	—	831,500

The FSS provides services to England and Wales, CRB to England, Wales and Northern Ireland and UKPS to the whole of the United Kingdom.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the Immigration and Nationality Service in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(b)* London. [39167]

Mr. McNulty: Immigration and nationality directorate paid a total of £12,485,495 in rates in 2004–05. The breakdown of this payment is as follows:

England— region	*Amount (£)*
(a) region	
London	5,951,272
East Midlands	146,618
East of England	105,731
North West of England	965,020
South East of England	895,812
South West of England	119,811
West Midlands	925,802
Yorkshire	308,330
Total England	9,418,396
Northern Ireland	15,114
Scotland	389,978
Wales	41,086

England—region	Amount (£)
Other payments with no regional classification	2,620,921
Total Rates	12,485,495
(b) London	
London Total	5,951,272

Rental Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the Immigration and Nationality Service in rent for properties *(a)* in total, *(b)* in each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(c)* in London in 2004–05. [39162]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows.

(a) In total

The total amount paid by the Immigration and Nationality Service in rent for properties was £34,666,400 broken down as follows:

England—region	Amount (£)
(b) (i) region (ii) nation	
East Midlands	326,880
East of England	386,105
London	24,022,220
North East of England	62,384
North West	2,362,629
South East	2,585,349
South West	579,351
West Midlands	1,246,578
Yorkshire	2,154,639
Total England	33,726,135
Northern Ireland	51,008
Scotland	803,595
Wales	85,662
Total	34,666,400
(c) in London	
London	24,922,220

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid in rent for properties by the *(a)* Forensic Science Service, *(b)* Criminal Records Bureau and *(c)* UK Passport Service in 2004–05; and how much was paid in (i) each (A) region and (B) nation of the UK and (ii) London. [39164]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Rental payments made by Forensic Science Service, Criminal Records Bureau and UK Passport Service during financial year 2004–05 are given in the following table:

£

	Forensic science service	Criminal records bureau	UK passport service
(A) region			
Scotland	—	—	444,792
Wales	—	—	307,578
Northern Ireland	—	—	163,450
North West	—	613,017	803,987
North East	26,100	—	1,048,986
Yorkshire and the Humber	—	—	—
East Midlands	—	—	—
West Midlands	1,688,700	—	—
East of England	—	—	687,388
South East	—	—	—
South West	—	—	—
London	2,050,000	—	2,985,000
Total paid	3,764,800	613,017	6,441,181
(B) nation			
England	3,764,800	613,017	5,525,361
Scotland	—	—	444,792
Wales	—	—	307,578
Northern Ireland	—	—	163,450
(ii) London	2,050,000	—	2,985,000

The FSS provide services to England and Wales, CRB to England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and UKPS provides services to the whole of the United Kingdom.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the Prisons Service in rent for properties in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(b)* London. [39168]

Fiona Mactaggart: Rent paid by the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales on properties in 2004–05 was as follows:

	Amount (£)
West Midlands region	68,000
East Midlands region	615,000
East Anglia region	168,000
Northern region	78,000
South East region	38,000
North West region	563,000
South West region	1,408,000
Yorkshire and Humberside	368,000
London	651,000
Total England	3,957,000

The Prison Service does not pay rent on its London headquarters buildings, as these form part of the Home Office estate. Rent paid to other Government Departments has been excluded. Data for the South West region includes rent paid for the mooring of the floating facility Weare. The Prison Service does not rent property in Wales. Information about properties in Scotland and Northern Ireland may be obtained from the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland Office respectively.

Rural Police Stations

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of rural police stations in England are permanently manned. [39735]

Hazel Blears: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role the Serious and Organised Crime Agency plays in countering *(a)* terrorism and *(b)* domestic extremism. [40554]

Paul Goggins: The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will have the function of preventing and detecting serious organised crime and contributing to the reduction of such crime and of the harm it causes.

Its main priorities will be those serious organised crime threats identified by the UK threat assessment, which are trafficking in Class A drugs, organised illegal immigration, fraud, money laundering, criminal use of firearms and e-crime. SOCA will not have a direct role in countering terrorism and domestic extremism, although it may provide support to those agencies which do have responsibility for these areas.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the performance of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. [40559]

Paul Goggins: The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will not come into existence until 1 April 2006. The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 requires SOCA to produce an Annual Plan and an Annual Report.

Sex Abuse

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions his Department *(a)* has had and *(b)* plans to have with (i) voluntary organisations and (ii) other departments on raising awareness in school age children of how to report incidents of sexual abuse. [38563]

Paul Goggins: As part of the stocktake on the Sexual Offences Act 2003, my officials have contacted a number of organisations and sought their views on the operation of the Act. Officials also hosted a number of meetings with representatives from the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and non-governmental organisations (NGO) representing people with learning difficulties and adult victims of sexual assault. The need to increase the reporting of offending was raised during these discussions. The specific issue of increasing reporting by child victims of sexual abuse has been raised during the stocktake and is something my officials will take forward with child protection NGOs and other Government Departments in the spring of this year.

Skilled Migrants

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what projections he has made of the number of immigrants likely to be admitted to the United Kingdom each year under the terms of his tier 2 (skilled migrants) category. [36944]

Mr. McNulty: The intention in designing the new system to ensure that those who can contribute most to the UK are selected for entry and that the country takes in the people our economy needs at any one time.

In a flexible and dynamic labour market like the UK it is impractical to forecast the number of people the UK will need. We want to design a system which is flexible enough to respond to the needs of the labour market and any changes to it. Tier two is an employer-led route, so the numbers of migrants who enter under that route will depend on how many skilled migrants employers want to sponsor, subject to ensuring where appropriate that the domestic UK and EU labour force is not displaced by migrant labour.

Firm proposals and a plan for implementation of the new system will be published later this year in response to the consultation exercise which ran from 19 July to 7 November.

Terrorism

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been arrested under anti-terrorist legislation in each of the last 24 months; and for what period each was held before *(a)* being charged and *(b)* being released without charge. [40599]

Hazel Blears: Statistics on arrests and charges under the Terrorism Act 2000, from 11 September 2001 until 30 September 2005 are available on the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/. These are compiled from recent police records and are therefore subject to change as cases go through the system.

The statistics you have requested are not available in the format you have requested. The following table provides information on those held for a period in excess of seven days for 2004 and 2005. The maximum period of detention pre-charge following an arrest under the Terrorism Act 2000 was extended to 14 days with effect from 20 January 2004. Between that date and 4 September 2005, 357 people were arrested of whom 36 have been held for in excess of seven days. The breakdown of these cases is detailed in the following table.

Period	*Number held for this period*	*Charged*	*Released without charge*
2004			
7–8 days	3	1	2
8–9 days	0	—	—
9–10 days	11	6	5
10–11 days	1	0	1
11–12 days	0	—	—
12–13 days	0	—	—
13–14 days	9	9	0
2005			
7–8 days	1	1	0
8–9 days	0	—	—
9–10 days	5	4	1
10–11 days	1	1	0
11–12 days	1	1	0
12–13 days	2	1	1
13–14 days	2	2	0

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been held under anti-terrorism legislation since 2001; and under which Act each was held. [40651]

Hazel Blears: Detention under anti-terrorism legislation is provided for following an arrest under section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000. The latest figures for

arrests are published on the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act.

These statistics have been supplied by the police. They are compiled from recent police records and are therefore subject to adjustment as cases go through the system. These statistics reflect the operation of specific terrorism legislation. It is important to remember that it is, and will continue to be the case, that terrorist suspects are dealt with by the most appropriate legal means. This could be the legislation for murder, grievous bodily harm or the use of firearms or explosives which are all outside the scope of the Terrorism Act.

In addition 17 people were certified under Part four of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) 2001. Of these, 16 were certified and detained, and one certified but detained under other powers. Sections 21–32 of the ATCSA 2001 were repealed on 11 March 2005 when the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 came into force.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of interrogation has been for suspects questioned under anti-terrorism legislation in each of the last 24 months. [40593]

Hazel Blears: The maximum period of detention pre-charge following an arrest under the Terrorism Act 2000 was extended to 14 days with effect from 20 January 2004. Between that date and 4 September 2005, 357 people were arrested of whom 36 have been held for in excess of seven days. The breakdown of these cases is detailed in the following table. Details of the length of time questioning took place for each of these cases is not collated centrally.

Period	*Number held for this period*	*Charged*	*Released without charge*
2004			
7–8 days	3	1	2
8–9 days	0	—	—
9–10 days	11	6	5
10–11 days	1	0	1
11–12 days	0	—	—
12–13 days	0	—	—
13–14 days	9	9	0
2005			
7–8 days	1	1	0
8–9 days	0	—	—
9–10 days	5	4	1
10–11 days	1	1	0
11–12 days	1	1	0
12–13 days	2	1	1
13–14 days	2	2	0

Torture

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many terrorist suspects have been deported to countries where they are at risk of torture. [39753]

Mr. McNulty: None. If we believe there is a real risk that a person would face torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment if deported, to remove them would be contrary to our obligations under Article three of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The purpose of the Memoranda of Understanding we have negotiated, or are seeking to negotiate, is, where appropriate, to enable us to satisfy ourselves that a particular removal is consistent with our obligations under the ECHR.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have been (i) prosecuted and (ii) found guilty in (A) Essex and (B) England and Wales an offence under (1) sections 22 and 22A, (2) section 27, (3) sections 28 and 29, (4) section 30 and (5) section 41A of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in 2004. [39746]

Hazel Blears: Information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the following table and gives the number of males and females proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts of sections 22, 22A, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 41A Road Traffic Act 1988 in Essex and England and Wales, 2004.

Number of males and females proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts of various offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988 in Essex and England and Wales, 2004

		Essex			
		Male		*Female*	
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Leaving vehicle in a dangerous position	Road Traffic Act s.22	4	4	2	2
Causing danger by causing anything to be on a road, interfering with a vehicle or traffic equipment	Road Traffic Act S.22A as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 s.6	1	—	—	—
Offences in relation to dogs under the Act	Road Traffic Act s.27	—	—	—	—
Reckless and dangerous driving by pedal cyclist	Road Traffic Act s.28	—	—	—	—
Careless driving by pedal cyclist	Road Traffic Act s.29	6	6	—	—
Pedal cyclist driving under the influence of drink or drugs	Road Traffic Act s.30	2	2	—	—
Brakes defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 and 18 and sch. 3; Road Traffic				

Number of males and females proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts of various offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988 in Essex and England and Wales, 2004[1]

		Essex			
		Male		Female	
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
	Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	8	7	1	—
Steering defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 29; Road Traffic Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	—	—	—	—
Tyres defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 25–27; Road Traffic Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	55	39	6	5

		England and Wales			
		Male		Female	
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Leaving vehicle in a dangerous position	Road Traffic Act s.22	103	74	18	13
Causing danger by causing anything to be on a road, interfering with a vehicle or traffic equipment	Road Traffic Act S.22A as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 s.6	185	117	8	6
Offences in relation to dogs under the Act	Road Traffic Act s.27	25	20	28	23
Reckless and dangerous driving by pedal cyclist	Road Traffic Act s.28	37	32	—	—
Careless driving by pedal cyclist	Road Traffic Act s.29	91	72	3	1
Pedal cyclist driving under the influence of drink or drugs	Road Traffic Act s.30	44	39	1	1
Brakes defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 and 18 and sch. 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	622	432	351	19
Steering defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 29; Road Traffic Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	52	38	2	—
Tyres defective	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 25–27; Road Traffic Act 1988 s.41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8	5,850	3,839	534	348

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

UK Citizenship

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people with convictions for indictable offences were granted UK citizenship in the last year for which figures are available. [42185]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not separately recorded and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have taken place for under-age drinking in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1990. [39955]

Hazel Blears: Under-age drinking is covered by a number of offences on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform. Information on these offences is provided in the following table, which gives the number of defendants aged 10–17 years who were proceeded against at Hillingdon petty sessional area , for selected offences related to alcohol. It is not possible to identify those prosecutions for the Ruislip-Northwood constituency as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of defendants aged 10–17 years proceeded against at Hillingdon petty sessional area for offences relating to under-aged drinking, 1990 to 2004[1]

	Being found drunk in a highway or other public place[2]	*Being guilty while drunk of disorderly behaviour*[3]	*Drunk in, or when entering a designated sports event*[4]	*Person under 18 buying or attempting to buy or consuming intoxicating liquor in licensed premises*[5]
1990	—	2	—	—
1991	—	6	—	—
1992	1	1	—	—

Number of defendants aged 10–17 years proceeded against at Hillingdon petty sessional area for offences relating to under-aged drinking, 1990 to 2004[1]

	Being found drunk in a highway or other public place[2]	*Being guilty while drunk of disorderly behaviour*[3]	*Drunk in, or when entering a designated sports event*[4]	*Person under 18 buying or attempting to buy or consuming intoxicating liquor in licensed premises*[5]
1993	—	—	—	—
1994	—	4	—	—
1995	—	3	—	—
1996	—	—	—	—
1997	—	—	—	—
1998	—	4	—	—
1999	—	2	—	—
2000	1	6	—	—
2001	—	7	—	—
2002	—	9	—	—
2003	—	5	—	—
2004	—	8	—	—

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis
[2] S.12 Licensing Act 1872
[3] S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967
[4] S.2(2) Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985
[5] S.169C(1) and E(1) Licensing Act 1964; Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983 S.3 Sch para 4(2)

Under-age Tobacco Sales

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions for under-age tobacco sales there have been in each year since 1997; and how many convictions resulted from these prosecutions. [39342]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information taken from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of prosecutions and convictions for the sale of tobacco etc. to persons under 16 under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 S.7 as amended by Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 S.1, England and Wales 1997–2004 is provided in the following table.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available autumn 2006.

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates' courts and found guilty for the sale of tobacco to persons under-age, England and Wales, 1997–2004[1]

Offence: Sale of tobacco etc. to persons under 16
Statute: Children and Young Persons Act 1933 S.7 as amended by Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 S.1

	Proceeded against	*Found guilty*
1997	130	112
1998	166	129
1999	127	102
2000	161	134
2001	117	90
2002	99	78
2003	117	93
2004	73	57

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Visas

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information has been passed to the UK Government under the Schengen visa information system about the number of Schengen visas that have been *(a)* refused and *(b)* revoked. [40357]

Andy Burnham: The visa information system (VIS) will be a database that assists in the issuing of Schengen short stay visas. It is unlikely to be operational until 2007 and therefore no information from the VIS has been passed to the UK to date.

The UK, as do other member states, has access to information on Schengen visa applications including the number of visas issued and refused by member states.

Work Permits

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of work permit applications were refused in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [40236]

Mr. McNulty: The number of applications that were refused in the last 12 months (January 2005 to December 2005) was 20,856 which was 12 per cent. of the total work permit applications decided.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for work permits that were originally refused were subsequently granted after being resubmitted through a recognised agency in the last 12 months. [40237]

Mr. McNulty: Work permit applications can be submitted by an employer or their representative. The only information available relates to applications granted following a request for review of an initial refusal. There were 475 such applications granted on review in the last 12 months (January 2005 to December 2005).

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to prevent abuse of the work permits scheme. [40279]

Mr. McNulty: Work Permits (UK) caseworkers carry out a risk assessment when the application is submitted. They can request further checks of an employer before a work permit is issued. Further checks, either random or intelligence-driven, can follow the issue of the work permit. These checks can result in revocation of permits, refusal of existing permit applications by the employers in question and the curtailment of leave of those who

have permits with the company. Where they believe that a work permit is forged or has been obtained using deception, Immigration Officers and Entry Clearance Officers can refuse entry.

On 27 April 2004, the Prime Minister announced a top-to-bottom review of managed migration routes, to assess the extent to which they were open to abuse or otherwise open to improvement. This has included an ongoing review of the work permit arrangements.

The Government have recently undertaken a consultation exercise on proposals to replace existing migration routes for work and study, including the work permit system, with a new points-based system. One of the objectives in introducing the new system is to ensure that it is robust against abuse. The Government's response to the consultation document will be published in due course.

Worker Registration Scheme

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of workers from the EU accession states who have not registered under the Worker Registrations Scheme and are working in the UK. [40360]

Mr. McNulty: Responsibility for registering on the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) lies with the individual worker from the EU Accession state, although their employer also has some responsibility to ensure that they have registered.

As nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA), Accession state workers are not subject to immigration control on arrival in the UK and do not therefore require a visa or entry clearance. As is the case with all EEA nationals they have a right of free movement and residence dependent on their activity in the United Kingdom. Registration on the WRS is not a condition for entry, but a requirement for nationals from Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia to be lawfully employed in a job if it continues for more than 30 days. There are therefore no figures or estimates available as to the numbers of accession nationals who have entered the United Kingdom and are working without registration.

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees at the Yarl's Wood Detention Centre on 1 January had been detained for *(a)* less than one month, *(b)* between one and three months, *(c)* between three and six months, *(d)* between six and 12 months and *(e)* over 12 months. [41483]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office publishes a quarterly snapshot of people detained under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter. The latest published information pertains to people detained as at the 24 September 2005.

On 24 September 2005 there were 245 persons recorded as being held in the Immigration Removal Centre at Yarl's Wood. This figure is rounded to the nearest five, in accordance with National Statistics protocols. The following table gives the breakdown of this figure by the length of detention.

Published statistics on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website http://wwwhomeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

The next quarterly snapshot is for 31 December 2005 and will be published at the end of February 2006.

Persons recorded as being held in the Immigration Service Removal Centre Yarl's Wood, in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers as at 24 September 2005, by length of detention[1]

Length of detention[2,3]	*Number of individuals*
14 days or less	120
15 to 29 days	45
1 month to less than 2 months	35
2 months to less than 3 months	15
3 months to less than 4 months	15
4 months to less than 6 months	15
6 months to less than 1 year	5
1 year or more	5
Total	245

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5; with * = 1 or 2, may not sum due to rounding and exclude persons detained in police cells and those detained under both criminal and immigration powers.

[2] Relates to current period of detention only.

[3] 2 months is defined as 61 days; 4 months is defined as 122 days; 6 months is defined as 182 days.

Young Offenders

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* support services and *(b)* training are in place to help children of school age who have been convicted of a crime in (i) Ruislip-Northwood constituency, (ii) the London borough of Hillingdon, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England. [40248]

Fiona Mactaggart: Young people under 18 convicted of an offence throughout England and Wales, will, unless the court deems it unnecessary, receive a disposal which requires an active intervention from the Youth Offending Team. Depending on the young person's circumstances, the intervention will be designed to challenge those attitudes held by the young person which appear to have contributed to their offending behaviour, and incorporate a restorative justice element, where appropriate, either to the victim or the community at large. In addition, all youth offending teams have a target to ensure that 90 per cent. of young persons under their supervision are in full-time appropriate education training or employment by the end of their sentence, recognising the key role that this can play in reducing the risk of re-offending.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many notifiable offences were committed by young people aged under *(a)* 21, *(b)* 18, *(c)* 16, *(d)* 15, *(e)* 14, *(f)* 13, *(g)* 12, *(h)* 11 and *(i)* 10 years in each year since 1980–81; and if he will make a statement. [41194]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. It is not possible to identify the age of the offender in the 'notifiable' offences data series.

TREASURY

Alcohol-related Deaths

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many alcohol-related deaths there have been in each year since 1997, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by (i) sex and (ii) socio-economic group. [41959]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many alcohol-related deaths there have been in each year since 1997, in total and broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* socio-economic group. (41959)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. The table below shows the number of deaths by sex and socio-economic group which were certified as due to alcohol abuse, dependence and poisoning, and diseases directly related to alcohol use from 1997 to 2004.

In 2001, National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS SEC) replaced Social Class based on Occupation (SC) for coding socio-economic status. For this reason, figures for years prior to 2001 are not comparable to figures for subsequent years. Information on the deceased's own occupation is only requested at death registration for those aged between 16 and 74. The table below shows deaths at these ages by Social Class for the years 1997 to 2000 and by NS-SEC for the years 2001 to 2004.

Number of deaths in persons aged between 16 and 74 from alcohol-related causes[1], by (a) sex, and (b) socio-economic classification, England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[2]

	Men				Women			
Social class	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
I. Professional	112	117	129	131	5	10	9	10
II. Intermediate	529	540	607	584	221	240	249	282
III. (nm) Skilled, non-manual	215	229	233	258	251	215	263	260
III. (m) Skilled, manual	837	908	963	947	61	60	81	86
IV. Partly skilled	484	500	524	527	129	140	175	174
V. Unskilled	302	327	311	337	67	68	80	57
Other[3]	295	374	360	436	781	893	863	898
Total deaths	2,774	2,995	3,127	3,220	1,515	1,626	1,720	1,767

	Men				Women			
NS SEC	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
1. Managerial and professional occupations	701	724	798	765	261	213	262	281
2. Intermediate occupations	173	193	219	221	190	185	171	224
3. Small employers and own account workers	380	469	509	478	58	69	60	66
4. Lower supervisory and technical	484	439	502	507	53	60	59	59
5. Semi-routine and routine	1,218	1,156	1,396	1,314	378	376	419	426
Other[4]	477	460	510	563	866	946	968	964
Total deaths	2,774	2,995	3,127	3,220	1,515	1,626	1,720	1,767

[1] For the years 1997–2000 the cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9). The codes selected to define alcohol-related deaths are listed below:
291—Alcoholic psychoses
303—Alcohol dependence syndrome
305.0—Non-dependent abuse of alcohol
425.5—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
571—Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
E860—Accidental poisoning by alcohol
For the years 2001–2004 the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used. To maintain comparability with earlier years the following codes were selected:
F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
142.6—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
K70—Alcoholic liver disease
K73—Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
K74—Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
X45—Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in:
Baker A and Rooney C (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 17, pp 5–14.
Deaths were extracted using the original underlying cause of death.
[2] Data are for occurrences of death in each calendar year.
[3] Includes armed forces, inadequately described occupations, full time care/dependent relative, housewife/house husband, full time student, independent means, and sick.
[4] Includes never worked, long-term unemployed and not classified.

Arm's Length Management Organisations

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the impact on his targets for the public sector borrowing requirement of the additional funds made available to arm's length management organisations to improve council homes. [41151]

John Healey: Funding of arm's length management organisations is from within the department expenditure limits set for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and does not represent additional expenditure. As a result there is no impact on public sector net borrowing.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the planned level of expenditure on the common agricultural policy is for each of the next 10 years; and how much and what percentage each member state will contribute of the total. [41458]

John Healey: The EU budget agreed by the European Council on 17 December for the period 2007–13 will be €863 billion (in 2004 prices) on a commitments basis. The following amounts will be allocated to agriculture, including rural development (Heading 2).

	€ billion, 2004 prices
2007	55.0
2008	54.3
2009	53.7
2010	53.0
2011	52.4
2012	51.8
2013	51.1

Equivalent expenditure in 2006 is estimated at €55.5 billion in 2004 prices. Member states do not contribute to individual programmes within the EC budget. The UK's post abatement financing share for the EC budget as a whole was estimated at 11.97 per cent. in 2005.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 31 October 2005, PO reference: 4/23543/2005. [41975]

Dawn Primarolo: The Paymaster General has already done so.

Council Tax

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of council tax as a percentage of gross income in each *(a)* decile and *(b)* quintile (i) before and (ii) after council tax benefit. [41574]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to asking what the latest estimate is of council tax as a percentage of gross income in each *(a)* decile and *(b)* quintile (i) before and (ii) after council tax benefit. (41574)

Estimates for taxes and benefits are based on the Office for National Statistics analyses 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income' and the latest analysis for 2003–04 was published on the National Statistics website on 7th July 2005 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits. The analysis includes measures of income inequality for households in the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering approximately 7,000 households in the UK. The analysis for 2004–05 is due to be published on the National Statistics website in April 2006.

The following tables show estimates of council tax as a percentage of gross income for each income decile and quintile where households are ranked by equivalised disposable income. Council tax figures are shown both before and after the deduction of council tax benefit. Each table also shows the equivalised disposable income boundaries which separate deciles and quintiles.

Council tax as a percentage of gross income by equivalised disposable income decile, 2003–04 Great Britain

		Council tax as percentage of gross income	
Decile	*Income boundary[1] (£ per year)*	*before council tax benefit*	*after council tax benefit*
Bottom		9.7	5.9
	9,368		
2nd		6.7	4.3
	11,690		
3rd		5.3	3.8
	13,767		
4th		4.4	3.7
	16,006		
5th		3.6	3.2
	18,519		
6th		3.2	3.0
	21,291		
7th		2.9	2.7
	24,565		
8th		2.5	2.4
	29,677		
9th		2.2	2.2
	38,509		
Top		1.4	1.4
Average for all households		2.9	2.5

[1] Boundary point between equivalised disposable income deciles.

Source:

Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income', published on the ONS website and in Economic Trends.

Council tax as a percentage of gross income by equivalised disposable income quintile, 2003–04, Great Britain

		Council tax as percentage of gross income	
Decile	*Income boundary[1] (£ per year)*	*before council tax benefit*	*after council tax benefit*
Bottom		7.9	5.0
	11,690		
2nd		4.8	3.7
	16,006		
3rd		3.4	3.1
	21,291		
4th		2.6	2.6
	29,677		
Top		1.7	1.7
Average for all households		2.9	2.5

[1] Boundary point between equivalised disposable income quintiles.

Source:

Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income', published on the ONS website and in Economic Trends.

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41272]

John Healey: The number of laptops bought in 2005 was 115 and their cost was £108,350. Details for 1997–2004 can be found in the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Lynne Featherstone) on 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 339W.

Figures for mobile phones are not available, as current Treasury records do not separate mobiles from other telecoms costs.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in the Southend West constituency. [41755]

John Healey: The Treasury owns no land or property in the Southend West constituency.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41257]

John Healey: I refer to the answers I gave to my right hon. Friend the Member for Warley (Mr. Spellar) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 302W, and to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) on 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 761W.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41579]

John Healey: Since financial year 1999–2000, departments' annual resource accounts, which are available from the Library of the House, have disclosed the staff costs of civil servants. The Treasury's resource accounts for the years 2001–02 onwards are also available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/about/resourceaccounts/resourceaccounts_index.cfm.

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41313]

John Healey: The information requested is set out as follows.

Reference	*Delivery (past and imminent)*	*System/purpose*	*Project cost £000*	*Running costs £000 × years*	*Overrun (£000 and months) Cost*	*Time*
1	Pre-1997	PANAGON—Document management system	—	50x9	—	—
2	Pre-1997	MINCOM—Management of Ministerial correspondence PQ system—Management of Parliamentary Questions Impres—Management of paper files	—	25x9	—	—
3	Pre-1997	GSI—Government Secure Intranet	—	114x9	—	—
4	1997 to 2005	Server and PCs technical refresh (3–4 year). [Current cost hardware and maintenance contract shown.]	—	250x9	—	—
5	1998	Replacement of Treasury Financial Information System (FIS)—monitoring of departmental expenditure	559	—	—	—
6	1999	PS/ENTERPRISE—Replacement of central HR/personnel system for HMT.	337	25x7	—	1
7	2000	Provision of a search engine to enhance the document management repository, internet and Intranet in HMT.	600	12.5x5	350	—
8	2001	ABACUS—Replacement of Treasury's domestic accounting system	900	250x4	—	—
9	2001	Implementation of the GOLD system for the Consolidation of Central Government Accounts.	622	13x4	—	—
10	2001	Redevelopment of Treasury's public web site, including provision of a CMS—content management system	250	80x4	—	—
11	2001	Provision of IT services in support of HMT Business Continuity Plan (BCP). Services: Colt link to HMT—35k GSI connection—123k Reuters—6.3k Data Circuit—6.1k Telecom lines—18.5k Hardware maint.—2.3k	1,455	191.2x4	—	—
12	2001	Updating the Treasury's desktop to incorporate MS Windows and Office 2000 products (includes: Oasis Build 6 implementation £1,111; MS Windows based servers (moved from Netware), File and Print servers, MS Exchange 5.5 servers).	2,500	—	—	—
13	2002	Move and provision of new IT facilities in new HMT building, 1 Horse Guards Road.	1,717	—	—	—
14	2002	Conversion of HMT PCs from Token Ring networking to Ethernet working.	260	-	-	-
15	2002	Improvements to the capacity, reliability, performance and ease-of-use of secure remote working facilities in HMT.	500	—	—	—
16	2005	COINS—Integration of three Government financial data systems to form a Single Data System (SDS). [Scope increased significantly and timetable adjusted].	4,560	104	2,160	24

Reference	Delivery (past and imminent)	System/purpose	Project cost £000	Running costs £000 × years	Overrun (£000 and months) Cost	Time
17	2005	JIGSAW—Enhancing Electronic Document and Records Management system (EDRMS). [Re-scoped and timetable lengthened].	2,166	86	366	6
18	2005	Replacement of the computer system 'TACSYS' which supports the operational accounting and cashflow forecasting work of the Treasury Exchequer Funds and Accounts team 'TRiP' [October 2002 budgeted at £1.1 million, soon thereafter, the project was stopped because of the opportunity to implement a cheaper solution and provide an opportunity to review the complex requirements.]	1,100	100x7	280	24

Notes:
1. Maintenance is quoted at current rates.
2. The costs shown for each of the IT systems cover externally-provided hardware, software and implementation costs and may, in addition, cover other costs such as training where this will be part of the initial contract to be placed with the external contractor. The costs of in-house development are not included.
3. IT systems with estimated or actual costs of over £100,000 or with running costs of over £20,000 p.a. are included in the table, as information on smaller systems has not been centrally held throughout this period, and so complete information is not readily available.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to publish, as an annex to his annual report, a list of all publications by his Department in the preceding year; and if he will make a statement. [41731]

John Healey: There are no plans to publish a list of publications in the departmental report. However, all major Treasury publications can be found on the websites of the Treasury Group (website addresses:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk
www.dmo.gov.uk
www.ogc.gov.uk)

Diabetes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths there have been from diabetes in each year since 1997. [42020]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths there have been from diabetes in each year since 1997. (42020)

The latest year for which data are available is 2004. Figures for deaths where diabetes was the underlying cause of death and where diabetes was mentioned on the death certificate as a contributory factor are shown in the table below for each year from 1997 to 2004.

Number of deaths from diabetes[1], England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[2]

Calendar year	Underlying cause	Mentioned on death certificate
1997	5,890	23,832
1998	5,938	24,116
1999	5,963	24,338
2000	5,773	24,193
2001	[3]6,119	25,002
2002	[3]6,192	25,929
2003	[3]6,316	27,027
2004	[3]5,837	26,638

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the years 1997 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for 2001 onwards. The codes used are listed below:
Diabetes mellitus—ICD-9 250; ICD-10 E10-E14.
[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.
[3] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for diabetes as the underlying cause of death are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Earnings

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the UK work force earned the *(a)* minimum wage, *(b)* less than £5.50 per hour, *(c)* less than £5.75 per hour, *(d)* less than £6.00 per hour, *(e)* less than £6.50 per hour, *(f)* less than £7.00 per hour and *(g)* less than £10 per hour in each year since 1997–98, broken down by region. [41290]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what proportion of the UK workforce earned the *(a)* minimum wage, *(b)* less than £5.50 per hour *(c)* less than £5.75 per hour, *(d)* less than £6.00 per hour, *(e)* less than £6.50 per hour, *(f)* less than £7.00 per hour and *(g)* less than £10 per hour in each year since 1997–1998, broken down by region. (41290)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library showing the proportion of the UK workforce with Average Gross Hourly Earnings by place of work from 1998 to 2005 below the stated hourly rates. Estimates of the proportion of the UK workforce earning at the Minimum Wage are not calculated, however proportions earning below this level have been given. The Minimum Wage was introduced from October 1998 so figures prior to April 1999 are not available.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the population is registered to vote in each ward of each constituency in *(a)* Essex, *(b)* Hertfordshire and *(c)* Greater London in descending order of numbers registered for each constituency. [42330]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the population registered to vote in each ward of each constituency in *(a)* Essex, *(b)* Hertfordshire and *(c)* Greater London in descending order of numbers registered for each constituency. (42330)

The attached Table 1 gives a comparison between the number of registered electors and the estimated population for wards in each parliamentary constituency in Essex, Hertfordshire and Greater London. Ward figures for the Unitary Authority areas formerly in Essex (Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock) and Hertfordshire (Luton) are included. Because of the length of the table it has been provided in electronic format and will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

It should be borne in mind that the percentage of the *resident population* who are registered to vote does not provide a reliable estimate of the registration rate of the eligible population. This is mainly because there are definitional differences between "usually resident" and eligibility to vote and therefore the estimated resident population aged 18 and over is not the same as the number of people eligible to vote. For example, the resident population includes all those who usually live in an area irrespective of nationality whereas the parliamentary electorate excludes foreign nationals (but Commonwealth and Irish citizens are included) and may include some overseas electors who do not currently live in the area. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate and this can occur for a number of reasons. People who have more than one address, including students, may register in more than one place. Electoral registration officers may vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died.

The closest available geography to current electoral wards, for which population estimates are available, is Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards. This geography was created for outputs from the 2001 Census and is based mainly on 2003 electoral wards. The electorate counts are on current ward boundaries and it has been necessary to convert these to the CAS ward geography.

The latest population data available at ward level are for mid-2002, published in April 2005. The ward electorate counts are for December 2002 parliamentary electors, including attainers. The parliamentary electorate has been used rather than the local government electorate even though the latter is definitionally closer to the resident population because the local government electorate is not available at ward level. No adjustment has been made to reflect the difference between these two time points. There are a number of wards that are split by parliamentary constituency i.e. they fall within two or more parliamentary constituencies. These are shown by an asterisk * alongside their ward name, and appear under both constituencies. Electorate and population figures for the whole ward are shown. Some wards will therefore be double counted. It is not possible to split the data for these wards.

The population data are *estimates* and as such are subject to a margin of confidence. This margin of confidence is proportionately larger for ward level estimates than for local authority level estimates. The CAS ward level population estimates have been published with the status of "experimental statistics". Therefore, the estimates, and figures derived from them, should be treated with some care.

There are a relatively small number of wards (28) where the electorate counts are more than 5 per cent. greater than the population estimate. These cases are attributable to definitional differences between the estimates and electoral counts, the margin of confidence in the ward estimates, the accuracy of the electoral registers and limitations in the methodology used to convert electoral counts to the CAS ward geography.

Electors (London)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many electors of all categories there are in each London borough according to the electoral registers now in force; and how many there were in the previous year; [41606]

(2) what proportion of registered electors are *(a)* male and *(b)* female in each London borough according to the electoral registers now in force. [41608]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding (1) the number of electors in each London borough according to the electoral registers now in force, and how many there were in the previous year and (2) what proportion of these currently registered electors are *(a)* male and *(b)* female (41606 & 41608).

The latest available electoral counts are for 1 December 2004. Therefore, the attached table provides data for each London borough (and the City of London) for 1 December 2004 and 1 December 2003. Figures are given for both the parliamentary electorate and the local/European electorate. Electoral counts for 1 December 2005 will be published on 23 February 2006 and will be available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=319&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272

Data on sex is not collected on electoral returns. Therefore, I am unable to provide what proportion of registered electors are male and female.

Electoral registers, 1 December 2003 and 2004, Local Government and Parliamentary Electors

	Local Government Electors[1]		*Parliamentary Electors*[2]	
	Total electors December:			
	2003	*2004*	*2003*	*2004*
London	5,143,392	5,237,019	4,968,004	5,021,532
City of London	6,029	6,018	5,982	5,688
Barking and Dagenham	117,350	119,372	116,757	117,621
Barnet	227,972	214,421	220,511	206,471
Bexley	170,928	171,904	169,874	170,549
Brent	164,202	180,665	157,224	170,466
Bromley	228,536	228,983	225,815	225,600
Camden	142,309	144,326	131,401	133,026
Croydon	242,216	246,866	238,123	241,935
Ealing	213,235	215,814	205,769	204,211
Enfield	192,028	194,611	187,072	188,593
Greenwich	157,189	160,176	153,601	155,168
Hackney	125,207	129,274	120,433	122,411
Hammersmith and Fulham	112,387	116,144	104,136	105,829
Haringey	151,281	152,486	142,631	143,046
Harrow	159,296	162,049	156,595	158,330
Havering	174,165	175,668	173,496	174,742
Hillingdon	182,696	181,145	179,621	177,327
Hounslow	141,925	165,583	137,761	159,909
Islington	124,438	120,297	117,722	113,432
Kensington and Chelsea	99,743	98,629	85,262	84,052
Kingston upon Thames	98,378	99,014	95,667	95,740
Lambeth	199,117	203,055	187,628	190,081
Lewisham	169,483	177,731	165,335	172,133
Merton	134,008	135,678	129,809	129,551
Newham	167,798	171,815	163,235	164,165

Electoral registers, 1 December 2003 and 2004, Local Government and Parliamentary Electors

	Local Government Electors[1]		Parliamentary Electors[2]	
	Total electors December:			
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Redbridge	177,473	181,192	175,550	178,905
Richmond upon Thames	121,132	120,146	117,025	115,632
Southwark	170,454	180,173	164,092	172,547
Sutton	131,872	131,315	130,101	129,270
Tower Hamlets	142,570	145,444	137,874	140,302
Waltham Forest	157,947	159,399	154,366	153,870
Wandsworth	208,271	211,816	199,565	200,573
Westminster	131,755	135,810	117,971	120,357

[1] Local government electors are those people who are entitled to vote in local elections and who meet the residence qualification. These include Peers and European Union citizens but exclude overseas voters.

[2] Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. These include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of registered electors are EU nationals who are not UK or Republic of Ireland nationals in each London borough according to the electoral registers now in force. [41607]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what proportion of registered electors are EU nationals, who are not UK and Republic of Ireland nationals, in each London borough, according to the electoral registers now in force. (41607)

The attached table provides figures for 1 December 2004 on the proportion of registered electors who are EU citizens but not British or Irish citizens in each London borough (and the City of London). These figures are the latest available data. Electoral counts for 1 December 2005 will be published on 23 February 2006 and will be available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=319i&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272

Total European/Local Government Electorate and Electorate Entitled to Vote through European Union Citizenship, December 2004

London borough	Electorate Qualifying through European Union Citizenship[1,2]	Total European/ Local Government Electorate	Percentage of European/ Local Electorate Qualifying through EU Citizenship
City of London	333	6,018	5.5
Barking and Dagenham	1,756	119,372	1.5
Barnet	8,004	214,421	3.7
Bexley	1,369	171,904	0.8
Brent	10,252	180,665	5.7
Bromley	3,458	228,983	1.5
Camden	11,378	144,326	7.9
Croydon	5,010	246,866	2.0
Ealing	11,685	215,814	5.4
Enfield	6,048	194,611	3.1
Greenwich	5,055	160,176	3.2
Hackney	6,904	129,274	5.3
Hammersmith and Fulham	10,460	118,168	9.0
Haringey	9,495	152,486	6.2
Harrow	3,739	162,049	2.3
Havering	947	175,668	0.5
Hillingdon	3,852	181,145	2.1
Hounslow	5,759	165,583	3.5
Islington	6,904	120,297	5.7
Kensington and Chelsea	14,608	98,629	14.8
Kingston upon Thames	3,340	99,014	3.4
Lambeth	13,016	203,055	6.4
Lewisham	5,650	177,731	3.2
Merton	6,184	135,678	4.6
Newham	7,651	171,815	4.5
Redbridge	2,319	181,192	1.3
Richmond upon Thames	4,614	120,146	3.8
Southwark	7,664	180,173	4.3
Sutton	2,069	131,315	1.6
Tower Hamlets	5,180	145,444	3.6
Waltham Forest	5,547	159,399	3.5
Wandsworth	11,378	211,816	5.4
Westminster	15,402	135,810	11.3

[1] These data are as reported by each London borough to ONS.

[2] Excludes British and Irish citizens, and also Maltese and Cypriot citizens who qualify as Commonwealth citizens.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Employment (Beverley and Holderness)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what proportion of all those in employment were employed by the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sectors in Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1996; [41367]

(2) what the *(a)* actual and *(b)* percentage annual changes in job levels for the (i) private and (ii) public sectors were in Beverley and Holderness in each of the last five calendar years. [41368]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about private and public sector employment. (41367 & 41368)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorization of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the proportions of public and private sector employment in the Beverley and Holderness constituency shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1997 to February 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Persons in employment resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency by private-public sector split[1]

12 months ending	*Proportions (Percentage)*		*Levels (Thousand)*		*Changes in private sector*		*Changes in public sector*	
	Private sector	*Public sector*	*Private sector*	*Public sector*	*Thousand*	*Percentage*[2]	*Thousand*	*Percentage*[2]
February 1997	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
February 1998	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
February 1999	72	28	24	9	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
February 2000	75	25	26	9	2	7	-1	-8
February 2001	73	27	26	10	0	0	1	12
February 2002	74	26	28	10	2	9	0	2
February 2003	73	27	30	11	2	7	1	14
February 2004	73	27	31	12	1	2	0	3

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey generally overestimate public sector employment.
[2] Percentage changes are based on exact levels for each year and then rounded. They will not correspond to percentage changes based on rounded levels
[3] Not available.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Environmental Projects

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much and what percentage of environmental taxes went to funding environmental projects in 2004–05. [41865]

John Healey: Environmental taxes are not directly hypothecated to environmental spending. Consistent with the principle of shifting the burden of tax from 'goods' to 'bads', environmental taxes such as the Climate Change Levy and Aggregates Levy were introduced with corresponding reductions in employers' national insurance contributions.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41209]

John Healey: The Treasury made payments totalling £99,561 in the calendar year 2005 to four consultants who are known to be former employees of the department. A central record is not maintained of consultants who are former employees, so this is not necessarily a comprehensive total.

Family Size

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families there are with *(a)* one child, *(b)* two children, *(c)* three children, *(d)* four children, *(e)* five children, *(f)* six to 10 children and *(g)* more than 10 children. [41392]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many UK families there are with (a) one child, (b) two children, (c) three children, (d) four children, (e) five children, (f) six to 10 children and (g) more than 10 children. (41392)

Estimates of the numbers of families in the United Kingdom in 2004 by the number of dependent children in the family are shown in the table below. These estimates are based on a sample survey and it is not possible using this source to provide figures for six to ten and more than ten children in a family due to the insufficiently large sample size of these categories.

Number of families by family size (counting dependent children[1] *only), 2004, United Kingdom*

Thousands

Number of dependent children[1]	*Number of families*
1	3,211
2	3,009
3	865
4	210
5	44
6 or more	17
Total	7,356

Source:
2004 Labour Force Survey (United Kingdom)
[1] Dependent children are those aged under 16 or aged 16 to 18 who are never-married and in full-time education.

Gross Domestic Product

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the UK gross domestic product was produced in *(a)* each English region, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [42407]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question on the percentage of UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) produced in the English regions, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland since 1997. (42407)

The attached table shows the proportion of Gross Value Added (GVA) for each region and country of the UK. The estimates are derived from the levels of regional GVA, which were published by the ONS in December 2005 and which are available on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Productasp?vlnk = 7359

Gross Value Added is equal to Gross Domestic Product at market prices adjusted for taxes less subsidies on products. The figures in the table exclude that part of UK economic activity which cannot be allocated to a region

Regional gross value added as a percentage of UK total

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
North East	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
North West	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7
East Midlands	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	7
West Midlands	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
East	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
London	18	18	19	19	19	19	19	18
South East	14	14	15	15	15	15	15	15
South West	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
England	85	85	86	86	86	86	86	86
Wales	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Scotland	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Illegal Fuel Smuggling

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Revenue and Customs staff in Northern Ireland have been involved during 2005 in operations aimed at disrupting the smuggling of illegal fuel into the UK. [42132]

John Healey: In 2004–05 159 members of staff in Northern Ireland were involved in operations aimed at disrupting the smuggling of illegal fuel into the UK. These officers were deployed across Customs and Excise including Intelligence, Criminal Investigation, Assurance and Detection activity.

Landfill

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue has been generated from *(a)* the landfill tax and *(b)* landfill sites within the London borough of Hillingdon in each year since 1997. [41039]

John Healey: Information on revenue from landfill tax can be found in the HM Revenue and Customs 'Landfill Tax Bulletin', which can be found on the HM Revenue and Customs website: http://www.uktradeinfo.co.uk/index.cfm?task=landfill.

A breakdown of landfill tax by borough is not available.

Leaked Letter

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what evidence the Prime Minister's Office has given to his Department's inquiry into the leaking of a letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Lord Turner in November 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41344]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 543W.

Lone Parents

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what proportion of lone parents were in employment *(a)* in total, *(b)* where the youngest child is under 11 years and *(c)* where the youngest child is between 11 and 18 years in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [41220]

(2) what assessment he has made of the employment rate of lone parent families in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [41293]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about lone parents in employment. (41293, 41220)

The attached table gives the levels and proportion of the number of lone parents who were in employment *(a)* in total, *(b)* where the youngest child is under 11 years and *(c)* between 11 and 18 years, also the lone parent employment rate, for the three months ending May 2005.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Number of lone parents[1] with dependent children in employment—United Kingdom—three months ending May 2005

	Number of lone parents (thousand)		
Total	*Total*	*In employment*	*Lone parent employment rate (percentage)[2,3]*
Total	1,881	1,043	55.8
of which:			
Age of youngest child under 11 years	1,192	571	48.2
Age of youngest child between11 and 18 years	689	472	69.0

[1] Refer to people who are not married or cohabiting and have dependent children, who are defined as 0 to 15 year olds, or 16 to 18 year olds in full-time education
[2] Includes lone parents aged under 16 who have been excluded from the employment rates.
[3] People in employment as a percentage of all persons.
Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey

Lung Cancer (Doncaster and Barnsley)

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* Doncaster and *(b)* Barnsley were diagnosed with lung cancer in each of the last 10 years. [42117]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many people in *(a)* Doncaster and *(b)* Barnsley were diagnosed with lung cancer in each of the last 10 years. (42117)

The most recent available information on registration of newly diagnosed cases (incidence) are for the year 2003. Numbers of newly diagnosed cases registered in the county districts of Doncaster and Barnsley, are given in the table below.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of lung[1] cancer registered in the county districts of Doncaster and Barnsley, 1994–2003

	Doncaster	Barnsley
1994	241	198
1995	268	190
1996	235	184
1997	232	196
1998	242	208
1999	237	172
2000	260	204
2001	237	181
2002	271	169
2003	258	182

[1] For 1994, International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) code 162; from 1995 to 2003, International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C33-C34.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

New Jobs (Wales)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in Wales in each year since 1997. [42389]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about jobs in Wales. (42389)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to net change in jobs in Wales from June 1997 to June 2005; the latest period for which information is available.

These estimates are from the Workforce Jobs series and, as with any sample survey, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Net change in Workforce Jobs in Wales: June 1997 to June 2004; not seasonally adjusted

	Number of Workforce Jobs	Thousand Net change
1997	1,196	—
1998	1,205	9
1999	1,219	14
2000	1,248	28
2001	1,243	-5
2002	1,265	21
2003	1,289	24
2004	1,279	-9
2005	1,283	3

Source:
Workforce Jobs series

Older Workers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of *(a)* men and *(b)* women, aged (i) 50 to 54, (ii) 55 to 59 and (iii) 60 to 64 years have been (A) in full-time work, (B) in part-time work, (C) in early retirement and (D) on out-of-work benefits in each of the last 20 years broken down by benefit. [40481]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the numbers and proportions of men and women in specific age categories who are in full and part-time employment or have taken early retirement, also those who are on out of work by benefits for the last twenty years. (40481)

I am placing the information requested in the House of Commons Library.

Table 1 shows the numbers and proportions of people who are in full and part-time work and those who have taken early retirement for the three month period ending in May each year from 1984 to 2005. These estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are, as with any sample survey, subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Table 2a shows people claiming out of work benefits for the period ending in May each year from 1995 to 2005. This information is from the Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS). Table 2b shows proportions where the number claiming benefits represents the estimated population in each age group.

Pensioners (Cause of Death)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners in whose deaths cold or malnutrition have been cited as the primary cause in each of the last 10 years, broken down by county and London borough. [41694]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the number of pensioners in whose deaths cold or malnutrition have been cited as the primary cause in each of the last 10 years, broken down by county and London borough. (41694)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004.

Most routine mortality statistics are based on a single cause for each death, the underlying cause of death which is defined by the World Health Organisation as:

(a) the disease which initiated the train of events directly leading to death; or

(b) the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury.

Using this definition "cold" can never be an underlying cause of death. However subnormal body temperature, hypothermia, may be mentioned on the death certificate. Tables of deaths with any mention of hypothermia by county and London borough were placed in the library of the House of Commons, (Official Report Number 91, column 547).

In response to this parliamentary question ONS also placed in the library of the House of Commons tables of deaths from malnutrition, where this was defined as deaths with any mention of malnutrition or deprivation of food.

Deprivation of food can never be the underlying cause of death using the WHO definition. Numbers of deaths where malnutrition was the underlying cause of death have been extracted for deaths registered in each year from 1995 to 2004. As retirement age differs for males and females, tables are provided separately for deaths of women aged 60 and over and men aged 65 and over.

Counties in England and Wales have been subject to administrative changes which affected the structure of many of these areas in the mid-1990s. Figures are therefore provided using current county boundaries which exclude unitary authority areas created from 1995 onwards.

These tables have been placed in the library of the House of Commons.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list those private Members' Bills introduced during the current session where policy responsibility rests with his Department; [41729]

(2) whether it is his policy to write to hon. Members presenting a private Member's Bill on a subject within his Department's responsibility to express his support, opposition or neutrality; and if he will make a statement. [41730]

John Healey: Treasury Ministers have lead responsibility within Government for two private Members' Bills which have been presented in the 2005–06 session: the Income Tax (Earnings Exemption for Persons Living in Poverty) Bill and the Registration Service Bill.

I and my ministerial colleagues are in direct contact with hon. Members sponsoring private Members' Bills concerning issues for which we have policy responsibility when it is appropriate to do so.

Public Bodies (Income from EU)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will implement the commitment in the 2005 pre-Budget report to reform the budgeting arrangements for income received by public bodies from the EU; and if he will make a statement on how such changes will be effected. [42273]

John Healey: The 2005 pre-Budget report (CM 6701) announced reforms to the budgeting arrangements for income received from the EU by public bodies (page 230, paragraph B76, bullet 2). The new arrangements will apply from the beginning of 2006–07, and will be effected by way of a classification change to departmental budgets. In common with all such changes, Departments' budgets will be restated to take account of the change.

Red Diesel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the timetable is for the negotiations with the EU on the derogation for red diesel use by pleasure craft; whether the case being made will be put in the public domain; and whether the public will be consulted. [41459]

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when his Department expects to conclude its assessment of the implications of not securing an extension to the UK's current derogation from the EU energy products directive which enables non-commercial boats to purchase red diesel; and if he will make a statement. [41948]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Members to what I said on the Floor of the House on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2804, and the written answer I gave the hon. Member to the hon. Member for Stroud on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2465W.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment will be drawn up in consultation with the main stakeholders such as the Royal Yachting Association and the British Marine Federation, and will be published at the time of the Chancellor's Budget.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many prosecutions by HM Revenue and Customs for the illegal use of red diesel took place in 2005. [42433]

John Healey: As set out in HMRC's Annual Report 2004/2005, there were 12 convictions for oils fraud. Prosecution is an important tool in tackling fraud and it is used where it is the most effective sanction in tacking fraudsters.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate HM Revenue and Customs has made of the amount of revenue lost in a year through the illegal use of red diesel in the UK. [42434]

John Healey: No estimate is available of the amount of revenue lost due to the illegal use of red diesel. However, an estimate of the total revenue lost due to all illicit activity relating to diesel and petrol is reported in 'Measuring Indirect Tax Losses-2005' which was published alongside the PBR and can be found in the House of Commons Library.

Registered Unemployed (Barnsley, East and Mexborough)

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the registered unemployed in Barnsley East and Mexborough were *(a)* under 25 years, *(b)* 26 to 35 years, *(c)* 36 to 45 years, *(d)* 46 to 55 years and *(e)* over 55 years according to the latest figures. [42114]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (42114)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles unemployment statistics for small areas from the Annual Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows the percentage of unemployed, by specified age groups, who were resident in the Barnsley East and Mexborough Parliamentary Constituency for the 12 month period ending in March 2005. These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 2 shows the percentage of JSA claimants, by age bands, resident in the Barnsley East and Mexborough constituency for November 2005.

Table 1: Percentage of unemployed by age bands resident in the Barnsley East and Mexborough constituency—12 months ending March 2005

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	58
26 to 35	[1]
36 to 45	26
46 to 55	[1]
Over 55	[1]
Total number of unemployed	1,200

[1] Estimate not available; sample size less than three could be disclosive.

Source:
Annual Population Survey

Table 2: Percentage of claimants of jobseeker's allowance by age bands resident in the Barnsley East and Mexborough constituency—November 2005

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	41.7
26 to 35	22.0
36 to 45	16.1
46 to 55	14.4
Over 55	5.8
Total number of JSA claimants	1,250

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

Registrar Offices

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the vacancy rates are in registrar offices in Greater London. [41120]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Registrar General, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the vacancy rates in register offices in Greater London. (41120)

As at 11/1/06 there are 18 principal statutory registration officer posts[1] vacant out of 244 posts in the 33 register offices in Greater London (7.4 per cent.). No information is available on the number of vacancies that might exist in support staff posts (including deputy registration officers, clerical officers, receptionists, security staff, ushers).

[1] Principal statutory registration officers are Superintendent Registrars, Registrars of Births and Deaths and Additional Registrars for marriage.

Sustainable Development Action Plan

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements he has made for the launch of the Treasury Sustainable Development Action Plan; and whether he intends to make an oral statement to the House on the contents of the plan. [41182]

John Healey: The Treasury intend to publish a sustainable development action plan shortly. We plan to publish this on the HM Treasury website.

Taxation

Mr. Paice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in what circumstances a taxpayer would be liable to a surcharge for non-payment of a January instalment if the completed forms were received by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) before 30 December but no calculation had been issued by HMRC. [41507]

Dawn Primarolo: A surcharge of 5 per cent. is added to tax payable but still unpaid 28 days after the due date for payment (31 January). A further surcharge of 5 per cent. is added to tax payable but still unpaid six months after the due date. 30 September is the filing deadline for paper self assessment tax returns if the taxpayer wants HMRC to calculate their tax and tell them how much to pay by 31 January of the following year. After 30 September HMRC will still calculate the tax but do not guarantee to do it in time for a calculation to go out to the taxpayer for the payment date of 31 January.

Where self assessment tax returns are filed online the tax is calculated automatically thereby informing the taxpayer how much to pay by 31 January.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the share of gross income paid in tax by *(a)* each income decile and *(b)* each major household type in each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06, broken down by each major tax; and if he will make a statement. [41398]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the lastest estimate of the share of gross income paid in tax by *(a)* each income decile and *(b)* each major household type, in each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06, broken down by each major tax. (41398)

Estimates of the share of gross household income which is paid in tax are based on the Office for National Statistics analyses *'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income'* which is published annually. The latest analysis for 2003–04 was published on the National Statistics website on 7th July 2005 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits. These analyses include measures of income inequality for households in the United Kingdom based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey (the Family Expenditure Survey before 2001–02). This is a sample survey covering approximately 6,000 to 7,000 households in the UK. Estimates are currently available only up to 2003–04. The analysis for 2004–05 is due to be published on the National Statistics website in April 2006.

The samples on which the estimates are based are only sufficient to allow a breakdown to be given by quintile for the ratio of taxes to gross income, and not by decile. In addition it should be remembered that the annual analyses from which the figures are drawn are not designed primarily for direct comparison over time, and there have been some changes in methodology and definitions.

I am placing in the House of Commons Library, tables showing taxes as a proportion of gross income for each income quintile where households an non-retired households in the UK. The disposable income quintile point boundaries have been calculated separately for the retired and non retired households. For example, the 1st quintile point for the retired households is the income below which one fifth of all retired households are estimated to lie and similarly for all households and non-retired households.

A retired household in the analyses is defined as one where the combined income of 'retired' members amounts to at least half the total gross income of the household. A 'retired' person is defined as some one over minimum NI pension age who is 'unoccupied' or 'sick or injured but not intending to seek work,' or who describes themselves as 'retired.'

Estimates of indirect taxes are imputed based on household expenditure. When comparing the incidence of indirect taxes on households at different levels of income, it should be remembered that measured expenditure will not necessarily balance with measured income for the year. On average measured expenditure exceeds measured income for households in the lower half of the distribution. There are a number of possible explanations for this. Some households with low incomes may draw on their savings or borrow in order to finance their expenditure. In addition, the lower decile in particular includes some groups, who have, or report, very little income (for example, self-employed people starting a business or someone who has just been made redundant). In these cases, expenditure is not being met from current income. Some types of receipts are not included as income in the EFS e.g. inheritance and severance payments. In some cases, the information given on expenditure is not consistent with that on income received because of timing differences.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings of full-time employees in the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood were in April in each year since 2000. [41043]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of full time employees in the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood are in April of each year since 2000 (41043)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach a table showing the Average Gross Weekly Earnings for full time employees by parliamentary constituency by place of work from 2000 to 2005. These statistics are also available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work

Ruislip-Northwood	*Average gross weekly earnings (£)*	
	Median	*Mean*
2000	[2]439	[2]477
2001	[3]391	[3]509
2002	[3]394	[2]484
2003	[3]446	[2]575
2004	[3]440	[2]539
2004[4]	[3]434	[2]534
2005	[3]446	[2]552

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] CV > 5% and < = 10%
[3] CV > 10% and < = 20%
[4] 2004 including supplementary surveys designed to improve the coverage of ASHE.
Notes:
Guide to quality:
1. The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.
2. The true value is likely to lie within + /- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5%, we would expect the population average to be within the range 190 to 210.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue was raised from personal taxation in the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the last financial year for which figures are available. [41044]

John Healey: Estimates of total income tax revenue at constituency level are unavailable. Published information on the number of taxpayers and their mean and median total income by constituency, can be found in table 3.15 "Total Income by Parliamentary Constituency" on the HM Revenue and Customs internet website http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/3_15_nov05.xls.

Unemployed People (Gateshead, East and Washington, West)

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the registered unemployed in Gateshead, East and Washington, West were *(a)* 25 years and under, *(b)* 26 to 35 years, *(c)* 36 to 45 years, *(d)* 46 to 55 years and *(e)* over 55 years of age in the most recent period for which figures are available. [41624]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Gateshead East and Washington West. (41624)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles unemployment statistics for small areas from the Annual Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1, attached, shows the percentage of unemployed, by specified age groups, who were resident in the Gateshead East and Washington West Parliamentary Constituency for the 12 month period ending in March 2005. These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 2, attached, and shows the percentage of JSA claimants, by age bands, resident in the Gateshead East and Washington West constituency for November 2005.

Table 1: Percentage of unemployed by age bands resident in the Gateshead East and Washington West constituency 12 months ending March 2005

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	24.4
26 to 35	27.1
36 to 45	18.8
46 to 55	16.6
Over 55	13.1
Total unemployed	2,500

Source:
Annual Population Survey

Table 2: Percentage of claimants of jobseekers' allowance by age bands resident in the Gateshead East and Washington West constituency November 2005

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	38.4
26 to 35	21.1
36 to 45	18.4
46 to 55	15.5
Over 55	6.7
Total JSA claimants	1,360

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Untaxed Wine and Beer

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate HM Revenue and Customs has made of lost revenue through the sale of untaxed wine and beer in the UK in 2005. [42432]

John Healey: No sound HM Revenue and Customs estimate is available on the loss of revenue through the sale of untaxed wine and beer in the UK in 2005.

Unclaimed Assets

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1839W, on unclaimed assets, how he intends to reinvest the sums to be raised by the Commission on Unclaimed Assets in communities within Scotland. [38437]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1839W. As announced in the pre-Budget report, the Commission on Unclaimed Assets is one of the stakeholders the Government will consult with in how best to reinvest money from unclaimed assets.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 17 January 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Public Appointments

23. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many current public appointments are fixed term and non-renewable. [42337]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The information is not held centrally. Individual Departments are responsible for setting the terms and conditions for their own appointments. Ministerial appointments to public bodies within the Commissioner for Public Appointments' remit are subject to maximum period of appointment of 10 years to the same board. This is set out in the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

Civil Service

24. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps the Government have taken to increase diversity in the civil service; and what progress has been made. [42338]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The civil service has made good progress towards increasing diversity, including at senior levels. But there is still more work to do: the Cabinet Office launched a new Diversity 10 Point Plan. Its aim is to build on progress so far to deliver a civil service truly representative of society.

Government Policy

25. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what role his Department has in improving the strategic coherence of Government policy. [42339]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office co-ordinates policy and operations across Government through the secretariats and the Government Communication Unit.

Under its objectives the Cabinet Office seeks to improve delivery by building capacity in Departments and the public services through the Delivery and Reform Group.

Special Advisers

26. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the number and role of special advisers in central Government Departments. [42340]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158–62WS.

Regulations

27. **Mr. Prisk:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement about the progress his Department is making on reforming regulations. [42341]

Mr. Jim Murphy: We are on track to deliver the radical programme of regulatory reform set out in the March 2005 Budget.

The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill was introduced on 11 January. The Bill will make it quicker and easier to reform out-dated, unnecessary or over-complicated legislation and help bring about a risk-based approach to regulation. Both the administrative burdens measurement project and the simplification programmes are on track, as is the rationalisation of a number of regulators in the public and private sectors.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Subsidies

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will consult hon. Members on agricultural subsidies before attending World Trade Organisation talks in Hong Kong. [35176]

Jim Knight: The European Commission has competency for trade negotiations and negotiates within a mandate given to them by the EU member states. The Commission therefore negotiated on behalf of the EU at the World Trade Organisation talks in Hong Kong.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry reported to hon. Members on the whole of the Doha Development Agenda (of which agricultural subsidies is one part) straight after the WTO ministerial conference.

The Government's overall, long-term approach to agricultural subsidies was published in December 2005 and copies have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The aim of this vision paper is to stimulate a full debate with stakeholders within the UK and across Europe on the future of the CAP.

Catering/Entertainment Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by her Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the United Kingdom, including London. [37469]

Jim Knight: From information held centrally, the total value of expenditure by core-Defra on catering contracts in financial year 2004–05 was £281,413; on hospitality was £370,544; and on conference facilities was £1,105,762. The expenditure figures for catering contracts, hospitality and conference facilities for the first six months of financial year 2005–06 are £494,864, £208,394 and £354,162 respectively.

The Department would incur disproportionate costs in breaking down the figures above to each nation and region of the United Kingdom, and London, requested by the

hon. Member. The Department does not hold centrally the requested expenditure information pertaining to its executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies, independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by the Department.

Chimpanzee Shooting (Malton)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the circumstances were surrounding the shooting of a chimpanzee near Malton in December 2005; upon whose authority the animal was shot; by whom; for what reason; and if she will make a statement. [42365]

Jim Knight: My Department has no direct role in decisions regarding the shooting of escaped zoo animals. Zoos are regulated by means of a licensing and inspection regime administered by local authorities. Ryedale district council is responsible for licensing Flamingo Land Zoo where this incident took place. They have notified my Department that they are looking into this issue and considering whether to undertake a special inspection of the zoo.

Climate Change

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on the outcome of the Montreal climate change talks. [40620]

Mr. Morley: There have been no representations to the Secretary of State on the outcomes of the Montreal climate talks. The outcomes of the conference were highly significant; Kyoto parties agreed to launch a process for agreeing new greenhouse gas targets beyond 2012; all parties agreed to review the framework convention with a view to ensuring a truly global effort to tackle climate change; the protocol was strengthened by the adoption of the Marrakech Accords, compliance mechanism and greater support for the Kyoto mechanisms; and progress was made on support for developing countries.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39074]

Jim Knight: The Department came into being in July 2001 and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost as Defra does not hold information centrally identifying expenditure on external consultants and advisers by the Department, and each of its non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies, independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by the Department in each year since 1997.

I refer the hon. Member to the answers given on 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 36–37W, and on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1962–63W to my hon. Friend the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell).

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual expenditure on training and development by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39968]

Jim Knight: The Department's central Learning and Development team arranges and centrally funds non-specialist corporate learning and development opportunities (including Management and Leadership courses, Departmental and personal development programmes and Communication skills,) for staff in the core Department and two of its executive Agencies—Pesticides Safety Directorate and Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

Each business area within the Department also holds its own devolved learning and development budget which it uses to fund locally arranged, mostly specialist training, for its staff. Similarly, each non-departmental public body and executive Agency for which the Department is responsible, holds an annual learning and development budget which it uses to fund both specialist and non-specialist training for its staff.

The Department does not currently hold central information on the annual expenditure on locally funded learning and development within the different business areas of the Department. Neither does it hold information on the annual expenditure on learning and development in the non-departmental public bodies or executive Agencies.

The figures in the following table refer only to the annual expenditure on centrally funded corporate courses, departmental and personal development schemes, for staff in the core Department, PSD and VMD, arranged by the Department's central Learning and Development team.

	Annual expenditure (£)
2002–03	1,458,674
2003–04	2,525,656
2004–05	3,578,222
2005–06 planned	2,813,000

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of jobs in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which her Department is responsible are located in (A) England, excluding Greater London, (B) Greater London and (C) overseas. [39866]

Jim Knight: The figures requested for the department and its executive agencies are published in Civil Service Statistics. Table D covers permanent staff numbers on a full-time equivalent basis. Civil Service Statistics are available in the Library and at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

Regional information on non departmental public bodies is not collected centrally could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EC-Canada Joint Committee have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [38781]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

The EC-Uruguay Joint Committee met on 10 November 2005. The UK was represented by officials from the British embassy in Montevideo. The EC-Canada Joint Co-operation Committee met on 25 October 2005. The presidency was represented by officials from London and the British high commission in Ottawa. There was no EC-Japan Joint Committee.

The Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government) a copy of which is available at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf. Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

Farm Incomes

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farming households in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northamptonshire and *(c)* Kettering constituency have household incomes below the Department's low income threshold. [38894]

Jim Knight: Defra does not have its own low-income threshold. A measure of low-income is specified by the Department for Work and Pensions who define the threshold as 60 per cent, of median household income. The latest data we were able to obtain for this threshold are taken from the 2005 Social Trends publications produced by the Office for National Statistics. This indicated that in 2002–03, the low income threshold was around £10,000 (£194 per week).

For the year ending February 2005, Farm Business Survey results showed that 16 per cent. of farming households[1] in England had a household income below £10,000 and 12 per cent. in the Government office region of East Midlands. Data for Northamptonshire and Kettering are not available due to insufficient farms in the survey.

In 2002–03, the proportion of all households in the UK below the threshold was 17 per cent. and this helps to put the figures for farming households into context with the wider population. No equivalent data are available for the East Midlands, Northamptonshire or Kettering.

[1] Sample based on farms greater than 0.5 Standard Labour Requirement

Peatbogs

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken to protect the additional peatbogs designated as special areas of conservation in 2002, with particular reference to halting the commercial extraction of peat. [42651]

Jim Knight: The peatbogs at Thorne Moor, Hatfield Moor and Wedholme Flow, which have been accepted as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), now have the highest levels of protection against disturbance or damage under the Habitats Regulations (1994). Where necessary, these Regulations also allow for a review of extraction licences in SACs.

Consultations on the remaining two sites, at Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss, are continuing because there are still some conflicting scientific views about their eligibility. They cannot be submitted to the European Commission or formally designated as SACs until this is resolved. If the conclusion is that they are eligible, we will take immediate steps to progress their formal designation.

Public Bodies/Agencies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff were employed by non-departmental public bodies and agencies for which she has responsibility in *(a)* total and *(b)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(c)* London in 2004–05. [35955]

Jim Knight: Total executive NDPB staff numbers by department as at 31 March 2005 are recorded in Table 2 of Public Bodies 2005, a copy of which is in the Library of the House, and which is available online at: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/the-future-of-the-civil-service/agencies-and-public-bodies/publications/pdf/public-bodies/publicbodies2005.pdf.

The NDPB data do not detail the regional breakdowns requested, and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The number of staff in individual executive agencies as at 1 April 2004, including a regional analysis, is available in Civil Service Statistics 2004 which was published in February 2005, a copy of which is in House Libraries. It is also available online at: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2004_report/number_of_civil_servants/index.asp.

Snares

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will take steps to introduce a statutory code of practice on the use of snares; [42002]

(2) if she will seek to introduce a legal requirement to have a stop on snares; [42003]

(3) if she will commission further research into the use of animal snares, with particular reference to *(a)* the welfare impacts and *(b)* alternative methods of control. [42004]

Jim Knight: On 19 October 2005 Defra published the report of the independent snares working group, the Defra Snares Action Plan and the Defra Code of Good Practice on the use of Snares in Fox and Rabbit Control in England. These documents can be found on the Defra website: http://www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/snares/index.htm.

The action plan sets out our response to the recommendations of the snares working group and the action we will take over the next three years. This includes reviewing the Code of Practice and considering if it should be legally binding.

TRANSPORT

Road Congestion

9. **Siobhain McDonagh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for reducing congestion on the road network. [42351]

Dr. Ladyman: We are tackling congestion with targeted strategies developed with national and local agencies—investing more in the road network, including new capacity where it is justified, trialling innovative new traffic management systems, and exploring the benefits of new ways to manage demand for road space—including road pricing.

Bus Regulation

10. **Graham Stringer:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to change the regulatory regime applying to buses. [42352]

Ms Buck: We have no plans to return to the regulatory regime of the 1980s. Current options available to local authorities include voluntary or statutory quality partnerships. There are a number of examples of good partnership working across the country, and quality contracts are available if other measures do not work. If local authorities are prepared to propose a comprehensive system for managing traffic demand, such as road pricing, we are prepared to consider introducing further measures to control bus services.

Crime (Public Transport)

12. **Ms Keeble:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to combat crime on public transport. [42354]

Derek Twigg: The Department continues to support the work of the police, local authorities and transport operators to tackle crime on public transport. We are developing, evaluating and disseminating good practice on reducing crime and the fear of crime wherever it occurs in the transport system. We have also introduced the Secure Stations Scheme and launched the Safer Travel on Buses and Coaches Panel. As Sponsor Department for the British Transport police we have encouraged and assisted the force, through implementation of legislation and increased funding, to fulfil its responsibilities for policing the railways.

Urban Traffic

13. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the typical proportion of urban traffic between 8.00 am and 9.30 am during term time which is related to journeys to and from school. [42355]

Ms Buck: Data from the National Travel Survey suggest that in 2004 on weekdays in term time around 15 per cent. of car trips in progress between 8 am and 9.30 am were for the purpose of taking children to school.

Railways

14. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of passengers who will be using the UK's railways by 2014.

Derek Twigg: The Department's estimates for rail use in future years are for passenger kilometres rather than numbers of passengers. Our latest published projections show rail passenger kilometres increasing by 33 per cent. between 2000 and 2010 and by 1.3 per cent. a year from 2010 to 2025.

19. **Matthew Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans there are for replacing the high speed train fleet serving the Greater Western franchise. [42361]

Derek Twigg: The Department is leading a project to procure a high-quality, modern replacement for the very successful existing high speed train fleet. We anticipate the first replacement trains entering into service during the lifetime of the new Greater Western franchise.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what total costs have been incurred by *(a)* the Government and Government agencies and *(b)* the Strategic Rail Authority in the franchising and tendering of passenger rail services since 1997. [33408]

Derek Twigg: The letting of franchises since 1997 has been undertaken by a number of successive agencies, namely the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising, the Shadow Strategic Rail Authority, the Strategic Rail Authority and since July 2005, the Department for Transport. Franchise tendering costs were part of the general business costs of such agencies and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information is more readily available from April 2004 and costs incurred are £16.9 million. This represents 0.06 per cent. of the value of the five franchises let.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the rate of growth of use in *(a)* the regional rail network, *(b)* rail networks serving the passenger transport executive areas, *(c)* the London and South East heavy rail network and *(d)* Intercity rail services was over the last (i) 12 months, (ii) three years and (iii) five years. [38695]

Derek Twigg: With regard to Intercity rail services, in 2004–05, 85 million journeys were undertaken on long distance train services compared with 70 million journeys in 2000–01. Further information is held by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). I have asked the ORR to reply to the hon. Member directly.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new passenger vehicles have been introduced on the *(a)* London and south east heavy rail network, *(b)* local regional rail network and *(c)* Northern Trains franchise area in each of the last 10 years; and how many are expected to be introduced in each area in each of the next three years. [38721]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is not held centrally for years before 1996. Details for subsequent years are set out in the following table. New trains for the integrated Kent franchise are not due to be introduced until 2009 and are therefore not shown in the table.

Information relating to Northern Trains (and the former Arriva Trains Northern and First North Western franchises) is included in column entitled regional network, as well as separately in the final column.

	L&SE Network[1]	*Regional Network*[2]	*Northern Trains area*[3]
1996	0	0	0
1997	0	0	0
1998	20	0	0
1999	60	59	0
2000	71	149	28
2001	268	191	90
2002	261	62	8
2003	375	11	8
2004	974	66	0
2005	631	21	0
2006	6	0	0
2007	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0

[1] L&SE comprises the routes served by the following operators South Eastern Trains, South West Trains, Southern, Thameslink, Great Northern, C2C, Silverlink, Chiltern, First Great Western Link and London Eastern Railway (One).
[2] Regional comprises the routes served by Wales and Borders, Wessex, Central Trains, Gatwick Express, Island Line, Merseyrail, Northern Trains and Scotrail.
[3] Formerly Arriva Trains Northern and First North Western.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 895W, on railways, how much his Department *(a)* was legally entitled to recover and *(b)* recovered from the Connex South Eastern franchise in 2003 when it discharged its duty under section 30 of the Railways Act 1993. [39380]

Derek Twigg: A performance bond had been put in place to cover losses, liabilities, costs or expenses that the SRA, DfT or successor operator had suffered or was likely to incur as a result of the termination of the franchise agreement. The bond had a value of £19.5 million.

The NAO report into the South Eastern Passenger Rail Franchise published 2 December 2005 provides details of the amount recovered from Connex South Eastern of £2.6 million. It also states that additional recoverable costs of £3.8 million were incurred by the SRA but that it was decided not to recover these costs from Connex South Eastern.

In order for Connex to exit from the franchise earlier than the contract required them to, a negotiated solution had to be put in place that was outside the strict terms of the contract. The concession for Connex exiting the franchise (which the SRA considered of overriding importance) was relaxation of the amount that could have been claimed had the franchise run its full term and the claim made in accordance with the strict terms of the performance bond.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the borrowings of Network Rail represent a contingent liability of his Department; what the level of this contingent liability is; and whether he acts as guarantor of these borrowings. [40862]

Derek Twigg: The credit support arrangements for Network Rail's borrowing provided by the Secretary of State are shown as contingent liabilities in the Department for Transport's resource accounts. Minutes describing the contingent liabilities were laid before Parliament when the various arrangements were first entered into, in June 2002, February 2004 and September 2004. As of 30 September 2005, £16.8 billion of Network Rail's borrowing is supported by these arrangements.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, on train operating companies, what assessment he has made of the value for money of each re-letting of a franchise to a train operating company since 1997. [39375]

Derek Twigg: Each franchise re-letting undertaken since 1997 has, prior to award, been subject to a value for money analysis conducted by DfT economists and approval by HM Treasury in respect of affordability constraints.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost has been of *(a)* West Coast Main Line and *(b)* East Coast Main Line modernisation since 2000; what the cost overruns were against original estimates; and what the expected increase in capacity is for each line. [40854]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail are responsible for the maintenance and infrastructure of the rail network and I have asked them to write to the hon. Member directly. For the West Coast Main Line there is a targeted 80 per cent. Increase in passenger service capacity. No equivalent figure is available for the East Coast Main Line.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of trains ran to timetable in the last period for which figures are available; and what the equivalent figure was in 2000. [40861]

Derek Twigg: Train punctuality is reported using the Rail Industry's 'Public Performance Measure' which records the percentage of trains arriving within 5 minutes (10 minutes for long distance trains) of their timetabled arrival time.

In the year to December 2005, 85.6 per cent. of trains achieved this standard. The corresponding figure in December 2000 was 83.1 per cent.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of sections *(a)* 1 and *(b)* 2 of the Railways Act 2005. [41007]

Derek Twigg: Section 1 of the Railways Act 2005 provides for the abolition of the Strategic Rail Authority and for the reallocation of its functions, where they are not discontinued. Subsections (1)-(9) were brought into force in June and July 2005, and most of the SRA's functions and the related property, rights and liabilities have now been transferred. Section 1(10), which enables the Secretary of State to make an order abolishing the SRA, will be brought into force in due course.

Section 2 transfers safety functions from the Health and Safety Commission and the Health and Safety executive to the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). We have consulted on draft regulations on where ORR will enforce the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. We expect to make the regulations and to transfer safety responsibilities to ORR shortly.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects each section of the Railways Act 2005 to come into force; and if he will make a statement. [41008]

Derek Twigg: Many of the provisions of the Railways Act 2005 have already been brought into force by the Railways Act 2005 (Commencement Nos 1–4) Orders 2005. The remaining provisions will be brought into effect in due course.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what arrangements he has made to manage the transition of South East Trains to Govia; and if he will make a statement. [42238]

Derek Twigg: Work to ensure a smooth transition of South Eastern trains to the new IKF Franchisee commenced on 1 December. A plan to manage the transition has been agreed and officials from the Department regularly meet representatives of Govia and South Eastern trains to ensure that all regulatory and contractual requirements will be met to enable the new franchise to commence on 1 April 2006.

Speed Cameras

15. **Mr. Leigh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the use of speed cameras on roads. [42357]

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of speed cameras on roads. [42347]

Dr. Ladyman: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State made a written statement on 15 December last year, announcing the publication of the independent four year evaluation report on the national safety camera programme, and also announcing changes to the future funding and administration of safety cameras. The independent report confirms that safety cameras continue to be highly effective in reducing speeding, accidents and casualties at camera sites.

Ports

16. **Mr. Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the development of road and rail infrastructure to ports in England and Wales. [42358]

Dr. Ladyman: The current ports policy framework, "Modern Ports", acknowledges that the Government have an important role, alongside ports themselves, in ensuring that the best use is made of existing infrastructure, and that opportunities are sought to improve port access. We will be looking closely at this issue in the forthcoming review of ports policy.

Night Flights

17. **Mr. Pelling:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on the number of night flights over London. [42359]

Ms Buck: Noise from aircraft operations at night is widely regarded as the least acceptable aspect of aircraft operations. We believe in bearing down on night noise, striking a fair balance between local disturbance, the limits of social acceptability and the economic benefit of night flights. This should be done on a case by case basis.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether he has notified the European Commission of the night flying restrictions that will apply at Heathrow when the present restrictions expire; [42242]

(2) when he expects to announce the night flying restrictions that will apply at Heathrow when the present restrictions expire. [42243]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Government will announce their conclusions on future night flying restrictions to apply at Heathrow airport in due course.

Directive 2002/30/EC established rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at certain EU airports. The Government must follow these rules and procedures in making decisions about night flying restrictions at Heathrow. The Directive does not impose any requirement for prior notification of new operating restrictions to the Commission. We have not submitted any information on future night flying restrictions at Heathrow to the Commission.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he expects to announce the night flying restrictions that will apply at Heathrow on the expiry of the present restrictions; [43037]

(2) whether he has informed the European Commission of the night flying restrictions that will apply at Heathrow on the expiry of the present restrictions. [43040]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given him today (UIN 42242, 42243).

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to question 40915, on night flight restrictions, when he will announce his decisions in relation to the stage two consultation paper of the night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports. [43041]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given today to the hon. Member for Windsor (Adam Afriyie) (UIN 42243).

Regional Air Services

18. **Danny Alexander:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the protection of regional air services from London Gatwick and Heathrow airports. [42360]

Ms Buck: Government have recently published guidance on the protection of regional air access to London's five main airports, including Gatwick and Heathrow. The guidance clarifies how we will interpret the criteria for imposing public service obligations (PSOs) set out in the European Regulations. It seeks to guarantee a minimum of two daily return services on existing routes from London to regional airports, but recognises that in some cases more provision may be required.

It is for regional bodies to apply for and make the economic case for a PSO. Regional bodies will also be responsible for providing any subsidy required.

Cliff Mitchie

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member dated 7 October 2005 in relation to Cliff Mitchie. [42846]

Dr. Ladyman: I have replied to the hon. Member's letter today.

Concessionary Rail Travel

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to extend concessionary travel to the regional rail network. [42353]

Ms Buck: None. Free off-peak local bus travel in England for people 60 and over and disabled people will come into effect on 1 April 2006. Local authorities and the Passenger Transport Executives will have the discretion, as they do at present, to offer concessions on local rail services based on their judgment of local needs and their overall financial priorities.

Heathrow Airport

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the maximum number is of *(a)* arriving and *(b)* departing aircraft that Heathrow could handle between 6 am and 7 pm (i) at present and (ii) when Terminal 5 opens; [42240]

(2) how many aircraft movements took place at Heathrow between 6 am and 7 am in the *(a)* winter and *(b)* summer seasons in (i) 1993–94 and (ii) 2004–05. [42241]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Government do not routinely monitor aircraft movements between 0600 and 0700 hours at Heathrow airport. The declared scheduling capacity at Heathrow—the maximum number of movements that can be scheduled per hour and still permit the schedule to remain below an average delay of 10 minutes—is currently 61 (35 arrivals, 26 departures). Actual numbers of arrivals and departures will vary depending on operating conditions and the weather. The scheduling capacity for future years is not determined in advance.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the maximum capacity is of *(a)* arriving and *(b)* departing aircraft at Heathrow between 6.00 am and 7.00 am; and what the capacity is expected to be when Terminal 5 opens; [43038]

(2) port how many aircraft movements took place at Heathrow between 6.00 am and 7.00 am in the *(a)* winter and *(b)* summer in (i) 1993–94 and (ii) 2004–05. [43039]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given him today (UIN 42240,42241).

Heavy Goods Vehicles

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his policy on the movement of heavy goods vehicles in rural areas. [42847]

Dr. Ladyman: Heavy goods vehicles provide essential services in rural areas but can cause problems on unsuitable roads. Local authorities have powers to regulate what sorts of vehicles use local roads, balancing the needs of local people, HGV operators, those who depend on their services and other road users.

Ministerial Meetings

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to meet members of the public following the award of the Integrated Kent Franchise; and what discussions he has held with GoVia Ltd. [40619]

Derek Twigg: My right hon. Friend has no meetings planned with either members of the public or GoVia to discuss the award of the Integrated Kent Franchise nor has any such meetings been requested.

Motorway Repairs (M1)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons the barrier repairs being carried on the central reservation of the M1 motorway near junction 16 on 15 November 2005 were not carried out after midnight to avoid causing congestion. [42362]

Dr. Ladyman: At approximately 09.00 hrs on 15 November 2005 a vehicle travelling north on the M1 between Junctions 16 and 17 lost control and collided with the central reserve safety fencing. About 50 metres of safety fencing were left ineffective and needed repair.

The Northamptonshire police had primacy at this incident. The police directed the Highways Agency's maintenance contractor to close off lane 3 of the northbound M1 carriageway and the police's own contractors then recovered the vehicle. This work was

completed at 13.50 hrs. The police took the advice of the Highways Agency's maintenance contractor and decided that barrier repairs should be carried out at this time, rather than be left until later, for the safety of the travelling public. The barrier repairs were completed and the northbound lane 3 reopened by 15.10 hrs. Full running capacity on the motorway was restored in time for the afternoon/evening peak.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Star Chamber Court

Anne Main: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what discussions the House authorities had with *(a)* Westminster city council and *(b)* English Heritage on the recently installed covered walkway in Star Chamber Court; and what aspects of the final design are the results of those discussions. [41926]

Nick Harvey: English Heritage and Westminster council officers were consulted at all stages of the design process of the new covered walkway in Star Chamber Court, in full accordance with the DOE Circular 18/84 on listed building clearance procedure. The final design was a product of these consultations. English Heritage and Westminster council officials attended detailed briefing meetings on a regular basis at which the developing design was assessed and amendments proposed. The final design is a synthesis of this and it is not possible to attribute specific features to any particular source.

DEFENCE

Arms Regulations

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the status of the UK's International Traffic in Arms Regulations waiver from the United States. [41653]

Mr. Ingram: Legislative provision for an International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) exemption for the United Kingdom was refused by Congress in 2003 and 2004, who called instead for expedited export licensing.

We are continuing to work with the US Administration to identify how best to improve arrangements for the transfer of military technology controlled by the ITAR. Such improvements need not be restricted to a single mechanism. The UK has already benefited from faster processing of US export licences for transfers to this country.

Civil Contingencies Reaction Force

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the *(a)* established and *(b)* actual strength is of the Civil Contingencies Reaction Force (CCRF); how many members of the CCRF are deployed with the regular forces; what recruiting schemes are in place for the CCRF; and what plans there are for the future size of the force; [42959]

(2) under what rules of engagement the Civil Contingencies Reaction Force will operate when it is deployed; [42960]

(3) which Civil Contingencies Reaction Force (CCRF) units are available to assist in the event of a terrorist attack in London; and at what notice to move CCRF units are required to be; [42961]

(4) under what criteria the Civil Contingencies Reaction Force will be *(a)* called out and *(b)* stood-to; [42962]

(5) at what point after the London underground attacks of 7 July 2005 the Civil Contingencies Reaction Force (CCRF) was called out; and how many members of the CCRF were deployed in response to the *(a)* 7 July 2005 and *(b)* 21 July 2005 incidents. [42963]

Mr. Ingram: Civil Contingency Reaction Forces (CCRFs) are based on the 14 TA Infantry battalions spread across the country. Each CCRF comprises a pool of around 500 personnel drawn from the Volunteer Reserve Forces, who have volunteered for the CCRF commitment in addition to their normal role. CCRF membership is dynamic and details of individual availability, including where volunteers have been deployed as part of their normal Reserve role, are not held centrally. It is, however, the case that when a CCRF member is mobilised to meet other commitments we aim to replace that individual immediately by another volunteer.

There are no specific recruitment schemes in place, nor are such schemes necessary given that the pool of potential volunteers consists of existing members of the Volunteer Reserves. The future size of the CCRFs is being considered as part of a wider review of the TA.

CCRFs would not be deployed in a situation which required the use of force so no question of rules of engagement would arise. Volunteers are not held at permanent readiness, although we aim to be able to deploy a CCRF within 24 hours. There are no specific criteria which would lead to a decision to mobilise a CCRF; they form part of the pool of resources upon which we could draw in the event of a request for military assistance.

While the supporting infrastructure is based on the army's regional structure, it is not the case that a CCRF would only be mobilised to undertake operations within its "home" region. Consequently, all CCRFs are available to undertake operations anywhere in the UK over an extended period, including in London.

No CCRF members were mobilised in response to the terrorist attacks in London on 7 and 21 July 2005. The civil authorities coped extremely well in the aftermath of the attacks and made no request for military assistance which would have required the sort of large scale general duties support which could be provided by a CCRF.

Credit Card Companies

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect on armed forces' personnel of the policies of major credit card companies' failure to recognise the British Forces Post Office as a valid address. [37561]

Mr. Ingram: There is no failure by major credit card companies to recognise British Forces Post Office (BFPO) addresses as a valid address. Service personnel and their families can use a BFPO address as the registered (home) address for their credit cards where appropriate and many do. Some companies—for their own reasons—will not take orders from, or deliver to, BFPO addresses but the majority are happy to do so. Where this commercial decision is driven by practical factors such as "card not present" identity verification or credit checking requirements, the MOD is supporting the Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) in resolving any difficulties.

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to ensure that all UK credit card companies recognise British Forces Post Office addresses as valid addresses for the purpose of making credit card transactions. [37562]

Mr. Ingram: UK credit card companies already recognise British Forces Post Office (BFPO) addresses as valid addresses for the purposes of making credit card transactions. Also, most companies providing goods and services via the internet and telephone—where "card not present" fraud control measures are necessary—do accept BFPO addresses. Ultimately it is a commercial decision for any company to determine how and where they will provide services. Even so, for the minority that choose not to deal with BFPO addresses, their issues are being explored further by the Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) with the assistance of the MOD.

Departmental IT Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the outturn time for implementation against planned time was. [41318]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Export Services Organisation (Iraq)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Defence Export Services Organisation last visited Iraq; which agencies and companies they met; and what was the outcome of the visit. [42068]

Mr. Ingram: Officials from the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) visited Iraq from 1–4 August 2005 and met with representatives of the Iraq Ministry of Defence and the Multi-National Security and Transition Command-Iraq. The visit helped DESO identify opportunities for UK industry to assist the development of the Iraq Security Forces, in accordance with Government policy to improve security and stability in the region.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the implications of the proposal by the US Congress to scrap the F35B version of the Joint Strike Fighter for UK defence procurement. [42375]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1103W, to the hon. Member for New Forest East (Dr. Lewis).

Procurement Contracts

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on the opening up of the European defence procurement market; and if he will make a statement. [42071]

Mr. Ingram: We support the work of the European Commission and the European Defence Agency to improve the transparency and openness of European defence equipment markets. This work will contribute significantly to the development of a more efficient, cost-effective and competitive European defence industry better able to meet the equipment capability requirements of our armed forces. Industry will benefit from greater competitive opportunities and taxpayers will obtain better value for money.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on the awarding of UK defence procurement contracts to non-UK companies; and if he will make a statement. [42072]

Mr. Ingram: We continue to define the UK defence industry as embracing all defence suppliers that create value, employment, technology or intellectual assets in the UK. This includes both UK and foreign-owned companies.

In many areas we can and do rely on overseas sources without compromising national security, and have made progress in recent years in developing increased assurances of security of supply. There are also some critical areas where we have to maintain national industrial capabilities to ensure our national security. The recently published Defence Industrial Strategy identifies those capabilities. Where a contract can be let to overseas suppliers without compromising these and the overseas bid represents the best long-term value for money, taking into account relevant wider factors, we will continue to procure from overseas, so that we can continue to access the equipment best suited to our needs from the widest range of suitable suppliers.

Territorial Army

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Territorial Army have been mobilised out of role in the last five years. [41656]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Trident

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what indications he has received from the United States Department of Defense of the future plans for the development and manufacture of Trident missiles. [42197]

John Reid: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1566W, to the hon. Member for New Forest East (Dr. Lewis).

Welfare Services (Army Barracks)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the hours of availability of welfare providers are at Catterick barracks; [38674]

(2) what steps he has taken to monitor the availability of welfare providers outside working hours on Army barracks. [38673]

Mr. Touhig: 24-hour welfare provision is available to all soldiers at both the unit level and through the Army Welfare Services. All soldiers, recruits and trainees are made aware of the provisions available to them and the responsibility of the Chain of Command, including their freedom to approach any civilian welfare agency direct if they prefer. A credit card size document is issued to every recruit and trainee, listing the contact details and hours of availability, of individuals and organisations that can be contacted.

No specific steps have been taken to monitor the availability of welfare providers as duty personnel are responsible for providing cover outside normal working hours, in addition to the out of hour support provided by external agencies.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Alcohol Licences

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications have been granted for 24 hour sale of alcohol licences in *(a)* Swansea East and *(b)* Wales; and if she will make a statement. [42043]

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications have been granted for licences for 24 hour sale of alcohol in *(a)* Doncaster, *(b)* Barnsley and *(c)* South Yorkshire. [42115]

James Purnell: This information is held by local licensing authorities.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications have been granted for licences for 24 hour sale of alcohol in *(a)* Bristol and *(b)* the constituency of Bristol East. [41600]

James Purnell: This information is normally available from local licensing authorities but, as announced in our Press Notice of 23 September 2005, Bristol is a scrutiny council with which DCMS is working closely to monitor how the Licensing Act 2003 is being implemented. According to Bristol city council, nine licences for 24-hour sale of alcohol have been granted in Bristol-to three supermarkets, one casino, two restaurants and three nightclubs. The Department does not hold details for Bristol East.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by her Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39150]

Mr. Lammy: The Department purchased a (widescreen) plasma screen unit for £2,750.00 in 2004–05.

The Royal Parks Agency purchased a widescreen television in 2005–06 for the sum of £222.99.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40065]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The administration budgets regime overseen by Treasury does not cover non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs).

The split of total departmental spending between identifiable and non-identifiable expenditure is set out in the 'Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis', copies of which can be found in the House Library.

Digital Television (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many and what percentage of households in Northern Ireland receive digital television via *(a)* satellite, *(b)* cable and *(c)* terrestrial provision. [42131]

James Purnell *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* According to Ofcom, overall household digital TV penetration in Northern Ireland is 45 per cent. We do not have figures breaking this down by platform.

Elite Athletes (Funding)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether UK Sport's submission to her Department on funding for elite athletes was endorsed by the British Olympic Association. [42964]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport's submission to the Department was endorsed by the UK Sport Board. The British Olympic Association (BOA) played an important role in developing and agreeing the 'top line' position and funding presented in the submission. This included taking part in a series of meetings with UK Sport and representatives from 22 of the 26 summer Olympic sports.

The chair of the BOA wrote on 2 December to the Department expressing its broad support for one of the options contained in UK Sport's submission.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she considered the letter from the chair of the British Olympic Association to her on 2 December 2005 about elite funding to be a funding submission. [42965]

Mr. Caborn: The chair of the British Olympic Association's letter of 2 December to the Secretary of State expressed broad support for one of the options contained in UK Sport's submission. It is not considered to be a funding submission.

Energy Efficiency

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what targets she has set for improving energy efficiency in her Department; and what steps she is taking to achieve these targets. [42794]

James Purnell: The Department, along with other Government Departments, is committed to achieve the targets under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate Part E Energy. The targets include energy efficient measures and energy clauses in estate management contracts.

In order to achieve these targets the Department has developed an energy strategy. This involves identifying potential savings through effective procurement; monitoring and targeting our consumption by analysing data, carrying out energy surveys of usage; capital investment in energy saving measures such as time controls and an awareness campaign amongst staff led by the Department's team of environmental champions.

The Department is also taking advantage of the planned refurbishment of its Cockspur Street offices to incorporate energy efficient measures such as passive infrared lighting controls.

The Department is supplied by 100 per cent. renewable energy.

Licensing Act

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from *(a)* church halls, *(b)* village halls and *(c)* users of other community buildings about the Licensing Act 2003. [41855]

James Purnell: The Department has received many representations about the 2003 Act from managers and users of church and village halls and other community buildings. In addition, as members of my High Level Group on Licensing, Action for Communities in Rural England raise issues of concern to village and other halls direct with me on a regular basis. These views are being fed into both our review of the statutory guidance and the Independence Review of Licensing Fees.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she received from the hospitality sector in Tamworth on the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [40683]

James Purnell: The Department has no record of representations from the hospitality industry in Tamworth about the Licensing Act 2003. Last year Ministers in the Department received representations about the Act from two addresses in Tamworth. One of these was from my hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth, enclosing correspondence from a constituent in the attractions sector, to which I replied on 15 July 2005.

London Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many businesses in Marshgate will need to be relocated for the 2012 Olympics; and how many have reached a settlement with the London Development Agency. [42706]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The London Development Agency (LDA) estimates that there are currently 91 businesses operating in or around Marshgate Lane.

Of these, one (the largest employer located in Marshgate Lane) has signed a legal contract; 11 have confirmed alternative relocation sites and a further 52 have appointed advisors in order to commence negotiations.

Additionally, two businesses have already moved out of the Marshgate Lane area after reaching agreements with the LDA.

Mobile Phone Masts

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of *(a)* one and *(b)* more than one mobile telephone masts on local television reception. [41881]

James Purnell *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Any kind of physical feature, be it man-made or natural has the potential to affect TV reception. However, Ofcom believe that in most cases the small towers or masts used by mobile phone companies cause negligible effects upon TV reception.

Rural Tourism

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of rural tourism in Staffordshire; and if she will make a statement. [42076]

James Purnell: Rural tourism is a vital element of the English and British tourism offer. At national level, my Department funds the work of VisitBritain and the England Marketing Advisory Board in promoting rural tourism to both the domestic and international markets. VisitBritain spent £1 million in directly promoting rural areas across England in 2004–05.

The regional development agencies have been responsible for supporting tourism at regional level since 2003. Advantage West Midlands includes tourism initiatives which take account of the region's rural areas in its Economic Strategy, and will be investing £900,000 in the promotion of local tourism across the county over the period from 2003 to 2006. Local authorities in Staffordshire also invest significantly in supporting rural tourism in the county.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the real terms level of child benefit for *(a)* the first child and *(b)* other children was in each year since 1976–77; and if he will make a statement. [41216]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the weekly child benefit rates for since its introduction in 1977–78. The figures show the rate for the first child and subsequent children separately, and alongside these figures are the weekly rates in real terms at 2005–06 prices.

In addition to receiving child benefit, families in 2001–02 and 2002–03 were eligible for children's tax credit. From 2003–04 onwards families are able to claim child tax credit. Therefore the minimum that a family in receipt of the maximum child tax credit award would receive per week would be £59.90 for a family with one child, and £103.80 for a family with two children.

£

Year[1]	Child benefit weekly rate		Child benefit weekly rate at 2005–06 prices	
	1st child	2nd and subsequent children	1st child	2nd and subsequent children
1977–78	1.00	1.50	4.24	6.35
1978–79	2.57	2.57	9.80	9.80
1979–80	4.00	4.00	13.06	13.06
1980–81	4.27	4.27	11.80	11.80
1981–82	4.93	4.93	12.44	12.44
1982–83	5.47	5.47	12.89	12.89
1983–84	6.09	6.09	13.73	13.73
1984–85	6.63	6.63	14.20	14.20
1985–86	6.90	6.90	14.02	14.02
1986–87	7.07	7.07	13.92	13.92
1987–88	7.25	7.25	13.52	13.52
1988–89	7.25	7.25	12.64	12.64
1989–90	7.25	7.25	11.81	11.81
1990–91	7.25	7.25	10.94	10.94
1991–92 (April to September)	8.25	7.25	11.74	10.32
1991–92 (October to March)	9.25	7.50	13.17	10.68
1992–93	9.65	7.80	13.30	10.75
1993–94	10.00	8.10	13.43	10.87
1994–95	10.20	8.25	13.50	10.92
1995–96	10.40	8.45	13.38	10.87
1996–97	10.80	8.80	13.44	10.95
1997–98	11.05	9.00	13.41	10.92
1998–99	11.45	9.30	13.50	10.97
1999–2000	14.40	9.60	16.62	11.08
2000–01	15.00	10.00	17.11	11.41
2001–02	15.50	10.35	17.25	11.52
2002–03	15.75	10.55	16.94	11.35
2003–04	16.05	10.75	16.78	11.24
2004–05	16.50	11.05	16.92	11.33
2005–06	17.00	11.40	17.00	11.40

[1] Prior to 1987–88, the child benefit weekly rate was often increased in November and not April, so adjustments have been made to calculate the average weekly rate for the financial year

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what role his Department has in the regulation of child care; and if he will make a statement. [42121]

Mr. Des Browne *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* None. Ofsted regulates child care in England under the policy direction of the Department for Education and Skills.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the role of child benefit in reducing child poverty; and if he will make a statement; [41397]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of child tax credit on the number of children in relative poverty in each year since 2000–01; and if he will make a statement; [41288]

(3) what assessment he has made of the likely effects on child poverty in the UK of *(a)* increasing child benefit by £5 for each child and *(b)* raising the child element of child tax credit by £500 per year; and if he will make a statement; [41213]

(4) what estimate he has made of *(a)* total cost and *(b)* the effect on the proportion of children living in relative low income households of (i) increasing the rate of child benefit for all children to the rate for the first child and (ii) paying child benefit at the rate of £17.50 for all children aged up to 12 years and £12.00 for other eligible children; [41432]

(5) what estimate he has made of the cost of eradicating child poverty in the UK by 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [41215]

Dawn Primarolo: Between the mid 1970s and mid 1990s, relative child poverty more than doubled. This Government have committed to halve child poverty by 2010–11 and to eradicate it by 2020.

Macro-economic stability, active labour market policies such as the new deal, policies to make work pay such as the national minimum wage and the working tax credit, and financial support for families, have all contributed to reducing child poverty since 1998–99. On an after-housing-cost basis, this approach has lifted 600,000 children out of relative poverty (60 per cent. of less of contemporary median income), and 1.8 million children out of absolute poverty (60 per cent. or less of median income in 1996–97, uprated by prices), between 1998–99 and 2003–04. Since 2000–01, 300,000 children have been lifted out of relative poverty and 800,000 children have been lifted out of absolute poverty.

Financial support for families has been based on the principle of progressive universalism, with support for all families and additional support for those who need it most. Child benefit provides universal support, and the Government have increased the rate of child benefit for the first child by more than 25 per cent. in real terms since 1997. The child tax credit (CTC) was introduced in April 2003, and targets additional financial support based on the needs and circumstances of the whole household. As a result of the Government's reforms to the tax and benefit system since 1997, by October 2007, in real terms, families with children will be, on average, £1,550 a year better off, while those in the poorest fifth of the income distribution will be, on average, £3,350 per year better off.

The Government have set out its spending plans to 2007–08, including a commitment to increase the child element of CTC in line with earnings. While it is possible to model the immediate effect of further changes, there are uncertainties in projecting the numbers of children in relative low income poverty. A further increase of £5 per week in the rate of child benefit would initially lift around 350,000 children out of poverty, at a cost of around £3.4 billion. A further increase of £500 per week in the child element of CTC would initially lift around 750,000 children out of poverty, at a cost of around £3.5 billion. Increasing the rate of child benefit for all children to the rate for the first child would lift around 250,000 children out of poverty, at a cost of around £1.7 billion.

The Family Resources Survey does not enable the Government to make an estimate of the cost or effect of reducing the rate of child benefit when a child reaches the age of 12. The Government have not made an estimate of the cost of eradicating child poverty by 2007–08, which would depend on the definition used, and would be subject to large uncertainties around future income growth, changes in the income distribution, and individual changes in behaviour in response to policy changes.

Dormant Accounts (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money is estimated to have been in dormant accounts in financial institutions in Northern Ireland in 2005. [42279]

Mr. Des Browne: As announced in the pre-Budget report 2005, based on the definition that unclaimed assets should generally cover accounts where there has been no customer activity for a period of 15 years, initial record searches by the industry suggest that several hundred million pounds may currently lie unclaimed.

This figure is for the UK as a whole.

Drugs Seizures (Glasgow Airport)

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions HM Revenue and Customs officers seized drugs at Glasgow Airport in 2005. [42034]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs made 68 drug seizures at Glasgow Airport in 2005.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions since May 2005 officials from his Department have consulted their Freedom of Information Officer on answers to parliamentary questions from *(a)* the hon. Member for Yeovil and *(b)* all hon. Members. [41854]

John Healey: Officials preparing draft answers to parliamentary questions consult colleagues, including the Freedom of Information Officer, as necessary. Records of such consultations are not maintained.

Health Expenditure

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1062W, on health expenditure, what percentage of the United Kingdom's gross domestic product he estimates has been spent on health in 2005–06; what percentage this will be in 2006–07, broken down by *(a)* public and *(b)* private expenditure; and what the most recent estimate is of the (i) EU-15 and (ii) EU-25 average health expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product. [41999]

Mr. Des Browne: The information about UK health spending is in the following table. According to the latest figures from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), average total health expenditure in 2003 was (i) 8.7 per cent. of GDP for the EU-15 and (ii) 8.3 per cent. of GDP for the 19 members of the EU-25 that are also members of the OECD.

UK health expenditure as a percentage of GDP

	2005–06	*2006–07*
Public expenditure	7.3	7.6
Private expenditure	1.4	1.4
Total UK expenditure	8.7	9.0

Notes:

1. The public expenditure figures are taken from Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005.
2. Private spending is calculated in a similar way as for ONS health accounts. From 2004–05, it is assumed to carry forward as a constant share of GDP.
3. The EU averages are simple averages of the figures for each country; they are not weighted by country population. For seven countries where 2003 figures were not available, 2002 figures were used instead.
4. The 19 members of the OECD within the EU-25 are the EU-15 plus the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what percentage of telephone calls to HM Revenue and Customs contact centres were *(a)* answered on the first call, *(b)* answered on the same day and *(c)* unanswered or had their calls aborted in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [29703]

(2) how HM Revenue and Customs distinguishes in its telephone target performance between calls answered at the first attempt and calls answered on the same day. [29704]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows.

1. No such distinction is made.

2. *(a)* This information is not available

(b) Callers to HMRC contact centres usually get through on the day they try though callers at the busiest times of the day may have to try more than once. HMRC estimate that in November 2005 the number of callers[1] to former Inland Revenue contact centres who spoke to an adviser on the day they called was around 99 per cent.

(c) HMRC estimate that in November 2005 the number of callers[2] to former Inland Revenue contact centres whose calls were unanswered on the day they called was around 1 per cent. HMRC does not generally abort calls from callers other than—exceptionally—where the caller is abusive.

Caller[2] level information is not available for former HM Customs & Excise contact centres.

1. Number of calls handled measured as a percentage of total unique telephone numbers calling within the day.

2. Excludes the St. Austell Orderline and the On line Services helpline where the information is not available.

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many HM Revenue and Customs officers are permanently based at Glasgow Airport. [42036]

Dawn Primarolo: Five officers are permanently based at Glasgow Airport dealing with regulatory matters. A pool of 68 Anti Smuggling Officers are based at Falcon House, Paisley which is within one mile of the airport. They undertake operational anti smuggling work at Glasgow Airport according to identified risk. They are supplemented as necessary by anti smuggling staff based in Edinburgh and by officers on flexible anti smuggling strike forces.

Lone Parents

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many lone parent families there were in the UK in each year since 1976–77; and if he will make a statement; [41292]

(2) how many *(a)* workless households and *(b)* households with two or more earners there were in each year since 1978–79; and if he will make a statement. [41294]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about lone parent families and households with either no-one or two people or more in employment, since 1976. (41292, 41294)

The Labour Force Survey household datasets have been used to reply to both questions, where information is given back to 1992, as that was when they were first produced on a comparable basis.

Table 1 gives the number of lone parent families for the three months ending in May each year from 1992 to 2005.

Table 2 gives the numbers of working age households with either no-one in employment, or with two or more people in employment.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Table 1: Lone parent families with dependent children, United Kingdom—Three months ending May each year, 1992 to 2005

	Thousand Lone parent families
1992	1,368
1993	1,396
1994	1,569
1995	1,685
1996	1,643
1997	1,605
1998	1,724
1999	1,737
2000	1,708
2001	1,741
2002	1,809
2003	1,820
2004	1,873
2005	1,881

Note:
Refers to people who are not married or cohabiting and have dependent children, who are defined as aged 0 to 15, or aged 16 to 18 and in full-time education.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Working age workless households and working age households with more than two people in employment, United Kingdom—Three months ending May each year, 1992 to 2005

	Workless[1] households	*Thousand Households with at least two people in employment*
1992	3,032	8,271
1993	3,271	8,219
1994	3,373	8,236
1995	3,419	8,325
1996	3,437	8,503
1997	3,265	8,673
1998	3,235	8,754
1999	3,157	8,838
2000	3,075	9,032
2001	3,062	9,061
2002	3,126	8,996
2003	3,035	9,083
2004	3,008	9,117
2005	3,068	9,188

[1] A working age workless household is a household that includes at least one person of working age, and in which no one aged 16 or over is in employment.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Charles Hendry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what schemes to help lone parents into employment are funded by the Treasury. [42848]

Dawn Primarolo: A range of Government policies help lone parents move into work including active labour market policies, ensuring work pays through the tax credit system and the national minimum wage, and tackling barriers to work such as availability of child care. The Department for Work and Pensions, through Jobcentre Plus, is responsible for delivery of employment programmes and pilots, and funding is provided by the Treasury through the spending review process. The Treasury also funds the tax credit system which is administered by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Nuclear Power Stations (Insurance Liabilities)

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how public sector insurance liabilities relating to nuclear power stations are recorded in the national accounts; and whether there are special rules for this case that do not apply to other public sector insurance liabilities. [42014]

Mr. Des Browne: The framework for managing nuclear liabilities arising from damage to nuclear power stations or damage caused by nuclear power stations in the UK is set out at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/nuclear/safety/liability.shtml.

Any contingent liabilities or provisions stemming from the implementation of this insurance framework will be included in the accounts of the relevant Government Department, NDPB or public corporation.

National accounts will include any payment required to meet a nuclear insurance liability in the year in which the payment falls due.

Public Sector Pension Schemes

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which public sector pension schemes *(a)* provide and *(b)* do not provide benefits for unmarried heterosexual partners. [42675]

Mr. Des Browne: Information is not held centrally on the benefits in all occupational pension schemes in the public sector. The Treasury is responsible for the general policy on the statutory public service pension schemes. All of these schemes provide survivor pensions for partners of scheme members where there is a legal partnership through marriage or civil registration in the case of same gender couples. Our policy is not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in provision for partners who are not married or civilly-registered to the scheme member. Any scheme may modernise its benefits to provide survivor pensions for unmarried and unregistered partners provided this improvement is introduced in a way which does not add to costs falling on the taxpayer. Of the statutory public service schemes *(a)* the 2002 section of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (premium) and the new armed forces scheme launched in 2005 have introduced provisions for unmarried and unregistered survivor pensions, as have the parliamentary pension scheme and the scheme for UK Members of the European Parliament with effect from 2004; and *(b)* none of the other public service schemes have yet done so. Many of the other schemes have proposals to do so as part of the restructuring of benefits associated with increases to normal pension ages and other changes which will overall reduce taxpayer costs, including the schemes for local government, the NHS, teachers, police, and firefighters.

Self-assessment Tax Returns

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on advertising *(a)* on television and *(b)* in printed media for the HM Revenue and Customs self-assessment awareness campaign in the last 12 months. [42397]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1334W. £3 million relates to television advertising and £4.5 million to press, radio, printed and ambient media.

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria he will use to measure the effectiveness of the HM Revenue and Customs recent self assessment awareness campaign. [42398]

Dawn Primarolo: The Income Tax Self Assessment media campaign is evaluated through tracking research. An independent consultancy (Billetts) is employed by the Central Office of Information to audit the media buying agencies used by HMRC to ensure that they achieve value for money and provide levels of customer awareness. Analysts employed by HMRC will formally evaluate the direct mailing campaign trialled in 2005–06.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the plans to change the procedures for the processing of tax returns such that HM Revenue and Customs will no longer issue receipts for self assessment tax returns handed into tax offices; whether this change was agreed with the Institute of Chartered Accountants; and whether the Chartered Certificate Institute was informed of this change. [42226]

Dawn Primarolo: It has not been HMRC policy to provide receipts for self assessment tax returns handed in at tax offices although, in practice, some offices have provided receipts. The change in procedure this year simply standardises the approach across the UK. It was the subject of consultation with the main accountancy representative bodies-CIOT, ICAW, ICAS, ACCA AAT and ATT-and an announcement was published on the HMRC website on 9 December 2005 and in Tax Bulletin 80 on 19 December 2005.

Tax Credits

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* terminations of tax credit notices and *(b)* new re-instatements of terminated tax credit notices have been issued in each month since 1 January 2004. [19262]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what target the Government have for minimising the overpayment of tax credits in 2004–05; and what targets have been set for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [38933]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* HM Revenue and Customs does not have targets for minimising the overpayment of tax credits.

I refer the hon. Gentleman to the written statement I gave to the House on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 53WS for the factors from which overpayments result, for an update on improvements already made to the tax credit system, and the announcement of a package of further improvements. The measures announced strike a balance between providing more certainty and stability of financial support for families, while maintaining flexibility to respond to changes in their income and circumstances.

HMRC is committed to responding quickly and effectively to changes of circumstances and changes in income reported by claimants that impact on tax credits awards so that the likelihood and size of any overpayment is kept to a minimum. It is also committed to supporting claimants to report changes promptly and more regularly.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of telephone calls for tax credits in Wales *(a)* received the engaged tone, *(b)* were disconnected during the IVR process and *(c)* were abandoned by the caller in each year since the tax credit system began; and if he will make a statement. [39474]

Dawn Primarolo: The technology behind the tax credits helpline telephone network distributes calls across the UK on the basis of the next available adviser, regardless of the area of origin of the call. Therefore we do not have the available information to answer this question.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been lost in tax credit payments by those people who failed to renew their tax credit applications by the annual deadline in 2005. [42122]

Dawn Primarolo: Claimants awards are terminated if they fail to renew by the annual deadline. If a claimant appeals and HMRC accepts the reason for late renewal, their award is reinstated, with full back payments, and they incur no loss of tax credit payments. Claimants whose payments are terminated may wish to reapply for tax credits, in which case theirs will be treated as a new claim and normal arrangements apply including backdating of credits for up to three months.

The failure to return the annual declaration means that the information needed to establish entitlement, and hence any lost payment, for any period is not available.

Tax Investigations

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of tax investigations by the Inland Revenue was in each year since 1997; and how many staff were employed to carry them out in each year. [40928]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is available only at a disproportionate cost.

Untaxed Spirits

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions HM Revenue and Customs staff detected the illegal sale of untaxed spirits in Scotland in 2005. [42035]

Dawn Primarolo: There were 14 inland detections of non-UK duty paid spirits in Scotland in 2005. These would have been at or close to the point of sale.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the national targets are for the Valuation Office Agency; and what the performance of relevant offices in the South West Region has been against those targets. [41993]

Dawn Primarolo: Within the South West Region are the Valuation Office Agency's South Western and Western Groups, covering local taxation work, and the South West District Valuer Services Unit covering other work. The national targets for 2004–05 and audited results (which are also available on the Agency's website at www.voa.gov.uk) are shown as follows, with a division between those offices within South West Region where applicable. National targets are also shown for the current year—2005–06—for which results will be published in the Agency's Annual Report in due course.

Valuation office agency national targets and results—2004/05

Agency wide key targets	*Agency target*	*Agency result*
National result—apportionment to South West not applicable		
Value for money		
Improve productivity by 2.5% in 2004–05	2.5%	2.4%
And achieve improvements of at least 15%, on 2004–05 figures, by 2007–08	15% by 2007–08	'On course'
People satisfaction		
Improve staff satisfaction in working for the VOA in comparison with other places of work, based on annual survey results, by 1%	53%	58%
Financial "break even"		
Recover full resource costs within Parliamentary Approved Estimates, including a return on capital of £3.5 million from fees and charges		Achieved
Local taxation key targets		
Valuation accuracy		
Contain reductions in the 2000 local rating lists to less than 7.5% in respect of compiled list appeals settled in 2004–05	7.5%	9.7%
And to a maximum of 4.7% of the total compiled list rateable value over the entire life 2000 rating lists	4.7%	4.6%
Council tax revaluation		
Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of domestic properties in England by digitising data for 97.5% of properties by 31 March 2005	97.5%	Achieved

Valuation office agency national targets and results—2004/05

Agency wide key targets	*Agency target*	*Agency result*
And, by 31 July 2004, evaluate whether the automated valuation model (AVM) can be utilised effectively for the banding of a minimum of 60% of dwellings	60%	Achieved
District valuer services key target		
Achieve an increased fee income of £19.2 million	£19.2 million	£19.4 million
And ensure that its share of VOA costs is covered		Achieved

Local taxation key targets	*Target*	*South West Group Result*	*Western Group Result*
Rating revaluation			
Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of non-domestic properties in England and Wales by producing draft rating lists by 30 September 2004	Achieved	Achieved	
And compiled rating lists by 31 March 2005		Achieved	Achieved
Customer satisfaction			
Maintain customer satisfaction, based on annual surveys, at 86%	86%	72.16%	76.19%
Local taxation—other targets			
Rating			
Draft programmes for clearance of appeals available by 31 July 2004	31 July 2004	Achieved	Achieved
Publish final programmes by 1 October 2004	1 October 2004	Achieved	Achieved
And adhere to start date in 95% of cases	95%	98.85%	96.65%
Appeals settled—England	280,000	13,555	11,296
95% of reports cleared within three months of receipt	95%	92.91%	95.3%
And clear all those received within 2004–05 by the end of the year	100%	100%	100%
Council tax			
Clear council tax appeals within a maximum of 27,800 in England	27,800	3,015	1,554
Provide a considered view to taxpayers on whether an adjustment to their banding is justified within two months of receipt of their appeal	100%	46.67%	64.1%
Ensure that all appeals are ready for hearing within six months	100%	96.67%	96.61%
Clear 95% of all reports within three months of receipt	95%	96.3%	97.36%
And 95% of all reports, in respect of new properties, within two months of receipt	95%	91.55%	95.92%
Ensure that 95% of new bandings are "right first time"	95%	94.17%	94.58%
Customer service			
Answer all telephone calls within an overall average of 10 seconds	100%	100%	100%
Acknowledge all correspondence within five working days	100%	98%	99%
Reply to 90% of correspondence, based on information held, within 15 working days	90%	82.74%	94.8%
See all callers to our offices within five minutes	100%	100%	100%
Achieve specified standards for valuation accuracy	90%	93.33%	93.3%
Meet timeliness targets	90%	92.9%	92.5%

District valuer services—other targets	*Target*	*District valuer SW result*
Inheritance tax		
Clear all initial appraisal cases within 20 working days	100%	93%
Report agreed values for 75% of cases within three months	75%	83%
Report agreed values for 90% of cases within six months	90%	95%
Report agreed values for 95% of cases within nine months	95%	98%
Capital gains tax		
Clear 90% of initial appraisal/information valuation cases within 30 working days	90%	79%
And the remainder within three months	100%	95%
Clear 90% of negotiation cases within six months	90%	66%
And the remainder within 12 months	100%	90%

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Clinical Negligence

Mr. Baron: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many legally aided clinical negligence cases were closed in the last 12 months; and how many *(a)* proceeded beyond investigation and *(b)* resulted in (i) an award of damages and (ii) a settlement involving an agreement to pay damages. [43104]

Bridget Prentice: In the last year 6,217 cases were closed where an outcome was reported of which 2,574 went beyond the investigation stage. In these cases the solicitors reported a substantive benefit to the client in 56 per cent. of cases.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what has been the annual expenditure on training and development for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40004]

Bridget Prentice: Since April 2002 the Department for Constitutional Affairs (formerly the Lord Chancellor's Department) has provided a corporate HR service, including learning and development for the Department and it's executive agencies—Court Service (until 1 April 2005), Her Majesty's Courts Service (from 1 April 2005)

and Public Guardianship Office. The Legal Service Commission has its own HR department including learning and development.

Annual expenditure for central learning and development provision for the last three years in *(a)* The Department and *(b)* (ii) executive agencies is as follows.

	Annual expenditure (£)
2002–03	891,558
2003–04	1,636,831
2004–05	1,609,268

It is not possible to provide a breakdown across Department and agencies nor across countries/regions as expenditure is not recorded in this way and the information could be provided only at disproportionate expense.

These figures do not include local expenditure on learning and development activity. This information could be provided only at disproportionate expense.

In 2005–06 planned expenditure is as follows:

	Planned expenditure (£)
Central learning and development including SCS	3,577,000
HMCS Regions	
London	255,000
Midlands	195,000
North West	195,000
North East	270,000
South West	195,000
South East	240,000
Wales and Cheshire	150,000
Regional Total	1,500,000

The budget for learning and development has increased significantly in 2005–06 as the creation of HMCS increased the size of the organisation by approximately 10,000 staff, including approx 2,500 lawyers who need to meet their continuing professional development requirements.

Annual expenditure for central learning and development provision for the last three years in *(b)* (i) Legal Services Commission is as follows:

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Central training	912,418	1,203,801	454,207	987,614
Regional Offices				
London	5,249	33,831	123,161	52,652
Bristol	10,130	25,444	31,275	29,867
Cardiff	7,123	6,176	24,734	27,804
Birmingham	4,343	10,950	24,076	25,800
Manchester	17,124	46,157	20,675	11,067
Newcastle	6,685	8,872	31,624	453
Leeds	3,743	8,705	17,073	2,273
Nottingham	2,964	4,806	6,924	13,250
Cambridge	9,553	24,447	21,141	14,232
Chester/Liverpool	6,756	15,141	22,918	22,530
South East	8,707	6,991	25,941	45,294
Regional total	102,377	191,520	349,542	245,222

It is not possible to provide a breakdown for the central training budget across regions as expenditure is not recorded in this way and the information could be provided only at disproportionate expense

Office for Disability Issues

Danny Alexander: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether a Minister in her Department is planned to be nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the Office for Disability Issues; and if she will make a statement. [37069]

Ms Harman: My hon. Friend the Member for Stirling (Mrs. McGuire), the Minister for disabled people, has overall responsibility for the Office for Disability Issues (ODI). The Minister for disabled people chairs a cross-government steering group which includes ministerial representatives from the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Transport, and Department for Trade and Industry. The Minister in this Department nominated to take responsibility for liaison with the ODI will be Baroness Catherine Ashton of Upholland.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the Legal Services Commissions' contracted suppliers in the London borough of Croydon for *(a)* criminal matters, *(b)* employment, *(c)* family matters, *(d)* housing, *(e)* immigration, *(f)* mental health and *(g)* social payments. [41125]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission contracts with suppliers throughout England and Wales to provide a range of legal and advice services across different categories of law.

The contracted suppliers in the listed categories in the London borough of Croydon are as follows:

(a) Criminal matters

Amphlett Lissimore
Barnes Harrild & Dyer
Benedict Charles & Co.
Dexter Henry & Co.
DKLL
Hiace Solicitors
J A Mundy & Co.
Mansouri & Son Solicitors
Mccauley-Slowe Solicitors
McMillan Williams
Omezie & Co.
Ormerods
Robert Blackford & Co.
Roger Long & Co.

(b) Employment

Croydon & Sutton Law Centre

(c) Family matters

Amphlett Lissimore
Atkins Hope
Barnes Harrild & Dyer
Barrington C Edwards & Co.

Daniel Curry & Co.
DKLL
Grants Solicitors
Haider Kennedy Solicitors
McMillan Williams
Ormerods
Robert Blackford & Co.
Roger Long & Co.
Streeter Marshall
White & Sherwin

(d) Housing

Amphlett Lissimore
Daniel Curry & Co.
McMillan Williams
Ormerods
Streeter Marshall
Croydon & Sutton Law Centre

(e) Immigration

Barnes Harrild & Dyer
Hiace Solicitors
Simman Solicitors
Croydon & Sutton Law Centre

(f) Mental health

None

(g) Welfare Benefits[1]

Grants Solicitors
Croydon & Sutton Law Centre
Thornton Heath Citizens Advice Bureau

[1] The LSC does not have a 'social payments' category so has provided figures for welfare benefits'

Small Claims (Personal Injuries)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which organisations she plans to consult as part of the review of personal injuries limits for small claims. [31594]

Ms Harman: The consultation paper on case track limits will be sent to a wide range of stakeholders, including the legal profession, insurers, consumer organisations, trade unions, business and the judiciary.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

African Partnership Forum

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what role his Department has given to African civil society groups in the African Partnership Forum. [42211]

Mr. Thomas: African civil society groups have an important part to play in supporting the Africa Partnership Forum's (APF) role as a high-level inter-governmental forum addressing strategic policy issues affecting Africa's development.

A key part of the APF's work is monitoring delivery of international and African commitments to support the continent, on the basis of a new Joint Action Plan. Civil society groups should hold governments to account for delivery of these commitments, and also for their results. DFID is supporting the Archbishop of Capetown's proposal for an 'African Monitor', which will bring together civil society groups across Africa for this purpose, complementing the APF's role.

The APF Support Unit being established in Paris will provide a central contact point for civil society groups, including in relation to the Plan. Civil society groups are not members of the APF, which is an inter-governmental forum. However, my co-chairs and I participated in a consultation with a broad range of civil society groups prior to the most recent meeting. It will be for Co-Chairs of future meetings to decide what form civil society input should take.

Anti-retroviral Medicines

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions his officials have had with UNICEF about the development of new anti-retroviral medicines for children suffering from HIV/AIDS in developing countries. [41940]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is in regular contact with UNICEF concerning children suffering from HIV/AIDS in developing countries.

In July 2004, DFID was one of the first bilateral development agencies, along with Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to endorse the UNAIDS/UNICEF Framework for the protection, care and support of orphans and vulnerable children living in a world with HIV/AIDS.

DFID is funding UNICEF programmes in Africa, totalling £44 million, as part of our commitment to spend £150 million on children affected by AIDS and supports the UNICEF Global Campaign which has an objective of increasing access to treatment for children.

We are also co-hosting the Global Partners Forum on children affected by AIDS which will consider how to address the blockages on treatment for children. This meeting will feed into the Global Steering Committee towards scaling up universal access to treatment by 2010, an assessment which will be reported to the UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS (UNGASS) in June.

Commission for Africa

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken to raise awareness of the Commission for Africa Report in Africa. [42209]

Mr. Thomas: The Commission for Africa report, 'Our Common Interest', was launched on 11 March in parallel events at the British Museum in London and at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa. The report was presented to the United Nations the same day in New York.

Following the launch, the Commission undertook a four month series of presentations leading up to the G8 Summit at Gleneagles. This included regional events in Africa as well as G8 countries. More than 45 presentations were made in over 20 countries. Audiences included the African Union New Partnership for Africa's development (AU-NEPAD), governments, private sector and civil society.

The full story of the Commission's work is told on the Commission website www.commissionforafrica.org which will remain as a permanent online archive. As well as the full report being published in English and French, Part One is available on the website in Arabic, Swahili and Portuguese, as well as Mandarin and Japanese.

The costs of the Commission for Africa, including these activities to raise awareness in Africa and other parts of the world, were met by the Department for International Development.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what procedures were used by his Department for the recruitment of staff for the secretariat for the Commission for Africa. [42212]

Mr. Thomas: Initial recruitment took place by trawling across Whitehall in February 2004. 14 staff, including the Head of the Secretariat, were in post by the end of March 2004 and came from six different Whitehall departments. Another six Whitehall staff joined the team by the end of May. The Commission's website editor was recruited in June 2004 through a recruitment agency.

Capacity was strengthened in August with external recruitment of nine policy analysts by open competition through the civil service gateway and public advertisement.

Subsequently and during the lifetime of the Secretariat, additional staff were brought in as demand required through public advertisement and secondments from the private sector, the British Council and Whitehall.

Democracy Projects

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the criteria used by his Department to assess the effectiveness of projects to promote democracy. [41951]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's aim is poverty reduction, as measured by the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs), and the eventual elimination of poverty.

Within this framework, the criteria used by DFID to assess the effectiveness of projects in support of better governance are defined by the scope of each individual project. Examples of criteria of effectiveness for governance projects might include the number of eligible citizens able to register and vote at elections, the election of representatives of disadvantaged or marginalised communities to decision-making arenas such as local government councils, or the establishment of channels for monitoring citizen satisfaction with key service sectors.

More generally, DFID uses the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria to evaluate its own programmes. The criteria are: relevance; efficiency; effectiveness; impact; and sustainability:

Relevance: the extent to which the development assistance is consistent with the policies and priorities of the major stakeholders.

Efficiency: the relationship between the outputs achieved and the inputs used. Efficient development assistance uses the least costly approach to achieve its objectives.

Effectiveness: the extent to which development intervention achieves its objectives at the purpose and goal level.

Impact: all outcomes (positive or negative) attributable to the development intervention.

Sustainability: the extent to which the activities, outputs and impacts will continue after external support has ended.

Developing Countries (Agricultural Trade)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department to assist developing countries in reforming their agricultural trade policies. [40596]

Mr. Thomas: DFID, along with all Government Departments, is committed to see reform of developed country agriculture policies, including trade policies, which distort international markets, and which if reformed, could deliver real development gains to the world's poorest countries. In the assistance we provide to developing countries, we do not start from the premise that their agriculture trade policies specifically must be reformed. The assistance that DFID provides to developing countries under our trade related capacity building programme is designed to support their own priorities and development needs, as identified by the countries themselves, and falls into three broad categories; helping developing countries to determine their own trade policies; helping them to negotiate their priorities in both bilateral and multilateral fora; and helping them to capture the potential benefits from trade. Since 1998, we have committed £181 million to trade related capacity building, and are set to increase this Aid for Trade to £100 million per annum by 2010.

For the least developed countries (LDCs), we contribute to the reform of their trade policies, including agricultural trade policies, through our support to the integrated framework (IF). The IF is an international initiative which assists LDCs to take the steps necessary to improve their trading performance in a manner which supports economic growth and poverty reduction. A Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) is carried out for each LDC participating in the IF which identifies constraints to the trading performance of LDCs, policies, infrastructure, institutional and private sector capacity. It also provides technical advice on how to address these constraints. Agriculture trade policies will be considered in participating LDCs with agricultural export sectors.

The IF is active in over 30 countries, 21 of them in Sub Saharan Africa including Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia. DFID has contributed a total of £4.5 million to the IF since 2001.

DFID has also contributed £850,000 to the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), a multi-donor funded programme that assists developing countries in improving their expertise and capacity to analyse and implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards.

DFID has recently published an agriculture policy paper. This identifies the need to improve the benefits of agricultural trade to poor people and poor countries and reaffirms DFID's strong commitment to agriculture, which we recognise as fundamental to poverty reduction and to the livelihoods of poor people.

Falluja

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the *(a)* birth rate, *(b)* death rate and *(c)* infant mortality rate in Falluja was in each year since 1990; [42206]

(2) what the population of Falluja was in each year since 1990; [42207]

(3) what recent assessment his officials have made of the humanitarian situation in Falluja; [42208]

(4) how many people *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a percentage of the total population in Falluja had access to (i) clean water and (ii) electricity in each year since 1990 for which records are available. [42235]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not made any recent assessment of the humanitarian situation in Falluja.

Humanitarian assistance and reconstruction in Falluja is the responsibility of the Iraqi Government, with support from the United States. Significant progress has been made since military operations concluded, and further projects are under way to improve basic services. To date, Falluja has received US$100 million for reconstruction, and US$103 million in housing compensation. The Iraqi Prime Minister recently approved a further US$75 million housing compensation, so that Falluja will have received a total of $281 million. Power and water is currently estimated to be available to over 80 per cent. of the population as a rule; however, a recent fire at an electricity substation has restricted these services. Prior to April 2004, the population of Falluja was estimated at 300,000; today the population is around 239,000.

Statistics on birth rate, death rate and infant mortality in Fallujah since 1990 are unavailable. For Iraq as a whole, this data can be estimated from surveys. However, when information is required at a more local level, the only source of information in most developing countries, including Iraq, is a population census. The most recent census, conducted in 1997, only contains details at the Governorate or regional level. Town-level estimates of birth and death rates are unlikely to have been calculated at any stage.

South East Asia Tsunami

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what conclusions were reached by the meeting in Brussels on 20 December 2005 to draw lessons from the emergency aid and relief effort for the victims of the South East Asia tsunami of 26 December 2004; and if he will make a statement. [42173]

Mr. Thomas: I have arranged for the document entitled 'UK Presidency Conclusions from the Tsunami Follow-up Event; 20th December 2005: Brussels' to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to help reduce infant mortality in the Sudan; and what help is available to Sudan from Government reconstruction funds. [41832]

Mr. Thomas: As in any conflict or humanitarian emergency, child health has suffered hugely in Sudan. In 2004, UNICEF's figures showed that out of 1,000 live births in Sudan, an estimated 91 would die before the age of five. By way of comparison, the UK's under five mortality rate is six out of 1,000.

This financial year, DFID has allocated £112.75 million for our work in Sudan. We aim to contribute towards the most critical needs in Sudan, especially in Darfur, Southern Sudan and the East. Of this, we channelled £45 million through the UN Work plan and £25 million via NGOs for a wide range of assistance including water and sanitation, emergency health care, shelter, food and nutrition; all of which help to reduce mortality.

For example, DFID currently funds a project which provides bed nets to women and children in Southern Sudan where malaria, a large contributor to infant mortality, is endemic. This follows similar programmes in Kenya and Gambia where it has been found that impregnated bed nets can reduce overall mortality rates by up to 30 per cent. in malaria endemic areas.

Although only a snapshot of the situation over the last six months, the recent World Health Organisation (WHO) mortality survey in Darfur revealed that death rates have dropped by two thirds in some areas. This points to the effectiveness of the responses in stabilising and improving the humanitarian situation in Darfur. With raising levels of insecurity, however, this remains extremely fragile.

Tax Evasion/Avoidance

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment has been made by his Department of the impact of tax evasion and tax avoidance on government finances in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [42210]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is working with developing country governments and their revenue authorities to improve collection of taxes and customs duties. Increasing tax revenue will increase funding available for essential services such as primary education and primary healthcare.

DFID has not made an assessment of the impact of tax evasion and tax avoidance on developing countries' finances. The high number of businesses not formally registered in many countries is a significant constraint on collecting taxes. DFID is undertaking a study looking at the impact of tax on business which will, among other matters, examine the impact on incentives for businesses to remain in the informal sector.

80 per cent. of taxes in developing countries are collected from formal companies, through VAT, corporate taxes, and taxes on labour. In contrast, the

collection of personal tax is very small, so the potential for tax avoidance and evasion is less significant in terms of proportion of tax revenue from individuals.

Through work on the investment and regulatory climate facing the private sector, and on building capacity through training in inland revenue and customs offices, DFID is contributing to reducing the avoidance and evasion of taxes in developing countries.

West Bank Barrier

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effect of the barrier dividing the West Bank from Israel on the Palestinian economy. [41932]

Mr. Thomas: A preliminary analysis of the barrier's route, published by the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in March 2005, identified that some 142,640 acres (10 per cent.) of West Bank land will lie between the completed barrier and the Green Line. This is some of the most fertile land in the West Bank and is currently home to 49,400 Palestinians. Where the Barrier has been constructed, Palestinians face economic hardship from being restricted from or not being able to reach their land to harvest crops, graze animals or earn a living. Residents have also been cut off from schools, universities and specialized medical care by the constructed Barrier.

World Water Forum

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2679W, on the World Water Forum, by what process national governments will *(a)* contribute to and *(b)* sign up to the Ministerial Declaration for the World Water Forum; and if he will make a statement. [42270]

Mr. Thomas: The Fourth World Water Forum Secretariat have invited all National Governments to contribute to the Ministerial Declaration by participating in inter-governmental negotiating sessions in Geneva over the coming months. EU member states have agreed to provide and co-ordinate appropriate input to these sessions via the Austrian presidency.

There is a time-tabled session within the Ministerial segment of the Fourth World Water Forum for Ministers who are present to sign the declaration.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2679W, on the World Water Forum, when the inter-governmental negotiating session on the Ministerial Declaration for the World Water Forum will take place; where it will be held; and which governments he expects to attend. [42271]

Mr. Thomas: The first inter-governmental negotiating session on the Ministerial Declaration for the Fourth World Water Forum will be held on Monday the 23rd of January in Geneva. EU member states will provide appropriate co-ordinated input through the Austrian presidency.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2679W, on the World Water Forum, whether the UK Government will be attending the inter-governmental negotiating session on the Ministerial Declaration for the World Water Forum; and what his aims and objectives are for UK contributions to the declaration. [42272]

Mr. Thomas: It is likely that environment officials from the Department for the Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFRA) or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will attend this first negotiating session. However, UK inputs will be co-ordinated through the EU by the Austrian presidency.

The UK has not strongly supported the need for a ministerial statement, following so closely from the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) 13. Our key objective is therefore to work through the EU to ensure that outcomes from the CSD are consolidated in any new negotiated statement.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education and Training

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost to public funds was of *(a)* adult education and *(b)* education and training for those aged over 22 years in each year from 1996–97; what allocation has been made for each year to 2008–09; and if she will make a statement. [41224]

Bill Rammell: In 2001–02 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) spent £2,236 million on adult programmes including Further Education, Work Based Learning, Adult and Community Learning and other programmes. This increased to £2,427 million in 2002–03 and to £2,866 million in 2003–04. These figures are available from the LSC's published accounts. Figures for adult education for the years prior to 2001 are not comparable as the budget was split between a range of different organisations.

Since 1997 Government funding for further education and training has increased by around £2.5 billion or around 48 per cent. in real terms. In 2004/05 over £1,600 million of further education funding was spent on adults aged over 22. Information for earlier years is not available. The LSC has been allocated £8.5 billion for 2006–07 and £8.9 billion for 2007–08 for education and training for adults and young people. Allocations for 2008–09 have not yet been made.

On 21 October 2005 I set out the Government's priorities for the learning and skills sector and the impact on funding in 2006–07 and 2007–08, and full details can be found in 'Priorities for Success' on the LSC's website.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what opportunities are made available by her Department in Kettering constituency to *(a)* retrain, *(b)* reskill and *(c)* educate local adult residents for paid employment. [39780]

Phil Hope: The Government's Skills Strategy, 21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential (July 2003) and Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work (March 2005), set out our plans for increasing opportunities for adults to develop their skills for paid employment.

Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive of the LSC has written to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 13 January 2005:

Further to your Parliamentary Question regarding opportunities available in your constituency to retrain, reskill or educate adults for paid employment, I have been asked to be respond with specific information on what provision is offered in Kettering.

Tresham Institute (FE College) is the main provider of training and skills in the town offering a range of full and part time courses at their St Mary's Road and Windmill Avenue campuses. A new £20 million campus (with a £6.93M contribution from the LSC) is due to open in Windmill Avenue in January 2007.

Curriculum areas offered by the college include:-

Art, Design, Media & Performance

Business, Administration & Professional

Computing & Information Communication Technology

Essential Skills for Employment (specifically designed for people with learning difficulties or disabilities)

Hairdressing, Beauty & Holistic Therapies,

Health Care and Child Education

Qualifications include NVQ's and BTEC as well as a wide range of A & AS level subjects and Access to Higher Education courses. At their nearby Corby and Wellingborough sites the college also offers courses in Engineering and Technology, Motor-sport and Motor Vehicle and Construction skills.

The LSC provide funding for:

All 16–18 year olds;

1st level 2 qualifications for those aged 19 + ;

Skills for Life qualifications;

Apprenticeships for age 16–25;

Sector Skill priorities training for Engineering, Logistics, Health and Social Care and Construction;

Other activities available in Kettering include first step programmes designed to engage more difficult to reach individuals in learning and to facilitate progression to further training and employment. Programmes in this category include Family Learning, Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities and Skills for Life (literacy and numeracy). Courses and events are held at a variety of schools and community venues and are delivered through the Northamptonshire County Council Adult Learning Service.

A number of countywide European Social Fund projects do operate in the Kettering area these include Skills for Life, employability skills for individuals and workforce development projects.

There are three UFI/Learndirect learning centres in Kettering each offering supported on line training mainly in Information Communication Technology and Skills for Life

The Employer Skills project delivered countywide via Business Link offers support for workforce development including a grant of up to £1000 for workforce skills development.

To help individuals locate and choose the appropriate learning opportunities the Nextstep (Information Advice and Guidance) service operates two days a week in the town, currently using the Kettering Centre for the Unemployed premises.

I hope the above information sufficiently answers your question. If you require any further information, please contact our local Executive Director, Richard Greenwood at Learning & Skills Council, Royal Pavilion, Summerhouse Road, Northampton NN3 6BJ (email richard.greenwood@lsc.gov.uk).

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the national targets are for the Adult Learning Inspectorate; and what the performance of relevant offices in South Devon has been in relation to those targets. [41994]

Bill Rammell: The Adult Learning Inspectorate (the ALI) is a national organisation operating from its single office in Coventry. The grant in aid is allocated to the ALI on the basis of targets for the number of inspections to be delivered. For 2005–06, the target for new inspections was 789 and for re-inspections 262. As a national organisation, local allocations are not made so no details are available for South Devon.

Aimhigher

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which rural area has been chosen as one of the four area studies to be considered in the research report being conducted as part of the Aimhigher Strategy for Higher Education; and what criteria were considered when choosing the area. [40697]

Bill Rammell: The Aimhigher area studies are being carried out as part of strand 3 of the national Aimhigher evaluation. While we know which areas were shortlisted for interview, we do not know which four areas were actually interviewed by independent contractors EKOS for this forthcoming report, as all individuals and areas were guaranteed anonymity as part of the interview process. This was to ensure that the answers provided reflected the true opinions of the respondent.

The main objective of the area selection process was to identify a broad range of Aimhigher Partnership areas which are reflective of the various types of Aimhigher activity undertaken throughout the country. Rurality was not one of the formal selection criteria of the initial shortlisting process, but a spread of areas with regard to the level of rurality or urbanisation was ensured.

The contractors have informed us that all districts within the rural area selected are formally classified as rural in the ODPM user guide.

Certificate in Education

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many teachers working in *(a)* higher and *(b)* adult education will be affected by the requirement to take a Certificate in Education in order to continue to be eligible to teach; [42290]

(2) what financial support is available to teachers aged *(a)* under 55 and *(b)* over 55 years who are working in (i) adult and (ii) higher education and who are required to take a Certificate in Education in order to continue to be eligible to teach. [42291]

Phil Hope: Since September 2001, all teachers appointed in Further Education colleges have been required by law to obtain the Further Education Teachers' Certificate.

From September 2007, all new teachers within the 'whole' of the publicly funded FE learning and skills sector will be expected to undertake the new teaching

requirement, which is to obtain Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status and a full Licence to Practise. This is set out in the Government's November 2004 reform document "Equipping our Teachers for the Future: Reforming Initial Teacher Training for the Learning and Skills Sector".

Higher Education teaching staff are not within the scope of the current and future regulations referred to above for FE. But, from 2006, it is expected that all new teaching staff in Higher Education will obtain a relevant teaching qualification accredited against national professional standards for teaching in Higher Education.

The Government expect to spend a total of approximately £18 million on incentives to recruit and retain FE teachers in 2005/06 and a similar amount in 2006/07. Three schemes available to eligible college teachers are Teacher Training Bursaries, Golden Hellos, and Key Worker Living. There are no age limits on these incentives.

The Department has also funded, through the Higher Education Funding Council for England, a Golden Hello programme to encourage new entrants into teaching shortage subjects within Higher Education, totalling £20 million from 2003–04 to 2005–06.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the *(a)* public and *(b)* voluntary and private organisations to which her Department made payments through grants or contracts in excess of £20,000 excluding the Department's administrative expenditure in 2004–05. [38604]

Bill Rammell: The Department's accounting system does not separately identify private organisations who receive grants or contracts and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. A list of bodies identified as in the voluntary sector which received grants or contracts, excluding the Department's administrative expenditure in excess of £20,000 are as follows:

Voluntary Organisations who received over £20,000 in 2004–05

National Family Planning Institute
Parentline Plus
Young Minds
National Council for One Parent Families
ContinYou (CEDC)
Parent Education Support Forum
Advisory Centre for Education
Royal National Institute for the Blind
Trust for the Study of Adolescence
YMCA England
Race Equality Unit
Local NE Community Foundation
Children's Legal Centre
Lubavitch Youth
Family Rights Group
Barnardos (Babyfather and Wigton)
National Deaf Children's Society
The Warren
National Black Boys Can Association
Agency for Culture and Change Management
NACRO (Sheffield)
South London Tamil Welfare Group
Circles Network
BAPS Care 4 Children
Action for Prisoners Families
Positive Parenting Publications
Wai Yin Chinese Women Society
Film IT
Place to be
Change
British Refugee Council
Eating Disorders Association
One Plus One
Coram Family
Leeds Animation Workshop
Good Shepherd Charities for Children
Childrens Foundation
Fathers Direct
Medway Ethnic Minority Forum
Prader Willi Syndrome Association
Barnardos (Halesowen)
Families Need Fathers
Single Parent Action Network
Parents in Partnership—Parent Infant Network
YWCA England
National Tenants' Resource Centre
National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations
Scope
Chance UK
Bradford Family Service Unit
Centre for Fun and Families
Project for Advocacy Counselling and Education
Yemeni Economic and Training Centre
NCH South West
Coalition for the Removal of Pimping
Henshaws Society for Blind People
Island Volunteers
National Autistic Society
African Families Support Services
Learning Partnerships
Family Matters Institute
Springboard Family Project
Anyadwe Children and Family Welfare Association
National Association of Child Care Centres
Lambeth Mencap
Children's Society
Mancroft Advice Project
Parents First
Calderdale Womens Centre
Paces Sheffield
Care for the Family
ARC
Student Force for Sustainability
New Forest and Romsey Mobile Community Project
Crime Concern
Family Nurturing Network

Direct Grants

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 943W, on direct grants, how much grant was received in 2005–06 by each voluntary organisation listed. [38703]

Bill Rammell: Information on the grants paid to the voluntary organisations to date in 2005–06 are as follows. Updated figures for 2005–06 will be available in April 2006.

Voluntary Organisations 2005–06

Parentline Plus	2,307,833.00
National Association of Child Contact Centres	541,993.56
Local NE Community Foundation	406,055.43
OCC	214,000.00
Advisory Centre for Education	168,453.15
National Council of One Parent Families	158,787.00
Trust for the Study of Adolescence	147,389.32
National Family Planning Institute	133,451.80
Children's Legal Centre	110,024.50
Circles Network	104,250.00
Scope	97,240.00
Film IT	93,750.00
Young Minds	87,948.13
YMCA England	83,250.00
NACRO (Sheffield)	74,862.00
National Deaf Children's Society	66,250.00
Agency for Culture and Change Management	66,000.00
National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations	65,245.00
National Black Boys Can Association	56,250.00
Families Need Fathers	53,476.19
Family Rights Group	52,500.00
National Tenants' Resource Centre	50,500.00
South London Tamil Welfare Group	50,250.00
Eating Disorders Association	41,253.00
Positive Parenting Publications	41,250.00
Lubavitch Youth	41,250.00
Wai Yin Chinese Women Society	41,250.00
Learning Partnerships	41,250.00
NCH South West	40,500.00
Student Force for Sustainability	37,755.09
Change	36,750.00
Good Shepherd Charities for Children	36,000.00
Family Matters Institute	33,750.00
Race Equality Unit	33,750.00
Princess Royal Trust for Carers	33,110.00
Royal National Institute for the Blind	33,000.00
Springboard Family Project	29,250.00
Anyadwe Children and Family Welfare Association	28,500.00
Action for Prisoners Families	27,500.00
Calderdale Womens Centre	27,000.00
New Forest and Romsey Mobile Community Project	18,000.00
Mancroft Advice Project	8,750.00
Parent Education Support Forum	1,640.00
National Autistic Society	411.25
Forum on Prisoner Education	78.00
One Plus One	50.00
NCH	20.00

Early Years Education

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans her Department has to improve *(a)* early years education and *(b)* after-school activities in Westmorland and Lonsdale. [43045]

Beverley Hughes: The Government have invested well over £17 billion on early years and childcare services since 1997 as part of an unprecedented expansion of provision for young children and families. The 2005 Foundation Stage Profile results for this local authority demonstrate that generally children are achieving good levels of development by the end of the Foundation Stage. Nonetheless, we want to continue to improve outcomes.

The Ten Year Childcare Strategy sets out ambitious plans to create a sustainable framework for high quality services for children and families. To support this, the Childcare Bill 2005 will take forward, and give statutory force to key commitments.

To raise the quality of early education the Bill provides for a new duty on local authorities to improve the outcomes of all children under 5, and close the gaps between groups with the poorest outcomes and children more generally, by ensuring early years services are integrated and accessible. The Bill also provides for a reformed and simplified regulatory framework for early years and childcare to reduce bureaucracy and raise quality.

Local authorities receive support on early education through the Foundation Stage strand of the Primary National Strategy (PNS). That support includes disseminating effective practice; supporting the transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1; supporting integrated provision; ICT development in the early years; working with parents as partners; and helping to embed the Foundation Stage Profile.

All local authorities now have access to Key Elements of Effective Practice (KEEP), guidance developed through sector wide consultation by the Foundation Stage strand of the PNS. KEEP represents an agreed view across the sector about the knowledge; skills, understanding and attitudes practitioners need to effectively support young children's learning and thereby raise quality.

We have committed £790 million over 2005–08 to support the development of extended services in or through schools which includes after school activities. £110 million of this was allocated in 2005–06 and Lancashire local authority received £1,824,687. We are unable to break this information down to parliamentary constituency level.

Of the £680 million to be allocated across 2006–08, £250 million will go direct to schools through the School Standards Grant and the remaining £430 million will be distributed to local authorities through the Standards Fund and the General Sure Start Grant. Of this Lancashire local authority will receive £3,531,061 in 2006–07 and £4,515,291 in 2007–08. The funding is to 'kick start' extended services and can be used flexibly, for example, to support the development of childcare including the training of childcare workers. Many schools will choose to develop services in partnership with existing local private or voluntary sector providers.

We are also funding the National Remodelling Team (NRT), Continyou and 4Children to support local authorities and schools nationally as they implement extended services. This support includes guidance on developing and sustaining childcare and working with existing voluntary and private providers to improve the delivery of after school childcare.

Further and Higher Education Private Sponsorship

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her policy is on the role of private sponsorship in further and higher education. [43084]

Bill Rammell: We welcome both private and public sponsorship in further and higher education. Sponsorship can help build better links between employers and institutions and the additional income which it brings can help institutions in both sectors to identify and play to their individual strengths.

Fire Risk (Schools)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many responses were received by her Department to the public consultation on the draft guidance Building Bulletin 100, "Designing and Managing Against the Risk of Fires in Schools". [41849]

Jacqui Smith: Public consultation on Building Bulletin 100 (BB 100), "Designing and Managing Against the Risk of Fire in Schools", concluded on 18 November 2005 and 68 responses were received. A number of these included comments, some extensive, and they are now being analysed. We expect to publish the final analysis on the Department's website by 31 March.

Foreign Students

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many foreign students are studying in the UK, broken down by country of origin. [43079]

Bill Rammell: The available information is given in the table.

Enrolments to UK HE institutions by non-UK domiciles, 2004/05

Country of domicile	*Enrolments*
EU domiciles	
Greece	19,685
Irish Republic	16,345
Germany	12,555
France	11,685
Spain	6,000
Cyprus	5,675
Italy	5,315
Sweden	3,430
Portugal	2,785
Netherlands	2,430
Belgium	2,400
Poland	2,185
Finland	1,755
Denmark	1,660
Austria	1,325
Luxembourg	820
Gibraltar	620
Czech Republic	605
Malta	590
Hungary	585
Lithuania	420
Slovakia	355
Slovenia	315
Latvia	270
Estonia	185
Non-EU other overseas	
China (People's Republic of)	52,675
India	16,685
United States	14,385
Malaysia	11,475
Hong Kong	10,780
Nigeria	8,145
Pakistan	6,545
Japan	6,180
Taiwan	5,880
Canada	4,190
Thailand	3,940
South Korea	3,845
Singapore	3,630
Norway	3,045
Ghana	3,035
Kenya	2,975
Zimbabwe	2,660
Saudi Arabia	2,440
Sri Lanka	2,420
Russia	2,025
Bangladesh	1,945
Turkey	1,915
Mexico	1,845
United Arab Emirates	1,805
Iran	1,750
Mauritius	1,660
Australia	1,610
South Africa	1,530
Switzerland	1,500
Libya	1,305
Jordan	1,295
Oman	1,150
Indonesia	1,150
Brazil	1,130
Israel	1,120
Vietnam	1,110
Tanzania	985
Bahrain	965
Philippines	955
Jamaica	940
Uganda	890
Kuwait	885
Egypt	805
Brunei	800
Trinidad and Tobago	765
Botswana	690
Bulgaria	605
Lebanon	585
Romania	580
New Zealand	560
Zambia	545
Algeria	545
Ukraine	525
Qatar	510
Syria	495
Colombia	485
Barbados	480
Nepal	460
Malawi	440
Argentina	370
Cameroon	370
Kazakhstan	360
Serbia and Montenegro	345
Iceland	345
Gambia	340
Sudan	340
Venezuela	320
Chile	310
Sierra Leone	280
Yemen	240
Albania	235
Ethiopia	235
Bahamas	230
Peru	230
Croatia	220

Country of domicile	Enrolments
Burma	200
Seychelles	200
Angola	195
Bermuda	190
Morocco	185
St. Lucia	180
Iraq	175
Uzbekistan	165
North Korea	155
Maldives	150
Macao	145
Belarus	125
Cayman Islands	115
Ivory Coast	110
Bosnia and Herzegovina	105
Guyana	105
Ecuador	100
Afghanistan	100
Somalia	95
Macedonia	95
Azerbaijan	90
Greenland	90
Mozambique	85
Georgia	85
Mongolia	85
Bolivia	85
Antigua and Barbuda	80
Rwanda	75
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	75
Namibia	70
Swaziland	70
Kyrgyzstan	65
Tunisia	65
Moldova	65
West Indies (not otherwise specified)	65
Eritrea	65
Congo (People's Republic)	60
French Possessions not elsewhere classified	55
Papua New Guinea	50
Grenada	50
Uruguay	50
British Virgin Islands	50
Panama	50
Dominica	45
Armenia	45
Belize	45
St. Kitts and Nevis	45
Costa Rica	40
Turks and Caicos Islands	40
Tajikistan	40
Congo (Democratic Republic)	40
Monaco	35
Fiji	35
Senegal	35
Guatemala	30
Cambodia	30
Lesotho	30
Dominican Republic	30
Gabon	30
Bhutan	25
Guinea	25
Monserrat	25
Turkmenistan	25
Burundi	25
Cuba	25
Madagascar	25
Liberia	25
Puerto Rico	20
Togo	20
El Salvador	20
Falkland Islands	20
British Antarctic Territory	20
Dutch West Indies	20
Mali	20
Nicaragua	20
CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)	20
British Indian Ocean Territory	20
Central African Republic	15
Honduras	15
Mauritania	15
San Marino	15
Benin	15
Niger	15
Paraguay	15
St. Helena Dependencies	15
Liechtenstein	15
Equatorial Guinea	15
Anguilla	15
Laos	10
Tonga	10
Gilbert Islands	10
Chad	10
Djibouti	10
Burkina	10
US Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands	10
Haiti	5
Andorra	5
Vanuatu	5
Surinam	5
Samoa	5
Windward Islands (not elsewhere specified)	5
Leeward Islands (not otherwise specified)	[1]
Solomon Islands	[1]
Cape Verde Islands	[1]
Guinea-Bissau	[1]
Sao Tome and Principe	[1]
Mayotte	[1]
Marshall Islands	[1]
Nauru	[1]
Tuvalu	[1]
Comoros	[1]
Pitcairn Islands	[1]
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands	[1]
Micronesia	[1]
East Timor	[1]
Overseas—determined by fee eligibility	1,305
Not known	[1]
Stateless	[1]
Total	318,400

[1] Less than 3.

Note:

Figures are on a HESA standard-registration population basis and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Medical Students

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether medical students with a first degree from a UK institution will be permitted to defer payment of up-front tuition fees. [41857]

Bill Rammell: Graduates with an honours degree undertaking a second undergraduate degree in medicine, or other subjects, will not be entitled to a government tuition fee loan when introduced in 2006/07. The Department of Health does pay the fees of undergraduate medical students, including those with a previous graduate qualification, in years 5 and 6. Medical students on four year fast track courses do not pay tuition fee contributions, except in their first year, because the Department of Health pays the fees in years 2 to 4. However, graduate medical students during their early years of study are eligible for subsidised maintenance loans, and in the latter years of study are

additionally eligible for bursaries and reduced rate maintenance loans when they access Department of Health support.

National Parenting Academy

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) where the National Parenting Academy will be based; [42108]

(2) what plans she has made to ensure country-wide access to the National Parenting Academy. [42109]

Beverley Hughes: We do not anticipate that the National Parenting Academy will have a single national base. We envisage that it will take the form of a network of educators who will be attached to existing educational organisations and institutions. The network of educators will be accessible country-wide.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what powers the National Parenting Academy will have. [42110]

Beverley Hughes: The National Parenting Academy will not be a formally constituted public body and therefore will not have formal powers.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria will be used by the National Parenting Academy when it decides which parents its trained professionals should assist. [42111]

Beverley Hughes: Local authorities and children's trusts, together with their partners and local professionals who work with children and parents, will identify parents in their local area who are most likely to benefit from support.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what methods will be used by the National Parenting Academy to assist professionals to help parents to bring up their children. [42112]

Beverley Hughes: The National Parenting Academy will use evidence-based parenting interventions which have a proven track record of success. The most effective parent support programmes have a clear theoretical underpinning, follow a programme manual and usually last 8–12 weeks.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how it will be decided which professionals will attend the National Parenting Academy. [42113]

Beverley Hughes: Local authorities and children's trusts, together with their partners and local practitioners, will identify training needs within their area and decide which professionals are best placed to receive training in delivering evidence-based parenting interventions.

Pupil Enrolment

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the level of pupil enrolment for a school to remain viable. [41930]

Jacqui Smith: It is for local authorities to decide whether a school is viable as part of their role in providing sufficient school places and education provision in their area.

Authorities have considerable freedom in their funding of schools to construct factors in their local funding formulae, which take account of small schools by way of having lump sum curriculum or salary protection factors which can assist schools with a low number on roll (NOR).

Lone Parents

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what skills training her Department provides to help lone parents into employment. [42849]

Phil Hope: My Department is committed to helping people, including lone parents, gain the skills to help them into employment. Lone parents are identified as a priority disadvantaged group for the LSC, and FE colleges also provide financial assistance towards childcare costs from ring-fenced Learner Support Funds. The Government's Skills Strategy is focused on improving the employability of all adults with low skills, including lone parents. Many lone parents lack qualifications at or above level 2, are therefore a priority for support; including Information, Advice and Guidance and free tuition from 2006–07 for a first full Level 2 qualification.

DfES also has specific strategies to help teenage parents into learning. For example, through the Care to Learn programme, £22 million is being made available in 2005–06 to provide help with childcare costs for an estimated 4,700 young parents; and those aged 16 and 17 and caring for their child and in learning also receive the education maintenance allowance maximum of £30 per week, plus attendance and completion bonuses.

In addition, my Department works with Jobcentre Plus to support the new deal for lone parents which provides a package of advice and support to help and encourage lone parents not in work to improve their employment opportunities.

Student Finance

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of part-time undergraduate students would be eligible for the financial support package announced in October 2005 if the threshold of access was *(a)* 50 credits, *(b)* 40 credits and *(c)* 30 credits; and what estimate her Department has made of the additional costs of extending eligibility in each case; [41162]

(2) how many and what percentage of part-time undergraduate students are likely to study at less then 60 credits per annum in the first three years of the operation of the financial support package announced in October 2005; [41163]

(3) how many and what percentage of part-time undergraduate students will be eligible for the financial support package announced in October 2005; and what the estimated cost is of this package for each of the first three years of its operation. [41164]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* From 2006/07 statutory fee support for part-time students with the lowest incomes will increase by more than a quarter, with 85,000 expected to receive fee support (approximately a third of eligible part-time undergraduate students).

The estimated cost of the new statutory part-time fee support package for 2006–07 and 2007–08 is approximately £40 million per year. Part-time students may also be eligible for a grant towards travel, books and other course costs; that is expected to cost approximately £20 million per year.

In addition, the discretionary funds available to institutions to help part-time students will quadruple: funds allocated for part-time students under the Access to Learning Fund will rise in 2006 from £3 million to £12 million, although the Fund may be used flexibly across full-time and part-time students. Institutions will be able to use this resource as an additional fee support on top of the grant or to increase help to students facing financial hardship.

Funding for 2008–09 will be considered as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

In 2003/04, 239,000 English-domiciled, part-time undergraduate students[1] studied at less than 50 per cent. of a full-time equivalent course at an English Higher Education Institution (HEI), representing 55 per cent. of all part-time undergraduate students at English HEIs. We have not made projections for students studying at less than 50 per cent. and have not made estimates of extending eligibility for statutory fee support below 50 per cent.

[1] Students with prior degrees are not normally eligible for statutory support.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of undergraduate students who declared themselves bankrupt in London in each year since 1997. [40807]

Bill Rammell: The table shows student loan borrowers who have informed the Student Loans Company of their bankruptcy and whose awarding local authority is in London, by calendar year of bankruptcy, since 1997.

Calendar year	*Borrowers*[1]
1997	1
1998	0
1999	2
2000	2
2001	7
2002	6
2003	30
2004	70

[1] Figures cover loans with the Student Loans Company only.

Notes:

1. Figures separately identifying undergraduates are not available; students on postgraduate initial teacher training courses can be eligible for loans.
2. There may be delays between borrowers becoming bankrupt and notifying the Student Loans Company, therefore figures could increase in future.

Source:

Student Loans Company.

There are several possible reasons for the rise in bankruptcy figures. Media coverage of the issue of student loan borrowers declaring themselves bankrupt during the passage of the Enterprise Act 2002 may have contributed to the rise in bankruptcies in 2003 and 2004. In addition, one of the effects of the Enterprise Act itself was to reduce the period of discharge from bankruptcy from three years to one. As a result provisions were included in the Higher Education Act 2004 to prevent student loans being written off on discharge from bankruptcy.

Bankrupt student loan borrowers, though, continue to benefit from the same non-commercial terms as other borrowers, including income thresholds and repayment in line with income. Income-contingent loan borrowers are not required to repay if their annual income is below £15,000.

Sure Start

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are participating in the Sure Start programme in Tamworth constituency. [42079]

Beverley Hughes: Sure Start Tamworth has 488 children aged four and under in its catchment area, which covers the wards of Glascote and Belgrave. During the last 12 month period for which data exists, it had delivered services to 448 of those children.

During the second phase of roll out of Sure Start Children's Centres from April 2006, Sure Start Tamworth is set to become a children's centre, and will continue to offer an expanded range of integrated services to these children and their families.

University Tuition Fees

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations her Department has received from Russell Group universities regarding the adequacy of tuition fee levels. [40262]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The Secretary of State, I, and our predecessors have regular discussions, formal and informal, with Higher Education institutions, including Russell Group Universities, on a wide range of issues, including tuition fee levels. We have had no formal representations on the adequacy of tuition fee levels since the levels were set in regulations following the Higher Education Act 2004.

Under that Act, tuition fees may not be increased by more than inflation until 1 January 2010 at the earliest. After that date, it could only happen if approval was given by both Houses of Parliament.

There will be an independent review of the effect of our higher education funding reforms. The review, to be conducted by a Commission, working with the Office for Fair Access, will report to Parliament on the new arrangements based on the first three years' operation of the policy.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of claimants moving into work in the last 12 months who are financially worse off. [41630]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The information requested is not available.

Through the introduction of the minimum wage, tax credits and changes to benefit rules we have made great strides to ensure that returning to work is more financially beneficial than staying on benefits. Employment is at record levels and this rising employment reflects people moving back into the jobs market who had not previously looked for a job, indicating that the Government's measures to make work pay are working.

Child Poverty

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether child poverty in Northern Ireland is included in assessments made in relation to child poverty targets. [41718]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* Our current child poverty targets are for Great Britain only and therefore do not include Northern Ireland at this time.

Child Support

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of Child Support Agency cases which are being handled where the non-resident parent has been assessed as nil liability. [21105]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is matter for the chief executive Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mr. Stephen Geraghty, dated 17 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of Child Support Agency cases which are being handled where the non-resident parent has been assessed as nil liability.

The table below shows the number of cases with a calculation or assessment in September 2005 broken down by whether or not they had a nil liability. Overall, 41% of cases had a nil liability, with the equivalent figures for new and old schemes being 12% and 51% respectively.

Cases with a maintenance assessment or calculation by scheme and type of liability—September 2005

	Old scheme		*New scheme*		*Overall*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Cases with a positive liability	407,000	49	244,000	88	651,000	59
Cases with a nil liability	428,000	51	33,000	12	461,000	41
Calculations/assessments performed	835,000	—	277,000	—	1,113,000	—

Notes:

1. The above figures exclude an additional 30,000 old scheme cases which had a positive liability, but due to the non-cooperation of the non-resident parent a punitive interim assessment was imposed.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000.
3. Cases which can result in a nil liability under the old scheme are:

People whose net income is less than the minimum amount of maintenance (2005–06 £5.70 a week)
People in receipt of sickness or disability benefit or award.
People who are looking after a child, so that their protected income calculation includes an amount equal to the family premium or income support.
Prisoners
People aged under 18 who are receiving income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance.
A non-resident parent (NRP) aged under 16, or aged 16–18 and in full time non advanced education (that is, up to A level, NVQ level 3 or equivalent).
An NRP receiving income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance, who satisfies the conditions for award of a family premium and who cares for a resident child for at least 104 nights a year.

4. Cases which can result in a nil liability under the new scheme are:

People whose net weekly income (including income from benefits) is less than £5 a week.
Students in full-time education (full-time means a course at a recognised school or college where there is at least 12 hours a week tuition).
An NRP aged under 16, or aged 16–18 and in full-time non-advanced education (that is, up to A level, NVQ level 3 or equivalent).
Prisoners.
16 or 17 year olds—in receipt of income support or income based jobseekers allowance or a member of a couple in receipt of income support or income-based jobseekers allowance.
People engaged in work-based training, or in Scotland, skillseekers training.
People living in a care home or independent hospital who get a benefit, pension or allowance which would otherwise result in flat-rate liability of £5, or who are getting help from a local authority with the cost of accommodation.
People in hospital who get a benefit, pension or allowance, which has been reduced to 'hospital pocket money' rate because of an extended stay in hospital (NB With the Government's announcement that reductions in benefit as a result of hospitalisation will cease from April 2006, it is intended that this category of nil rate will no longer apply from that date)
An NRP who gets a benefit, pension or allowance, which would otherwise result in flat-rate liability of £5, and who shares the care of a qualifying child for at least 52 nights a year.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to move onto the new Child Support Agency scheme those who are paying under the old scheme. [42926]

Mr. Plaskitt: The remaining old scheme cases will transfer to the new scheme when Ministers are satisfied that it is working well. We are not willing to risk that flow of money and put at risk these cases by bringing them across before we are sure that the new system and operations are robust.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are taken to ensure that those resident in the Isle of Man meet obligations placed on them by the Child Support Agency. [42927]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Child Support Agency does not have jurisdiction to make a maintenance calculation unless the parent with care, non-resident parent and qualifying child are habitually resident in the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom does not include the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.

Immigration

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of immigration on long-term unemployment. [41509]

Margaret Hodge: While there has not been a specific study focused on the impact of immigration on long term unemployment, research on the labour market effects of migration into the UK has shown that migration appears to have little effect on the labour market outcomes of the existing work force.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the reform of incapacity benefit. [41504]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* We will set out proposals for the reform of incapacity benefit in a Green Paper to be published later this month.

Pathways to Work

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Pathways to Work pilots in getting existing incapacity benefit claimants into work; and if he will make a statement. [41691]

Margaret Hodge: The early evidence from our pathways pilots is positive. Nearly 150,000 people have started on a pilot, including 11,200 existing claimants and there have been 19,500 job queries. As a result there has been an 8 percentage point increase in people leaving incapacity benefits after six months in pathways areas compared to the rest of the country.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1764W, on incapacity benefit, whether cost-benefit analysis has been carried out in relation to the Pathways to Work pilot scheme. [41692]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in Working Paper "Incapacity Benefit Reforms—Pathways to Work Pilots performance and analysis" a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

The Pathways to Work districts are piloting new measures and innovative approaches to helping people with long-term illnesses or a disability to return to work. As pilot schemes, they are designed to test whether alternative approaches may be more effective than existing measures.

Early results show off-flows from incapacity benefit at six months of around 48 per cent. in the pilot areas compared with around 40 per cent. nationally, an improvement of 8 percentage points, resulting in a reduction in the incapacity benefit case load which more than pays for the additional costs of the pilots.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1764W, on incapacity benefit, what assessment he has made of the percentage of new incapacity benefit claimants eligible for mandatory entry into the Pathways to Work who entered jobs; and if he will make a statement. [41693]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my right hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1764–1765W.

Pension Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of how much will be spent on the *(a)* guarantee credit and *(b)* savings credit, assuming income taken into account for pension credit purposes rises in line with (i) inflation, (ii) earnings and (iii) at a mid-point between earnings and prices and assuming (A) 80 per cent. take up of the guarantee credit and 50 per cent. take up of the savings credit, (B) 80 per cent. take up of the guarantee credit and 60 per cent. take up of the savings credit and (C) 100 per cent. take up of both guarantee and savings credit, in (1) 2005–06, (2) 2010–11, (3) 2020–21, (4) 2030–31, (5) 2040–41 and (6) 2050–51. [40485]

Mr. Timms: The information is not available in the form requested. Such information as is available is given in the table.

Projections of pension credit entitlement, and hence costs under alternative take-up scenarios, are not available at present, as they are dependent on National Statistics estimates of take-up; once these are available the projections will be updated. In addition, the cost of alternative levels of take-up, other than 100 per cent. also depends critically on the size of entitlements newly taken up under the alternative scenarios; it is not possible to estimate this realistically.

The table shows expenditure under the three scenarios where income brought to account for pension credit is

uprated in line with (i) prices, (ii) average earnings, (iii) midway between earnings and prices. All scenarios effectively assume a constant overall take-up rate beyond 2007–08, the end of the current planning period, and are based on the continuation of the current uprating policy.

Table 1: Projections of pension credit expenditure in 2005–06 prices (£ billion) assuming constant overall take-up from 2007–08

Income growth/credit type	2005–06	2010–11	2020–21	2030–31	2040–41	2050–51
Prices						
Guarantee	5.4	6.9	8.9	14.5	21.1	26.5
Savings	1.1	1.5	3.0	4.9	6.4	7.0
Total	6.5	8.4	12.0	19.4	27.5	33.5
Earnings						
Guarantee	5.4	6.1	5.1	6.0	6.9	7.5
Savings	1.1	1.6	3.4	5.8	8.5	10.6
Total	6.5	7.7	8.5	11.8	15.4	18.1
Midway						
Guarantee	5.4	6.6	7.1	10.3	14.0	17.5
Savings	1.1	1.6	3.5	6.0	8.7	10.4
Total	6.5	8.2	10.6	16.3	22.7	27.9

Notes

1. Figures are for Great Britain. They are in 2005–06 prices and rounded to the nearest £100 million.
2. Pension credit projections assume the continuation of the current uprating of the guarantee element of pension credit by earnings, although the Government are not committed to this beyond 2008.
3. Projections of expenditure for pension credit in the future are based on a long-term version of the Department's policy simulation model, which uses Family Resources Survey data for 2003–04 projected forward into the future to estimate the extent of eligibility and average award for each pensioner household on the survey.
3. Expenditure figures for 2005–06 are consistent with the latest available forecasts from the pre-Budget report 2005.

Pensioners (Hendon)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Hendon have received *(a)* winter fuel payments, *(b)* winter fuel payments for over 80s, *(c)* council tax help and *(d)* extra living costs help for over 70s in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41619]

Mr. Timms: Figures for this winter's payments are not yet available.

In winter 2004–05 there were 17,660 people in the Hendon constituency who received a winter fuel payment and of these 4,075 received the extra payment for those aged 80 or over. We expect the numbers to be similar for this winter.

We estimate that in the Hendon constituency around 11,000 people will receive the £200 aged related payment for help with council tax and around 2,500 people aged 70 or over will receive the £50 aged related payment to help with living expenses.

Notes:

1. Actual figures for the number of winter fuel payments made are rounded to the nearest five, estimates for the council tax and living expenses payments are rounded to the nearest 500.

2. Local authorities and parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:

Information Directorate, 100 per cent. Sample.

Winter Fuel Payments

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total amount of winter fuel payments to each constituency in the UK has been since the introduction of the payments; and what the overall total was in each year; [41632]

(2) how many people received winter fuel payments in each ward in each constituency in the UK in 2004–05, broken down by region; and what the value was of these payments in each case. [41633]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The information requested is not available. Total expenditure on winter fuel payments in Great Britain, and total number of recipients in each year, are as follows:

	Winter fuel payment expenditure (£ million)	Total recipients (Thousand)
1997–98	191	–
1998–99	194	–
1999–2000	759	10,084
2000–01	1,749	11,106
2001–02	1,681	11,202
2002–03	1,705	11,348
2003–04	1,916	11,468
2004–05	1,954	11,401

Notes:

1 Figures are for Great Britain.

2 Expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £ million and are given in cash prices.

3 Recipient figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

4 Includes £100 over-80s payment from 2003–04.

Source:

DWP benefit expenditure tables, consistent with PER 2005. These can be found on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Breakdowns at constituency and ward level are available from 1999–2000. This information has been placed in the Library. For 2004–05, a comprehensive breakdown at these levels includes age-related payments for people aged 70 or over, which cannot be separated from winter fuel payments, so the total figure is higher than that given above for Great Britain.

Women's Pensions

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received about improving the pension provision of women who have stayed at home to bring up their children; and if he will make a statement. [34433]

Mr. Timms: The Department for Work and Pensions has received representations from a range of stakeholders such as the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Trades Union Congress, Age Concern and the Fawcett Society on ways to improve the pension position of women.

Ministers have also met with hon. and learned Members with a specific interest in the subject of women's pensions.

We will be assessing all proposals against our five key tests to ensure they are fair, affordable, simple, sustainable and promote personal responsibility. We will keep an open mind, not ruling anything in or out at this time and then come back to the House in the spring with our proposals.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Administrative Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total administration costs of his core Department were in the last period for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39842]

Alan Johnson: Total administrative costs for the core Department for 2004-05 were £308 million. Of these £306.6 million are regarded as non-identifiable, and £1.4 million as identifiable, for the purposes of the country and regional analysis exercise, which is published in chapter 8 of the public expenditure statistical analyses.

Bus Services

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will ask the Office of Fair Trading to investigate bus service provision at district council level in metropolitan districts and larger unitary district councils. [41845]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), as the UK's independent competition authority, to decide whether to investigate competition issues. If anyone has any evidence of anti-competitive behaviour or market failure in bus service provision they should inform the OFT directly.

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35924]

Alan Johnson: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Cabinet Office will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the hon. Member for Walsall North will receive a reply to his letter of 2 November sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and transferred to his Department. [36229]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 12 December 2005]*: The letter from my hon. Friend was not a matter for the DTI and was transferred to the Department for Transport for reply on 6 December.

Credit Card Charges

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if the Government will introduce legislation preventing credit card companies sending out credit card statements which are received by customers too late for customers to avoid incurring late penalty charges and interest; and if he will make a statement. [41176]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have no plans to legislate on this matter. However, in 2004 the Department made regulations that require lenders to give consumers clear information about the key features of credit products before and at the time the agreement is made, including the way in which interest is treated and on default charges. This will help consumers to understand credit products better, shop around for better products and increase competition among UK credit providers.

The Consumer Credit Bill will further improve consumer rights by giving them more effective options to challenge unfairness in credit relationships and to resolve disputes with lenders. It will also improve the powers of the Office of Fair Trading to take action against lenders who exploit or harm consumers.

Damages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1006W, on damages, if he will make a statement on each case to which he refers. [37353]

Alan Johnson: All of the cases listed in my answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1006W, involved settlements with individual members of staff. It is not my Department's policy to provide confidential information relating to the circumstances of each claim from which employees are or might be identified.

Departmental Conferences

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what financial provision his Department has made for branded *(a)* conference bags, *(b)* plastic carrier bags and *(c)* pens for distribution at conferences held by his Department in each of the last three years. [38877]

Alan Johnson: The purchase of promotional items of this nature is done on an individual basis for each particular campaign or conference. Therefore, no budgetary provisions are made exclusively for these specific items but they are considered as part of the wider marketing mix.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40144]

Alan Johnson: There have been no sales of land or buildings on the DTI HQ estate since 1997 based on our office records. Such information on non departmental public bodies and other public bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in Southend West constituency. [41758]

Alan Johnson: The DTI administrative estate does not include any land or property in the Southend West constituency.

Departmental Expenditure

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33224]

Alan Johnson: A comprehensive list of all projects is not held centrally and to do so could be done only at disproportionate cost. However, we can supply the following:

(a) Design and production of new logos

On identity development and design guidelines towards the rationalisation around the single DTI logo:

	£
2002–03	450,000
2003–04	100,000
2004–05	10,000

	£
The re-branding of British Trade International (BTI) to UK Trade and Investment (UKTI):	
2003	600,000
The proposal to change the name of the DTI:	
2005	30,000

(b) Employing external:

(i) public relations agencies

Information provided from COI shows that the DTI spent the following amounts on:

	£
2002	
UKO4B	661,606.84
Invest UK	126,282.39
SBS	178,696.26
Trade Partners	247,651.65
	£
2003	
Trade Partners	546,312.99
UKO4B	443,767.40
Invest UK	447,412.30
SBS	295,607.01
2004	
Dispute Resolution	68,405.05
Renewable Energy	516,490.60
Best Business Practice	338,443.29
Best Practice	151,827.51
Renewable Energy	548,703.98
2005 (to date)	
Consumer Direct	138,560.25
UKTI	121,840.54
SBS	19,406.95
Consumer Direct	22,975.59
Consumer Direct—event	6,902.50

(ii) graphic design agencies:

Accurate figures are not able to be supplied as budgets for this type of expenditure are not held centrally. To do so would exceed disproportionate costs.

Letter from Claire Clancy, dated 17 January 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

(a) Spend on the design and production of new logos is as follows:

	£	
2000	0	
2001	0	
2002	5,000	Re-branding project
2003	0	
2004	530	Icon for "PROOF" (new product)
2005	6,500	Icons for "My Companies House"

(b) Companies House does not employ any external agencies for public relations.

External agencies have provided graphic design for our Annual Report and Accounts as follows:

	£
2000	n/a
2001	n/a
2002	8,000
2003	9,000
2004	9,912
2005	9,963

n/a – not available

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 17 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. I have been asked to reply in respect of the Employment Tribunals Service (ETS) which is an executive agency of the DTI.

The Employment Tribunals Service has spent the following:

(a) On designing and production of new logos since 2000 the Agency has spent—£10,407

2000–01: £5,000 for design of Corporate Identity and new ETS logo.

2001–02: £4,982 for design of Corporate Identity.

2002–03: £425 for design of 'DTI Service' logo and boilerplate.

(b) (i) There has been no external expenditure on public relations since 2000.

(b) (ii) Since 2000 the Employment Tribunals Service have spent the following employing external graphic design agencies—£44,328

	£
2000–01	15,514
2001–02	4,560
2002–03	4,358
2003–04	5,396
2004–05	7,970
2005–06	6,530

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 17 January 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 25 November 2005, regarding what the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project.

£

The Patent Office	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 to end October*
The design and production of new logos	0	0	0	0
Public Relations	101,398	111,963	102,125	59,755
National Awareness Campaign			150,706	58,452
Graphic Design				
New Patent Literature	0	32,780	7,502	0
Annual Report and Accounts	20,510	In House	12,175	3,533
Business Advisor training packs	10,873	0	0	0
Branding	0	1,453	0	0

Figures for 2000–01 and 2001–02 are not readily available and could not be prepared within the deadline set.

Letter from Desmond Flynn, dated 17 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2054/2005) asking what the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project.

The Insolvency Service has not spent any money on the design and production of new logos or employing external public relations companies each financial year from 2000 to date.

Letter from Martin Birdseye, dated 17 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding what the Department and its Agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project.

NWML total spend in year:	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*£000 2005–06*
On						
(a) Design and production of new logos	0	0	0	0	0	0.3[1]
(b) (i) Employing external public relations	0	0	0	7	8k	0
(c) (ii) graphic design agencies[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	11	3

n/a = not available.

[1] NWML spent £300 in July 2005 developing a logo for a new service in respect of the enforcement of the Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS) Regulations.

[2] These costs include design for posters for exhibitions, exhibition panels, a biannual corporate newsletter sent to customers, design for leaflets and brochures, design for a CD cover for the NWML video, and design for the Annual Report and Accounts. In 2005–06, NWML has spent £3k YTD.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual expenditure on training and development by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39992]

Alan Johnson: The following table shows the core DTFs expenditure on training and development in each of the last three financial years.

	Amount (£ million)
2004–05	5
2003–04	4.5
2002–03	5.04

The Department of Trade and Industry is expected to spend £5 million on training and development in period 2005–06. This figure is for core DTI only. The other organisations—NDPBs, executive agencies etc.—have devolved training and development budgets and the cost of collecting this information would be disproportionate.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40108]

Alan Johnson: Information on these expenditure items within the DTI HQ estate is not available by location and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Such information on non departmental public bodies and other public bodies is not held centrally and again could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40325]

Alan Johnson: Any costs associated with the provision of bottled water are not separately identified but such facilities are not standard within the DTI HQ buildings.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value is of *(a)* pay supplements, *(b)* bonuses and *(c)* other incentive packages that are payable in his Department on the basis of geographic location; how many people are in receipt of each payment; and what the total cost to his Department of each payment was in 2004–05. [35925]

Alan Johnson: There are no pay supplements, bonuses or other incentive packages that are payable to DTI staff on the basis of geographical location in the UK. Pay rates for staff below the senior civil service in DTI are set on London and National scales. Staff paid according to the London pay scales receive £3,500 more per annum on a full-time basis than those on the National scales.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40284]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not centrally monitor the number of staff who work from home, since flexible working patterns, including working from home, are negotiated locally. However, in our recent staff survey 8 per cent. of staff reported that they worked from home regularly, at least one day a week.

In 2002 the Department introduced a flexible working policy, including full guidance for managers and staff to ensure that new ways of working (including home working) are available to all individuals in all directorates and all grades, and that the benefits to stakeholders, customers, managers and staff are maximised.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41358]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The Department does not own any vehicles.

(b) The fuel efficiency and type of petrol required of each make and model of vehicle leased by staff for business use in the Department is:

Vehicle	*CO_2 emissions (g/km)*	*Petrol type*
Citroen C3 1.4i LX	148	Unleaded
Renault Clio 1.2	143	Unleaded
Ford Focus 1.8TDi	143	Diesel
Ford KA 1.3i	154	Unleaded
Vauxhall Vectra 1.8LS	183	Unleaded

The following vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service for use by the DTI:

Vehicle	*CO_2 emissions (g/km)*	*Petrol type*
4 Toyota Prius	104	Petrol/electric hybrid
1 Ford Mondeo	218	Unleaded
1 Ford Mondeo Zetec	218	Unleaded
1 Rover 75	249	Unleaded

EU Employment Directive

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the EU Employment Directive will be incorporated into United Kingdom law. [42289]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The majority of the provisions of the EU Employment Directive 2000/78/EC have already been incorporated into United Kingdom law. The remaining requirements—relating to age and certain provisions for disability discrimination—are scheduled to come into force by 1 October 2006, in compliance with Article 18 of the Directive.

Food Retail Sector

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent research his Department has conducted into independent food retailing in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [41429]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department have not conducted any recent research into independent food retailing in the UK.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings he has had with the Office of Fair Trading on structures in the grocery market; and if he will make a statement. [41430]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Ministers meet with the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on a regular basis to discuss topics of mutual interest.

Competition in the supermarket and grocery sectors is a matter for the independent competition authorities, in this instance the OFT.

Interest Charges

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place a cap on the level of interest money lending organisations can charge; and if he will make a statement. [38603]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have no plans to introduce an interest rate ceiling in the United Kingdom. In the light of research, published by the Department in August 2004, the Government are not convinced that legislating for interest rate ceilings would help consumers.

Rate ceilings could cause lenders to exit parts of the market and reduce the supply of certain credit products. This in turn could force many vulnerable consumers to use products inappropriate to their circumstances or even to go outside of the regulated market and borrow from illegal lenders.

We will, however, be keeping the matter under review.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department has made a written submission to the Lyons inquiry on local government finance. [31807]

Alan Johnson: I refer to the reply previously given by the Minister for Local Government on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2431W.

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease claimants have gone through the full medical assessment process to date; how many of those have been found to be suffering from an additional lung disease; and how many have *(a)* pneumoconiosis, *(b)* asbestosis or asbestos particles in the lung and *(c)* asthma. [38958]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* As at 30 November 2005, 274,599 medical assessments had been completed. Detailed figures of the incidence of other conditions found alongside Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are not kept but our claims handlers estimate that there are co-morbid conditions found in around two thirds of cases where COPD is diagnosed (about 100,000 cases so far).

Nuclear Decommissioning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to speed up the decommissioning of Magnox stations. [41552]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has set out its proposed approach to the decommissioning and clean up of its sites in its draft strategy and has confirmed that the closure dates for the remaining four operational Magnox power stations as those previously announced by BNFL. The NDA has indicated in the draft strategy its intention to speed up the decommissioning and clean up of Magnox and other reactor sites and to achieve final site clearance within 25 years, subject to the long term management arrangements for Intermediate Level Waste being available within the same time scale. The Scottish Ministers and I have until 31 March 2006 to consider and approve the NDA's proposed strategy.

Paternity Benefits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the costs of paternity benefits arising from measures in the Government's Work and Families Bill for each year from 2005–06 to 2010–11; and if he will make a statement. [41310]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The new paternity leave measures in the Work and Families Bill will be subject to further consultation and the date when they will come into effect has yet to be decided. The regulatory impact assessment for the Bill, which was published in October 2005, gives an initial cost estimate of £29.6—£59.4 million in the first year of implementation. This will fall to £24.6—£50.9 million in subsequent years.

£19.1–28.0 million of the costs in the first year will fall to the Exchequer, and £15.1–24.0 million in subsequent years. The remainder will fall to employers. The range of figures reflects the fact that the Government are still consulting on the detail of the scheme for additional paternity leave and pay there is some uncertainty about how many fathers will choose to take advantage of the new entitlements.

Post Office (Teynham)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the future of Teynham post office. [41888]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL) and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Royal Mail

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the board members of Royal Mail; and what the date of appointment was of each one. [41911]

Barry Gardiner: The Board Members of Royal Mail Holdings plc currently are:

	Date of appointment
Non-executive Directors	
Allan Leighton (Chairman)	25 March 2002 (Director from 2 Apr 2001)
Sir Mike Hodgkinson	1 January 2003
David Fish	1 January 2003
Richard Handover	1 January 2003
John Neill	1 January 2003
Bob Wigley	1 April 2003
Baroness Margaret Prosser	1 November 2004
Helen Weir	1 January 2006
Executive Directors1	
Adam Crozier (CEO)	1 February 2003
Tony McCarthy (HR)	6 January 2003
David Burden (IT)	1 July 2004

[1] A new finance director (currently being recruited), Ian Griffiths (as MD Letters) and Alan Cook (as MD Post Office Ltd.) are due to join the Board in early 2006.

School Holidays (Price Rises)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what investigations have been undertaken by *(a)* the Office of Fair Trading and *(b)* the Competition Commission into the practice of travel companies raising prices during school holidays. [42374]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 2006]:* While neither body has undertaken a formal inquiry into the practice the OFT did consider similar issues in the course of an investigation into the cost of flight supplements for package holidays from Scottish airports in 2001. The subsequent report concluded that there were no grounds for action under competition law.

The OFT's view is that in a competitive market it is inevitable that prices adjust based on supply and demand and one would therefore expect to see higher prices during school holidays when demand is greater relative to supply.

Sick Leave

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many of his Department's employees who are within one year of the official retirement age are on extended sick leave. [32589]

Alan Johnson: There are two employees in DTI HQ who have been on sick leave for at least three months and who are within a year, or later, of the normal retirement age. (normal retirement age is 60.)

The DTI remains committed to managing sickness absence effectively and, where appropriate, to putting in place the recommendations of the 2004 "Managing Sickness Absence in the Public Sector" report to reduce long-term absence.

Sunday Trading

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1675W, on Sunday trading hours, how many personal meetings he had with representatives of *(a)* trade unions, *(b)* supermarkets and *(c)* other large retail organisations in 2005 on Sunday trading. [40684]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The only meeting my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has held specifically on Sunday Trading to date was with USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers) on 16 November 2005.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what recent written representations he has received on the *(a)* economic and *(b)* social implications of liberalised Sunday trading hours; [41035]

(2) what representations he has received from business stakeholders concerning the proposed review of Sunday trading laws. [41036]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have received representations from a range of stakeholders on the issue and welcome further views.

DTI officials have commissioned an independent cost-benefit analysis of the case for further liberalisation of the Sunday trading laws.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the planned cost-benefit analysis of liberalisation of Sunday trading hours will invite representations from groups interested in the social cost of longer trading hours; and if he will make a statement. [41047]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We are very happy to receive representations from stakeholders on all issues relevant to Sunday trading. The DTI website gives details of how to submit views and evidence.

Sunday Trading Laws

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether a change in Sunday opening would require primary legislation; and if he will make a statement. [41517]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I anticipate that primary legislation would be used to bring about any further liberalisation of Sunday Trading laws.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will strengthen the measures that protect those who for religious reasons do not wish to work on Sunday; and if he will include such proposals in the forthcoming consultation on changes to Sunday trading laws. [41519]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The right to opt-out of Sunday working under the ERA 1996 applies regardless of the individual's religion.

We are happy to receive representations from stakeholders on all issues relevant to Sunday trading.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Animal Welfare Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with relevant Ministers about the extension of the Animal Welfare Bill to Northern Ireland. [42688]

Angela E. Smith: When consideration was given to extending the powers of the Animal Welfare Bill to Northern Ireland, it was viewed that this was inappropriate, as England and Wales legislation is different from Northern Ireland where animal welfare legislation dating back to 1911 has already been consolidated by the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.

However, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is finalising a review of Northern Ireland animal welfare legislation in order to identify measures, which are necessary to strengthen existing powers, by Easter.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has had no-discussions with relevant Ministers about the extension of the Animal Welfare Bill to Northern Ireland.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to take steps to amend legislation on penalties for those found to be responsible for cruelty to animals in the light of recent cases in Northern Ireland. [42133]

Angela E. Smith: Unlike in the rest of the United Kingdom, where animal welfare legislation is at present spread over 23 Acts of Parliament going back to the Protection of Animals Act 1911, animal welfare legislation in Northern Ireland has already been simplified and consolidated by the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.

However, a review of animal welfare policy is currently being finalised with a view to identifying new measures that may be necessary to strengthen powers to deal with abuses of animal welfare, including illegal puppy farms, puppy trafficking and dog fighting. Following consultation with stakeholders, steps will be taken to consolidate current legislation and to introduce new powers and penalties to deal with new types of offences.

Antisocial Behaviour

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* interim and *(b)* full antisocial behaviour orders have been made in each Police Service of Northern Ireland district command unit since their introduction in Northern Ireland. [42685]

Mr. Hanson: The relevant authorities have notified the Northern Ireland Office of two antisocial behaviour orders in Larne district council area, one interim antisocial behaviour order in Belfast city council area, two interim antisocial behaviour orders in Coleraine borough council area, one antisocial behaviour order on conviction in Dungannon district council area, and one interim antisocial behaviour order in Magherafelt district council area. The NIO does not collect data by police DCU.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, to question 39669, on bovine tuberculosis, what compensation package is available for farmers who have cattle diagnosed as positive when tested for bovine tuberculosis; and what impact this has on their ability to move cattle *(a)* within the country, *(b)* to the mainland and *(c)* to the Republic of Ireland. [41891]

Angela E. Smith: Under the Tuberculosis Control Order (Northern Ireland) 1999 (as amended), where the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) causes an animal to be slaughtered as a reactor the compensation payable by DARD for the animal is the market value of the animal. The market value is defined by the legislation as the price which might reasonably have been obtained for it at the time of valuation from a purchaser in the market if it had been free from disease.

In relation to the impact on movement of cattle, where TB is identified in a herd in Northern Ireland the movement of animals out of the herd is prohibited except to slaughter. Also, subject to the veterinary assessment the movement of animals onto the farm may be prohibited.

Only cattle from officially TB free herds are allowed to be moved to Great Britain and cattle from herds restricted for TB are not eligible to move there.

In accordance with the relevant EU rules (Council Directive 64/432/EEC), only cattle from officially TB free herds can be exported to the Republic of Ireland, and other member states. However, at present, live cattle cannot be exported from the UK due to BSE restrictions.

Bulimia/Anorexia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many specialist staff are available for the treatment of bulimia and anorexia in Northern Ireland; what facilities are available; and if he will make a statement. [42269]

Mr. Woodward: Community-based specialist eating disorders teams, which will be managed within a regional care network, are currently being established in South and East Belfast Health and Social Services (HSS) Trust, Causeway HSS Trust, Craigavon HSS Trust and Foyle HSS Trust. Nine appointments have been made and it is expected that the remaining 11 will be made by end of May.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) public body for which his Department is responsible are located in (A) each English region, (B) Northern Ireland and (C) overseas. [40035]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

(a) Northern Ireland Office

Core and legal staff	*Number of staff*	*Northern Ireland*	*London*	*Northern Ireland percentage*	*London percentage*
NIO Core	763	673	90	88	12
Public Prosecution Service	348	348	0	100	0
Crown Solicitor's Office	74	74	0	100	0

This figure excludes temporary staff.

(B)(i) Non-departmental public bodies

Name	Number of staff	Northern Ireland	London	Northern Ireland Percentage	London Percentage
Equality Commission for NI	143	143	0	100	0
Criminal Justice Inspection NI	15	15	0	100	0
Office of the Justice Oversight Commissioner	3	3	0	100	0
NI Human Rights Commission	16	16	0	100	0
NI Memorial Fund	3	3	0	100	0
NI Policing Board	51	51	0	100	0
RUC George Cross Foundation	2	2	0	100	0
Office of the Policing Oversight Commissioner	4	4	0	100	0
Office of the Police Ombudsman	128	128	0	0	0
Probation Board for NI	294	294	0	100	0
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeal Panel for NI	7	7	0	100	0
Boundary Commission for NI	3	3	0	100	0
Independent Assessor of Military Complaints Procedures	1	1	0	100	0
Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects	1	1	0	100	0
Parades Commission for NI	12	12	0	100	0

(B)(ii) Executive Agencies

Name	Number of staff	Northern Ireland	London	Northern Ireland Percentage	London Percentage
Compensation Agency	123	123	0	100	0
Forensic Science NI	181	181	0	100	0
Youth Justice Agency	70	70	0	100	0
Northern Ireland Prison Staff (Prison Grades)	1627.5	1627.5	0	100	0
Northern Ireland Prison Staff (Caterers, cleaners etc)	70.5	70.5	0	100	0
Northern Ireland Prison Staff (Administration Staff)	350	350	0	100	0

(B)(iii) Other public bodies

Name	Number of staff	Northern Ireland	London	Northern Ireland percentage	London percentage
Chief Electoral Office	46	46	0	100	0

Disabled Parking

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much revenue was collected through fines incurred by *(a)* parking in a disabled person's parking space and *(b)* the wrongful use of a disabled person's badge in Northern Ireland in 2004–05. [24180]

Mr. Woodward: The following table provides details of the amount of revenue collected through fines issued by police and traffic wardens for disabled parking offences in 2004–05.

£

Type of offence	2004	2005
Illegal parking in a disabled person's bay	53,520.00	52,770.00
Wrongful use of a disabled person's badge	270.00	330.00

Executive Programme Funds

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will reinstate the Executive Programme funds which were abolished by the Direct Rule administration in 2002; and if he will make a statement. [42402]

Angela E. Smith: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave on 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1980W.

Gabion Wall (Killyleagh)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on progress on reaching a decision on the Gabion wall at Killyleagh. [42259]

Angela E. Smith: The Planning Service remains committed to pursuing the necessary actions to ensure a satisfactory resolution to this matter.

An Enforcement Order, requiring the removal of the unauthorised wall, was served on 2 August 2005. The applicant lodged an appeal against the enforcement notice, and the Planning Appeals Commission is expected to set a date for the hearing in due course.

Separately, consideration of the current planning application is continuing and additional information has been requested from the agent.

These parallel processes will continue to be pursued until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.

Hip Replacements

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the waiting time was for hip replacements in each health board area in Northern Ireland on the last date for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [42268]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients waiting for a hip replacement in each Health and Social Services Board area in Northern Ireland at 31 December 2005 by length of time waiting is shown in the following table:

	Number waiting			
	Less than 6 months	*6–12 months*	*12–17 months*	*Total*
Eastern	250	193	3	446
Northern	185	132	12	329
Southern	104	81	4	189
Western	140	90	16	246
Northern Ireland	679	496	35	1,210

Source:
Altnagelvin Group and Green Park Healthcare HSS Trusts.

In July I announced a target to ensure that no-one is waiting more than nine months for hip replacement surgery by March 2006. The Department of Health is working very closely with Trusts to ensure that this target is achieved through further increases in hospital activity and use of the independent sector.

Hospital Beds

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many single rooms are provided to patients at each hospital in the Province. [18422]

Mr. Woodward: The number of single rooms available to patients at each hospital in Northern Ireland is shown in the following table:

Hospital	*Single rooms available*
Altnagelvin Area[1]	[2]100
Longstone	31
Mullinure	4
Oaklands	1
St. Lukes	30
Belfast City	103
Belvoir Park NICCO	20
Causeway	59
Dalriada	16
Robinson Memorial	8
Banbridge	0
Craigavon Area	122
Lurgan	9
South Tyrone	8
Craigavon PNU	17
Downe	6
Downshire	11
Lagan Valley	33
Lagan Valley PNU	10
Thompson House	4
Gransha	24
Lakeview	33
Waterside	17
Forest Lodge	0
Foster Green	24
Musgrave Park	39
Holywell	66
Whiteabbey PNU	2
Mater Infirmorum	69
Daisy Hill	47
Muckamore Abbey	61
RBHSC	42
Royal Maternity	21
Royal Victoria	216
Knockbracken	88
Shaftesbury Square	0
Young Peoples Centre	8
Erne	31
Tyrone and Fermanagh	33
Tyrone County	15
Ards	15
Bangor	2
Ulster	102
Antrim	52
Braid Valley	10
Mid Ulster	15
Moyle	12
Whiteabbey	33
Total	1,669

[1] Altnagelvin Area Hospital figures include figures for Altnagelvin, Windsor House, Spruce House and Waterside Hospitals.
[2] Approximately.
Source:
Northern Ireland HSS Trusts.

Illegal Waste

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many prosecutions have been initiated against the illegal dumping of waste originating from the Republic of Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many of those prosecutions have been successful. [42686]

Angela E. Smith: The Environment and Heritage Service [EHS] acquired powers for prosecution in December 2002; EHS does not hold figures for 2001 and 2002 when district councils were the regulators. With regard to cases of illegal dumping of waste from ROL in 2003—seven prosecutions were initiated; in 2004—12 prosecutions were initiated and in 2005—11 prosecutions were initiated. To date, eight successful prosecutions have been completed with fines totalling £33,070 plus costs imposed.

A further 16 cases are pending submission to the Public Prosecution Service.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many illegal landfill sites with waste from the Republic of Ireland have been detected in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [42687]

Angela E. Smith: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the response given to the hon. Member for East Antrim on Friday 28 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 650W. Since that date, an additional site of significance has been detected and will be subject to prosecution. Four others are also under investigation.

Medical Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients in Northern Ireland had to travel to other parts of the UK or further afield to receive treatment on the NHS in each of the last five years; which procedures such patients received; what the cost of such treatment has been over the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [42258]

Mr. Woodward: The table sets out details of the number of patients who had treatment outside Northern Ireland as part of waiting list initiatives in each of the last five years; the specialties concerned; and the resultant costs.

	Procedures	Number of patients treated elsewhere in UK or further afield	Cost (£)
2000–01	Cardiac Surgery, MRI, Orthopaedic Surgery	208	1,042,749
2001–02	Cardiac Surgery, MRI, Orthopaedic Surgery	1,467	2,724,418
2002–03	Cardiac Surgery, General Surgery, Orthopaedic Surgery	457	4,607,826
2003–04	Cardiac Surgery, MRI, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic Surgery	388	5,287,420
2004–05	Cardiac Surgery, Cardiology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Plastic Surgery	407	4,152,632
Total		2,927	17,815,045

I have set targets for this year to ensure that no-one is waiting more than 12 months for in-patient or day case treatment by March 2006, with shorter waiting times for cardiac surgery (six months), cataract surgery (six months), and major joint replacement (nine months). This is just a first step, and waiting times must be further reduced over the coming years.

In bringing about these improvements, I have introduced an Alternative Offer Scheme whereby patients will be made an offer of treatment by an alternative provider, including outside Northern Ireland where necessary. While every effort is made to treat people at their local hospital, where this is not possible I believe it is more important to get people the treatment they require and end the anxiety and frustration caused by long waiting times.

Review of Public Administration

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions his Department has had with representatives of the Irish government since the publication of the Review of Public Administration on 22 November 2005. [40781]

Angela E. Smith: There have been no discussions with representatives of the Irish Government since the publication of the Review of Public Administration on 22 November 2005.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions have been held between *(a)* the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland and *(b)* the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office and the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Dublin and officials on the Review of Public Administration. [40787]

Angela E. Smith: There has been no discussion at Prime Minister/Taoiseach level. However, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Dermot Ahern discussed the review of RPA briefly at a stocktake meeting held in Hillsborough on 14 November.

Statutory Off Road Notices

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorists in Northern Ireland should have completed the Statutory Off Road Notice during 2005, but did not; and how many were subsequently prosecuted. [42276]

Angela E. Smith: Figures for Statutory Off the Road Notification (SORN) are not recorded separately but incorporated into a range of offences under the Continuous Registration Regulations. For the calendar year ended 31 December 2005, 60,779 out of court settlement offers were issued to vehicle keepers who had failed to comply with Continuous Registration Regulations. Of those who did not respond to the offer 146 have been prosecuted.

Unauthorised Encampments

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Unauthorised Encampments (Northern Ireland) Order 2005. [42719]

Mr. Hanson: The Unauthorised Encampments (Northern Ireland) Order 2005, was made at Privy Council on 19 July 2005. However, as the order cannot be fully effective until sufficient sites for Travellers are available, I have decided to defer bringing the substantive provisions of the order into effect until I am satisfied that an adequate number of transit sites is operational in Northern Ireland.

Responsibility for providing such sites falls to the Housing Executive and I am pressing it to ensure the necessary sites are available as soon as possible. I anticipate that five sites will be operational by the summer by which time I will review the situation with a view to enabling the necessary provisions. I believe this represents a fair and balanced approach.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Public Order

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in Coventry, South since the penalty was introduced; and how many have been breached. [39742]

Hazel Blears: Data held centrally on the number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued by court in Coventry are only available for the whole of the city by type of court.

From commencement up to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area. Since 1 June 2000 up to 30 June 2005 (latest available) the number of ASBOs issued at all courts in Coventry, as reported to the Home Office, is 64.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction and are available at Criminal Justice System area level only. ASBO breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since one June 2000. During this period, of those ASBOs issued in the West Midlands, 81 were breached on one or more occasions.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire in each quarter since the penalty was introduced; [42428]

(2) what percentage of antisocial behaviour orders issued in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire have been issued to people under the age of 21. [42584]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Number of antisocial behaviour orders issued by the courts, as reported to the Home Office where restrictions are imposed within North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire local government authority areas, by period and age, 1 June 2000[1,2] to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

	North East Lincolnshire council			
	Age 10–20	*Age 21 and over*	*Total*	*Percentage under age 21*
July-September 2000	—	—	—	—
October-December 2000	—	—	—	—
January-March 2001	—	—	—	—
April-June 2001	—	—	—	—
July-September 2001	—	—	—	—
October-December 2001	—	—	—	—
January-March 2002	—	—	—	—
April-June 2002	—	—	—	—
July-September 2002	—	—	—	—
October-December 2002	—	—	—	—
January-March 2003	—	—	—	—
April-June 2003	—	—	—	—
July-September 2003	—	—	—	—
October-December 2003	1	—	1	100
January-March 2004	—	—	—	—
April-June 2004	3	—	3	100
July-September 2004	4	3	7	57
October-December 2004	1	2	3	33
January-March 2005	5	6	11	45
April–June 2005	7	3	10	70
Total	21	14	35	60

	North Lincolnshire council			
	Age 10–20	*Age 21 and over*	*Total*	*Percentage under age 21*
July-September 2000	—	—	—	—
October-December 2000	—	—	—	—
January-March 2001	—	1	1	0
April-June 2001	—	—	—	—
July-September 2001	—	—	—	—
October-December 2001	—	—	—	—
January-March 2002	—	—	—	—
April-June 2002	1	—	1	100
July-September 2002	—	—	—	—
October-December 2002	—	—	—	—
January-March 2003	—	—	—	—
April-June 2003	—	1	1	0
July-September 2003	—	—	—	—
October-December 2003	—	—	—	—
January-March 2004	—	—	—	—
April-June 2004	—	—	—	—
July-September 2004	4	—	4	100
October-December 2004	5	2	7	71
January-March 2005	3	1	4	75
April–June 2005	5	3	8	63
Total	18	8	26	69

[1] Between 1 April 1999–31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area (pfa). During this period no ASBOs were issued, as reported, within Humberside pfa (in which the North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire local government authority areas are located).

[2] As from 1 June 2000 data collected centrally by magistrates courts committee (MCC) area by quarter. For the month of June 2000 no ASBOS were reported as being issued.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* Derbyshire and *(b)* Amber Valley have entered into acceptable behaviour contracts since their introduction. [42939]

Hazel Blears: The number of acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs) made in Derbyshire and the Amber Valley is not known as this information is not collected centrally. ABCs are voluntary agreements with no statutory basis and can be entered into by various local services such as local authority social services or housing

departments, youth inclusion and support panels or the police. They are therefore unsuitable for central data collection.

A recent survey carried out by the Home Office and sent to all crime and disorder reduction partnerships estimated that over 13,000 ABCs were issued between October 2003 and September 2005.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers were held in custody at the latest date for which figures are available; and how many were families with children below the age of 18. [40633]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers is available from a snapshot taken on the last Saturday of the quarter and is published in the Quarterly Asylum Statistics publications.

This information is available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women are detained under Immigration Act powers; and how many of them are known to be pregnant. [39520]

Mr. McNulty: Pregnant women are not normally considered for detention under the Immigration Acts unless there is a clear prospect of early removal from the United Kingdom and medical advice suggests no question of confinement prior to this. In addition, women in the early stages of pregnancy may be detained briefly at Oakington Reception Centre as part of the fast-track asylum process and Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

The latest available information on persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers relates to 24 September 2005. As at that date, there were less than five women in detention who were known to be pregnant, all of whom were at the Yarl's Wood immigration Removal Centre.

Information on the number of persons detained, as at 24 September 2005 are published in the Quarterly Asylum Bulletin, on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the purposes for which his Department uses automatic number plate recognition; and how many convictions have resulted from its use in each of the last five years. [40600]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office is developing automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to target terrorism, serious and organised crime and 'volume' crimes such as burglary and theft of, and from, vehicles. Evaluation of the technology, which is currently being used by all 43 forces in England and Wales, shows that officers engaged in ANPR operations made over nine times more arrests and brought, on average, three times more offences to justice than general patrol officers.

This facility will enable the Police and intelligence services to track vehicle movements throughout the United Kingdom, specifically for the purposes of detection and preventing of serious crime.

The number of convictions resulting from the use of ANPR in the last five years is not collected centrally, however police forces that have participated in the three stages of the ANPR pilot have recorded nearly 30,000 arrests in a 32 month period.

Burglar Alarms

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had regarding the provision of burglar alarms to the elderly at a reduced cost. [41690]

Hazel Blears: I have had no specific discussions on this issue. Decisions about funding interventions that help reduce crime and the fear of crime such as such as the provision of burglar alarms are taken by crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) in the light of local assessments of priorities.

During 2005–06, CDRPs have received £74 million in funding for crime reduction and community safety programmes through the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF). This has been the primary source of funding to CDRPs for a number of interventions, including amongst others, tackling burglary and vehicle crime, violent crime, drug-related crime and youth crime.

In addition, we have provided £50 million for police Basic Command Unit Commanders to allow them to work with CDRPs on complementary crime prevention initiatives.

Closing the Gap

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he received a draft copy of the document Closing the Gap before 13 September 2005. [42430]

Hazel Blears: The report was published on 16 September 2005. Ministers and officials had been briefed on the report prior to that date.

Community Safety Partnerships

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms he has put in place for the monitoring of community safety partnerships. [41154]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has in place performance management arrangements to ensure the effectiveness of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Wales and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in England.

Under these arrangements challenging targets for crime reduction have been agreed with each CSP and CDRP and progress against them is regularly monitored. Under-performing partnerships are offered support and assistance to improve delivery. Our

approach to performance management is to work with local partners to bring the performance of all CSPs and CDRPs, to the level of the best.

Consultants/Special Advisers

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* special advisers were employed by his Department in each year since 1997; what the cost of each was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [27419]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information on individual consultants employed by the Department is not held centrally and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

The information held by the Home Office on its spend on consultants is as follows:

We do not hold information on the Department's total expenditure on consultants for 2002–03 and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

The best information available for the financial year 2003–04 from interrogation of the Business and Accounting Strategic System (BASS), indicates that the cost of external consultants to the department in 2003–04 was £106.8 million.

The best information available for the financial year 2004–05 from the interrogation of the Adelphi Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system Accounts Payable Module indicates that the cost of external consultants to the department was £46.9 million.

The Department awards contracts in open competition according to the EU procurement regulations based on best value for money. The use of external consultants in the Home Office provides the Department with specialist knowledge, skill, capacity and technical expertise that is not otherwise available in house.

Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For the most recent information I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 21 July 2006, *Official Report*, Columns 158–162WS. Information on the numbers of special advisers prior to 2003 was provided at regular intervals and this information will be available in the Library of the House.

	£
1997–98	7,627,016
1998–99	4,588,445
1999–2000	10,302,672
2000–01	27,877,286
2001–02	21,147,058
2002–03	[1]—
2003–04	106,800,000
2004–05	46,900,000

[1] Not held.

Correspondence

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to improve the Department's performance in replying to correspondence from members of the public. [21923]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Every effort is made to handle all correspondence effectively and efficiently. All correspondence from hon. Members and Peers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in 'Handling Correspondence from Members of Parliament, Members of the House of Lords, MEPs and Members of Devolved Assemblies: Guidance for Departments'. The same principles apply when handling correspondence from members of the public.

The department aims to respond to correspondence from the public within 20 working days. The Home Office responded to 92 per cent. of 9,788 items of centrally received public correspondence received in the period June to September of this year within target. Not all correspondence received from the public is tracked, for example correspondence relating to casework is not monitored.

A number of initiatives are in place to encourage improved correspondence performance:

the development of factsheets

promotion of the use of centralised drafting facilities

forums for the sharing of good practice

relevant training is available in subjects including the use of Plain English

Management information is gathered across the group and used to monitor performance and focus attention on areas where improvements are required.

The computerised correspondence tracking system has now been operational since 2003. The department has reviewed processes for the handling of correspondence and introduced measures that mean cases reach the appropriate drafting officer promptly.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 28 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Miss Sabrina Williams. [41844]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Baroness Scotland replied to my right hon. Friend's letter as duty Minister on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Home Department on 9 January.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons convicted of *(a)* murder and *(b)* manslaughter in England and Wales were subsequently (i) charged with and (ii) convicted of murder or manslaughter following their release on licence in 2004. [39747]

Hazel Blears: In 2004, there were two persons in England and Wales known to have been killed by persons who had been previously convicted of homicide in England and Wales.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* arrested for and *(b)* charged with a recordable offence in each year since 1995. [41675]

Hazel Blears: Statistics are collected on arrests for recorded crime (notifiable offences) by offence group, age, gender and ethnicity. Data available on the number of persons arrested for a notifiable offence can be found in Table AA of the HOSB "Arrests for Recorded crime (notifiable offences) and the Operation of Certain Powers under PACE", http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2105.pdf

Information prior to 1999–2000 is not available.

The statistics do not record what action followed the arrest and would only include arrests for a recordable offence if the offence was both recordable (on the Police National Computer) and notifiable to the Home Office. No separate statistics are collected by the Home Office on persons charged.

Criminal Records Checks

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest time taken was for Criminal Records Bureau checks to be made when a doctor in training changed (i) rotation and (ii) NHS trust in the last period for which figures are available. [43170]

Andy Burnham: Information is not available to answer the hon. Gentleman's question; such data are not collated centrally by the Criminal Records Bureau.

Departmental Correspondence

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much departmental correspondence was addressed to people who had *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house in each of the last five years. [41051]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This information is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Resources

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the real terms percentage increase in allocated resources for his Department *(a)* was for the period 1997–98 to 2004–05 and *(b)* is estimated to be between 2005–06 and 2007–08 (i) for each period and (ii) for each year. [31031]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The real terms increase in allocated resources[1] for each period and year are shown in the following table:

[1] Allocated resources for 1997–98 and 1998–99 are based on the old system of cash accounting which was replaced by resource accounting in 1999–2000. From 1999–2000 onwards, the total allocated resources shown are the current and capital elements of the department's departmental expenditure limit (DEL).

Period		*Total (stated in 2004–05 values) £000*	*Year on year real terms increase (percentage)*	*Period increase in real terms (percentage)*
1	1997–98	7,906,545		
	1998–99	8,367,815	5.83	
	1999–2000	8,780,662	4.93	2004–05 total is 64.69 higher than 1997–98 total
	2000–01	10,211,327	16.29	
	2001–02	12,009,479	17.61	
	2002–03	12,425,142	3.46	
	2003–04	12,877,937	3.64	
	2004–05	13,021,404	1.11	
2	2005–06	13,565,023	4.17	2007–08 total is 4.21 higher than 2005–06 total
	2006–07	13,804,366	1.76	
	2007–08	14,136,242	2.40	

Equality Bill

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria were used to make the decision *(a)* to grant an exception from the religious discrimination provisions in clause 47 of the Equality Bill to landlords who let part of a house in which they live and *(b)* not to grant an exception from clause 46 to owners of bed and breakfast accommodation who rent out part of a house in which they live. [41922]

Paul Goggins: There is a fundamental difference between someone who rents out a room in their own home and someone who provides a bed and breakfast service to the general public.

When a person rents a room in a house the arrangement is usually of a long-term nature and involves the paying of rent on a weekly or monthly basis. The person renting the room becomes a tenant and the house becomes their home. As a tenant they are entitled to certain legal rights of occupancy and it will be classed as their residence for the purposes of, for example, the census and electoral register. Such arrangements may involve a close relationship between the landlord and tenant. For example, they may include sharing washing and cooking facilities as well as other communal areas in the house. We believe it is right that when someone offers to take someone into their home on this basis that they should be allowed to discriminate on who they accept as tenants. That is why we have provided an exemption for the letting out of rooms in small dwellings at clause 48 of the Equality Bill.

The situation with bed and breakfast accommodation is different. This involves a service that is provided to the general public on a commercial basis. People often stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for only a brief period of time and the service is often paid for on a daily

basis. The person staying in such accommodation does not become a tenant and has no legal rights of occupancy. We do not believe that there is any justification for an owner of a bed and breakfast to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief in the way they provide their services. Clause 46 of the Equality Bill would not make it unlawful to provide a service which reflected the religious beliefs of the owner, for example, to offer a Christian bed and breakfast service where grace was said at mealtimes or where rooms included objects associated with the Christian faith.

Humberside Police

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time to an emergency call to the police was in Humberside in each year since 1997. [39416]

Hazel Blears: Data on time taken to respond to emergency calls are not collected centrally. This is essentially an operational matter for the chief constable and this query could therefore be directed to Humberside Police.

Identity Cards

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which public sector body will levy the proposed fines outlined in the planned identity card scheme. [41240]

Andy Burnham: Fines will be levied under the proposed Identity Cards Scheme in connection with the criminal offences of possession of false identity documents, tampering with the Register, provision of false information and unauthorised disclosure of information from the Register which the Bill introduces. These will be levied by the Courts on conviction in the usual way.

The Scheme will set up a system of civil penalties, which are not fines, for failure to register when the scheme is compulsory, failure to renew ID cards when the scheme is compulsory and failure to notify changes affecting accuracy of the Register. This will be administered by the Secretary of State by means of the new executive agency which will be responsible for issuing identity cards and passports.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate (Correspondence)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to improve the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's performance in replying to correspondence from *(a)* members of the general public and *(b)* hon. Members; and if he will make a statement. [34332]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) receives well over 1 million pieces of correspondence each year. The IND's policy is to acknowledge the receipt of all immigration, asylum, asylum support and citizenship applications either by sending a letter or issuing a form.

Other casework-related correspondence is not at present routinely acknowledged.

Our published target is to reply to 95 per cent. of correspondence—including Members' letters—within 20 working days. Some of the IND's business areas already achieve this target but we are considering how to meet it more consistently across all areas without adversely affecting decision-making capability. Our strategy to achieve that, however, cannot simply focus on answering letters more quickly. We must also improve the way we communicate with Members and constituents so that they do not feel compelled to write so often. I shall shortly be writing to all Members setting out how we intend to move forward on this.

Intercept Evidence

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* police chief constables and *(b)* the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis about using intercept evidence in court; and if he will make a statement. [29372]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have not discussed the matter personally with police Chief Constables or the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis nor have they sought to raise it with me. However, I am kept well informed of police views through the discussions officials regularly have with the police and others on this issue.

LT 12020 Speed Measuring Device

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the accuracy of the LT 12020 speed measuring device. [40451]

Paul Goggins: All speed measuring devices type approved for use by the police, including the LT 12020, are subject to laboratory and field testing before they receive type approval. I am satisfied as to the accuracy and reliability of the LT 12020.

Metropolitan Police Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under paragraph 10 of section 54 of the Metropolitan Police Act 1839. [40977]

Hazel Blears: Persons proceeded against and found guilty at the magistrates courts of offences under section 54(10) of the Metropolitan Police Act 1839 cannot be separately identified on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as they form part of a miscellaneous group which cannot be analysed.

Misuse of Drugs Advisory Committee

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many scientists who have conducted research into the association between drug misuse and mental illness *(a)* serve and *(b)* have served since 1997 on the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs. [42013]

Paul Goggins: Under the terms of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the membership of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs must include representatives of the practices of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and pharmacy, the pharmaceutical industry and chemistry other than the pharmaceutical industry and people who have a wide range of experience of social problems connected with the misuse of drugs.

There are four present members and six past members (who were members since 1997, including two members that retired from the Advisory Council at the end of 2005) who have conducted research into drug misuse and mental illness. The Advisory Council's committees and working groups also include co-opted members, some of whom have also conducted research in this area.

Mobile Phone Location Data

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use the police made of public mobile communications networks during the response operation to the incidents on the London underground and bus network on 7 July 2005. [42715]

Hazel Blears: The primary method of communication for the police are secure radio systems. Individual officers do make use of mobile telephones for communication both to other officers and to outside agencies, but emergency plans are designed around the use of radios. As part of the Government's lessons learned exercise we are reviewing the communication by emergency responders, Government and others on 7 July.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances there have been of the police using data from UK mobile phone operators to locate a missing person. [42716]

Hazel Blears: This information is not centrally held.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many motorists stopped for breaking the speed limit in *(a)* Tamworth, *(b)* Staffordshire and *(c)* England and Wales received a (i) warning and (ii) caution in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [42096]

Paul Goggins: The annual Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales, Supplementary tables' 1999 to 2003 (latest available), Table 18 gives data by police force area on written warnings (which includes formal cautions) issued by motoring offence groups. Copies of the above publications are available in the Library. The publications can also be accessed on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics (RDS) website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify Tamworth within the geographical area covered by the Staffordshire police force. 2004 data will be available at the end of March 2006.

Offender Rehabilitation

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what non-charitable premises are available in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon for the provision of (i) treatment testing and (ii) rehabilitation of offenders by his Department. [40716]

Fiona Mactaggart: The non-charitable premises available for the provision of drug treatment and testing and the rehabilitation of offenders residing in the London borough of Hillingdon, including those living in the Ruislip-Northwood constituency, are as set out in the following table:

Name of provider	*Address of premises*	*Description of what is delivered at premises*
DRR/DTTO Probation Team	Uxbridge Probation Office The Court House Harefield Road Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1PQ	Supervision of offenders on drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) and drug rehabilitation requirements (DRRs) of the community order who have not been designated as prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs)
PPO team	Main address: Uxbridge Probation Office The Court House Harefield Road Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1PQ	Supervision of offenders on DTTOs/DRRs who have been designated as PPOs. Drug testing of PPOs on licence, which is in the process of being implemented across the borough
Criminal Justice Interventions Team (CJIT)	Old Bank House 64 High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1JP	Assessments, drug treatment and/or testing as part of the arrest referral scheme in Hillingdon, DTTOs/DRRs, as part of the CARATs service and for PPOs
Probation staff from the Offender Programme Unit, Hendon Probation Office	Harrow Probation Office Rosslyn Crescent Harrow Middlesex	Addressing substance related offending (ASRO), a substance misuse accredited offending behaviour programme, to offenders on DTTOs/DRRs or as a stand-alone requirement of a community order where no other drug work is being undertaken
Hillingdon Drug and Alcohol Service (HDAS)	Old Bank House 64 High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1JP	Treatment of drug interventions programme (DIP) clients transferred from CJIT after 12–16 weeks and prescribing and assessments for residential rehab./detoxification for young offenders

Name of provider	Address of premises	Description of what is delivered at premises
Hillingdon Youth Offending Service	Darren House 65 High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1LQ	Supervision of young offenders, assessment and delivery of interventions e.g. targeted educational programme or counselling through substance misuse worker
Sorted	Sterling House 276a High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1LQ	Provision of tier 2 3 treatment e.g. counselling to young offenders

Operation Crackdown

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are plans to repeat Operation Crackdown in 2006; and if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to reduce the supply of Class A drugs in the UK. [41571]

Paul Goggins: The objective of our National Strategy is to have a sustained impact on the supply of Class A drugs to the UK and availability within its communities.

While there are no immediate plans to repeat Operation Crackdown in 2006, we are bearing down on each part of the supply chain, both in this country and overseas, and have put in place strong powers to seize the assets of drug dealers, and strengthened the ability to bring dealers to justice, through the Drug Act 2005.

Operation Crackdown, the concerted campaign by 33 police forces in England and Wales between January and March 2005 achieved its objective of promoting the use of powers to close crack houses and these powers continue to be widely used by the police.

Parenting Programmes

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are to be put in place to ensure that there is a lead organisation in every locality to deal with the most challenging families; and if he will make a statement. [41938]

Hazel Blears: The Respect Action Plan sets out the Government's plans for tackling the most challenging families. Initially the lead will be achieved by a dedicated Family Support Project which will be created in areas where they are needed. These projects assign a key worker to each family who coordinates the range of services and agencies that are involved with the household. Over time the effective approaches from these projects need to be mainstreamed and a local body (such as the crime and disorder reduction partnership) made clearly accountable for leading the local response to the most challenging households.

Police

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the likely cost of the proposed police force restructuring *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in Gloucestershire. [34265]

Hazel Blears: The business cases submitted by forces and authorities include information on financing and costs. The Home Office has provided considerable advice and guidance, including involving the independent Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to ensure that this financial information is provided on a consistent and equal basis.

A variety of estimates of costs of change have been advanced which are progressively being refined as business cases are analysed.

The Home Office has established a finance working group with the policing community and other Government Departments to take forward work on financial issues arising from restructuring.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the police force restructuring will be funded. [34266]

Hazel Blears: I have decided to set aside £50 million of police capital funding for 2006–07 and up to a maximum of £75 million of police capital funding for 2007–08 to support authorities and forces committing to early i.e. voluntary mergers and will consider applying this to authorities and forces which I decide can deliver acceptable levels of protective services if they remain stand-alone, since they too will need to reconfigure their organisations to achieve this.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the financial payback period for the police force restructuring. [34267]

Hazel Blears: The business cases submitted by forces and authorities include information on financing and costs. The Home Office has provided considerable advice and guidance, including involving the independent Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to ensure that this financial information is provided on a consistent and equal basis.

There are a variety of estimates of the financial payback period identified in business cases, which are being progressively refined, and this quality assurance will form a central part of the analysis produced by the Home Office.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department has issued to chief constables on the distribution of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* resources. [34268]

Hazel Blears: It is an operational matter for the chief constable of each area to decide how he or she wishes to deploy the available resources to best serve their communities. However, in doing so, chief constables must take account of nationally set targets on reduction of crime and service delivery.

We are introducing national standards setting out the quality of service which members of the public can expect whenever they have contact with the police. Public satisfaction with the police has now become a part of how police performance is measured.

We will give individuals and communities a voice in determining local policing priorities, engage communities in finding solutions to problems, and, where people are dissatisfied with the response to persistent problems, they will be able to secure a response from councils and the police. We want people to know who their local police officers are, and how to contact them. I have also pointed to the fact that every area will have a dedicated neighbourhood policing team by 2008.

It is also the case that some resources are allocated directly to the local level, for example the BCU Fund, worth £50 million in 2005–06. This is aimed at BCU Commanders and is intended to help the police play a full and active role in the delivery of crime and disorder reduction partnership strategies. BCU Commanders may spend the money on a wide range of crime and disorder interventions, including target hardening activity focusing on repeat victims, tackling antisocial behaviour through interventions such as pub watch schemes, youth inclusion work including support programmes for young people and CCTV. The interventions might also include anti-drugs work.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the conclusions of the Walsh Group evaluation in November 2003 in relation to the drug testing equipment supplied to the police by Cozart Bioscience Ltd. [40318]

Paul Goggins: The Department received the research report "An Evaluation of Oral Fluid Point of Collection Testing Devices" by the Walsh Group (November 2003) which assessed the accuracy of drug testing equipment supplied by a range of manufacturers, including that supplied by Cozart Bioscience Ltd. to the police under contract from the Department. This report initially indicated that the Cozart equipment was not accurate.

However, the authors of this report published an erratum in the July/August 2004 edition of the *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* where they stated errors in the reporting of opiates and cocaine results arising from the Cozart technology. Separate studies undertaken by the National Institute of Drug Abuse in the USA indicate that the Cozart technology is accurate.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were *(a)* accused of, *(b)* arrested for and *(c)* charged with corruption-related offences in each year since 2000. [41670]

Hazel Blears: The level of detail in the information you require is not held centrally and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. However, more generalised information on police complaints and discipline can be found in Home Office Statistical Bulletins on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hosb1704.pdf)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate his Department has made of the costs of the initial study into police force mergers undertaken by the Police Information Technology Organisation; [39706]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of the costs of implementing new IT systems arising from the options under consideration for the merger of police forces *(a)* within the East of England region and *(b)* in each of the other regions. [39712]

Hazel Blears: A study initiated and sponsored by the Police Information Technology Organisation commenced in November 2005 to examine the impact on IT of potential mergers within the eastern region. The original estimate for the cost of the study was £110,000 and funding has been capped at £120,000. The study is due to be completed at the end of January with the findings expected to be reviewed, approved and published in February 2006.

As part of the work flowing from the recent report on police structures "Closing the Gap" which was published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, the Home Office is examining the matter of cost of implementation of force restructuring on police IT and the eastern region study will assist in that evaluation.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will amend the guidance given to police officers in relation to the shooting of animals being kept in captivity under licence which have escaped, so that such an animal is only shot when it is an immediate danger to the public. [42376]

Hazel Blears: This is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police. If police officers encounter any animal which could be considered dangerous to the public, they will deal with it in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers Manual of Guidance on the Police Use of Firearms.

The manual states that the humane destruction of an animal is a duty which may fall to the police service if the animal represents a danger to lives or property, or if it is in such a condition that it must be killed to avoid unnecessary suffering and no veterinary surgeon or licensed slaughterer is available to perform the task or they are otherwise unable to do so.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been allocated to each London borough since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [42631]

Hazel Blears: Information on the number of police officers in each of the Operational Command Units for each London borough in the Metropolitan Police district was not collected before March 2002. Data on police numbers in the Metropolitan Police Service's Operational Command Units for 2002 to 2005 was set out in my reply of 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1117–20W, to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green .

Racist Attacks (Prosecutions)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there have been for *(a)* anti-Semitic attacks and *(b)* other racist attacks in each of the last three years. [40736]

Paul Goggins: The available information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform provides the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for racially aggravated, religiously aggravated and racially or religiously aggravated offences of grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm and common assault, England and Wales 2002–04.

It is not possible to identify those assaults which are anti-Semitic as the data are not collected at this level of detail.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates courts for racially and religiously aggravated assaults, England and Wales, 2002–04[1]

Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against* 2002	2003	2004
Racially aggravated wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm (inflicting bodily injury with or without weapon)	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.20 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(a)* and (2)	83	62	43
Racially aggravated actual bodily harm (assaults occasioning ABH)	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.47 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(b)* and (2)	475	482	372
Racially aggravated common assaults	Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(c)* and (3)	694	750	908
Religiously aggravated wounding or GBH[2]	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.20 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(a)* and (2)	1	1	5
Religiously aggravated ABH[2]	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.47 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(b)* and (2)	6	22	13
Religiously aggravated common assault[2]	Common Law and Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(c)* and (3)	2	4	17
Racially or religiously aggravated wounding or GBH[2]	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.20 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(a)* and (2)	1	20	17
Racially or religiously aggravated ABH[2]	Offences against the Person Act 1861 s.47 as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(b)* and (2)	7	40	39
Racially or religiously aggravated common assault[2]	Common Law and Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.29(1)*(c)* and (3)	5	62	77

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Codes for these offences were introduced to the court proceedings database in late 2002.

Reoffending

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people who had been placed in custody have re-offended in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each year since 1997. [40711]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates, which are measured through convictions, are only currently available for England and Wales.

The most recent re-offending data for adults were published in 'Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort' which is available through the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm). The report shows the proportion of offenders who re-offended within two years and were subsequently convicted. The conviction for the offence is counted even if it occurred beyond the two year follow-up period. Results are given for 2000 and 2002.

Reconviction data for 1997 through 2000 were published in 'Prison statistics England and Wales 2002' and data for 2001 were published in 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003'. Both of these are publications are available on the Home Office website. These series count only those convictions that were secured within the two year follow-up period.

Reconviction rates should be used with caution as a number of different factors can influence them. Reconviction rates can be adjusted to take account of the changing characteristics of offenders and these adjusted rates are published on the Home Office's website. The most recent data show that there has been a reduction in re-offending for all offenders of 0.2 per cent. against the 2000 baseline. The Home Office Public Service Agreement target is to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2006.

Respect Action Plan Booklet

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Ministers' photographs are included in the booklet Respect Action Plan; and which Ministers wrote their own words. [42082]

Hazel Blears: There are 13 photographs of Ministers' in the Respect Action Plan and a short personal statement of the Ministers commitment to the plans set out in the document.

The Respect Action Plan is a cross-government agenda and as such Ministers from a number of departments contributed towards the wording of the action plan.

Road Traffic Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will increase the fixed penalty for offences under section 14(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to £80; and if he will make a statement. [41750]

Paul Goggins: We have no current plans to increase the fixed penalty level for seat belt offences. However, the penalty levels associated with all fixed penalty offences are kept under continual review by the Home Office chaired Fixed Penalty Procedures Working Group, with representatives from relevant Government Departments and criminal justice agencies.

Secure Training Centres

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the staff to trainee ratio is at *(a)* Rainsbrook, *(b)* Oakhill, *(c)* Hassockfield and *(d)* Medway secure training centres. [40418]

Fiona Mactaggart: In each centre, the ratio of staff to trainees in each unit varies with the size of the unit. In all four centres, there is one member of staff in a directly supervisory role to between 2.5 and 3.5 trainees. In addition, there are custody officers on site to cover admissions, movements and supervision of visits..

Shellfish Toxins (Use of Animals)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many project licences authorising the use of live animals to detect toxins in shellfish were extant on 31 December 2004; what severity banding was assigned to the licences; and how many animals were used in these procedures in 2004. [38317]

Andy Burnham: Home Office records show that three project licences authorising the use of live animals to detect toxins in shellfish under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were extant on 31 December 2004. Two of the licences have been assigned a moderate severity banding and the other has been assigned a substantial severity banding. A total of 6,468 animals were used in the relevant procedures during 2004.

Tagging

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what sanctions apply to tagged offenders who remove their tags; and what discussions he has had on the effectiveness of such sanctions. [40757]

Fiona Mactaggart: Removal of a tag is regarded as a serious failure to comply with the requirements of electronic monitoring. The sanction depends upon the type and age of the offender. Those released from custody may be recalled. Adults subject to a community order will be returned to court. If a breach of the order is proved and the original offence was committed on or after 4 April 2005 the court must either make the requirements of the order more onerous or re-sentence. Juveniles subject to a community sentence will be returned to court. It is for the courts to decide how to deal with a failure to comply. Defendants on bail who remove their tags can expect to be detained.

Compliance with electronically monitored requirements is generally good. For those made subject to electronic monitoring between April and November 2005, 94 per cent. completed their requirements within the period, 69 per cent. without breach and a further 25 per cent. following breach.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many motorists stopped for breaking the speed limit in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire, *(d)* the Metropolitan Police area of London and *(e)* England and Wales received a (i) warning and (ii) caution in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [39714]

Hazel Blears: The annual Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales, Supplementary tables' 1999 to 2003 (latest available), Table 18 gives data by police force area on written warnings (which includes formal cautions) issued by motoring offence groups. Copies of the publications are available in the Library. The publications can also be accessed on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics (RDS) website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify Southend within the geographical area covered by the Essex police force. 2004 data will be available end of March 2006.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many fixed penalty notices were issued for the consumption of alcohol by under-18s in licensed premises in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Greater London and *(c)* Croydon in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005; [41129]

(2) how many fixed penalty notices were issued for selling alcohol to under-18s in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Greater London and *(c)* Croydon in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [41130]

Paul Goggins: The penalty notice for disorder (PND) scheme was brought into effect in England and Wales during 2003–04 to provide the police with a quick and effective means of dealing with minor offences. Under the scheme an offender is issued with a fixed penalty notice and has 21 days in which to pay the penalty or request a court hearing.

The offences of sale of alcohol to a person under 18 and consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 were added to the scheme with effect from 1 November 2004. The latest available figures showing the number of penalty notices issued for these offences from November 2004 to September 2005, are provided in the table.

Penalty notices for disorder issued for selected alcohol offences, Greater London and England and Wales, 2004 and 2005[1]

Number

Offence code	*Offence description*	*November to December 2004*		*January to September 2005*[1]	
		Greater London	*England and Wales*	*Greater London*	*England and Wales*
DA07	Sale of alcohol to person under 18	21	113	39	818
DB09	Consumption of alcohol by under 18 in licensed premises	—	7	2	40

[1] Provisional data.

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

It is not possible to identify penalty notices for disorder issued in Croydon as the data is not broken down to that level of detail.

Vulnerable Witnesses

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vulnerable witnesses were interviewed by police in each year since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [29340]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

War Crimes

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests for war crimes under the Geneva conventions have been made by the Metropolitan police since 1997. [40801]

Andy Burnham: The Metropolitan police unit responsible for war crimes has no record of any arrests under the provisions of the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 since 1997.

Young Offenders

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people of school age *(a)* found guilty of a crime and *(b)* placed in custody had a previous history of being in care in (i) Wimbledon and (ii) the London Borough of Merton in each year since 1997. [41707]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not collected centrally.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes were committed by young offenders in each of the last eight years. [42167]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. It is not possible to identify the age of the offender in the recorded crime data series.

Youth Crime

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to tackle youth crime in Southend; and if he will make a statement. [34027]

Hazel Blears: The Youth Justice Board has recently awarded a grant of £217,000 to Southend Youth Offending Team for services to prevent youth crime and antisocial behaviour between 2006 and 2008. The Youth Offending Service in Southend provides a range of services aimed at preventing offending and re-offending, including Youth Inclusion and Support Panels, a Family Support Project, Positive Action for Young People and drug treatment programmes. As part of the Government's Prolific and other Priority Offenders programme, Southend Youth Offending Team, in partnership with other agencies, is currently targeting 20 young offenders who have been identified as being most at risk of becoming future prolific offenders. The focus is on working intensively with these young offenders to address all the risks associated with their re-offending through a multi-agency response.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

BBC World Service

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the role of the BBC World Service in Central Asia. [41682]

Mr. Straw: The role of the BBC World Service is to deliver high quality international news coverage to a global audience through radio, TV and new media, thereby bringing benefit to Britain. Vernacular radio services targeted towards the Central Asia region include Azeri, Kyrgyz, Pashto, Mandarin, Russian and Uzbek. World Service English language broadcasts are also available as are websites in English, Mandarin and Russian. Recently the World Service closed its dedicated Kazakh service because of low reach and impact.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how funding for the proposed BBC World Service Arabic TV channel will be sourced. [41683]

Mr. Straw: The new channel will be funded from the existing grant in aid to BBC World Service which is currently £239 million per annum. Following a review of its output and input, the World Service has decided to close a number of low impact vernacular services. These closures, together with efficiency measures, will release resources to launch 12-hour Arabic TV.

Burma

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much investment in Burma has been made through UK dependent territories in each of the past five years. [42247]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* We do not hold any statistics on investment being channelled through the British Overseas Territories into Burma.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* problems facing the oil industry in Muanda, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and *(b)* the impact of Angolese soldiers in that region; and if he will make a statement. [41426]

Ian Pearson: We are not aware of any reports of problems facing the oil industry in Muanda, nor of the presence of Angolan troops in Muanda. However, Angolan troops are conducting a bilateral training programme at Kitona in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, at the request of the Congolese Government.

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41262]

Mr. Straw: While core IT equipment is centrally provided, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) operates a devolved system of budgeting under which directorates and overseas posts have the freedom to buy a range of IT and other equipment to support their work. Laptop computers, in particular, are frequently bought from such devolved budgets and no central figures exist for the numbers used within the FCO. To obtain this information would incur disproportionate costs.

Since 2003, officially supplied mobile telephones for use by the FCO in the UK are obtained under the central Government GTM contract owned by the Office of Government Commerce. Records available show that in the financial year 2004–05 the Department bought 269 mobile phones and 18 "Blackberries" at the prices specified under that contract. Prior to 2003, mobile phones were obtained under a variety of contracts, but there was generally no charge for the equipment supplied. Responsibility for contracts for mobile phones used by staff overseas is devolved to our overseas missions and to obtain the relevant figures would incur disproportionate costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40084]

Mr. Straw: All the buildings in the United Kingdom for which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responsible and for which the hon. Member has requested information about expenditure, including Wilton Park Executive Agency, and the non-departmental public bodies, are in London and the South East of England. The hon. Member will wish to bear in mind that my Department's principal activities are overseas, in 218 missions and posts. However, the specific details for fixtures and fittings, general office expenses and office equipment cannot easily be separated from the overall expenditure records and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41321]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office operates a devolved system of financial responsibility under which directorates and overseas posts have the freedom to invest in non strategic IT systems designed to meet specific needs. To compile a comprehensive answer to the hon. Member's question would require exhaustive searches of records in the UK and overseas, and would incur disproportionate costs.

EU Budget

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the net contribution per head of population in the United Kingdom will be under the next EU budget. [41572]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Over the next financial perspective of 2007–13, the per capita net contribution will be £88 per annum on a payments basis. This reflects the deal agreed at the December European Council and will leave us paying, for the first time since we joined the EU, roughly the same as France and Italy.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Joint Committee (EEC-Macao), *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-Nepal), *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-Pakistan) and *(d)* Joint Committee (EEC-Sri Lanka) have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38794]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There were no meetings of the EC Joint Committees on Macao, Nepal, Pakistan or Sri Lanka during the UK presidency.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Joint Council (EEC-Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council), *(b)* Joint Committee (ECC-Yemen), *(c)* Joint Committee Cooperation Committee (EEC-ASEAN) and *(d)* Joint Committee (EEC-Bangladesh) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what

other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38798]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There were no meetings of the EC-Yemen Joint Committee, EC-Countries of the Gulf Joint Co-operation Council or the EC-Bangladesh Joint Committee during the UK presidency. There are no meetings between the EC and ASEAN.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Joint Committee (EEC-Uruguay), *(b)* Joint Cooperation Committee (EEC-Canada) and *(c)* Joint Committee (EC-Japan) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39046]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EC-Uruguay Joint Committee met on 10 November 2005. The UK was represented by officials from the British embassy in Montevideo. The EC-Canada Joint Co-operation Committee met on 25 October 2005. The presidency was represented by officials from London and the British high commission in Ottawa. There was no EC-Japan Joint Committee. The Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government) a copy of which is available at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

EU Council

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of the steps proposed on the reform of the European Council put forward in the Prime Minister and Chancellor Schroeder's joint letter of 25 February 2002 to the President of the Council have since been adopted. [42023]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The European Council in Seville in June 2002 agreed a number of practical changes to improve the effectiveness and transparency of the Council, in line with proposals made in my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's and Chancellor Schroeder's joint letter of 25 February 2002. These measures did not require Treaty amendment.

Further reforms of the Council are proposed in the European Union Constitutional Treaty. However, as my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said to the House of Commons on 20 June 2005, under the current circumstances, the Treaty cannot proceed.

The UK will continue to advocate positive reforms of the EU institutions where these are practical and make sense.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals his Department supports to improve the decision-making process of the European Council. [42024]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Now that the UK presidency is complete, the Government will be giving further consideration to issues related to the period of reflection agreed at the June European Council. We have made clear that we support a wide debate on the future direction of the EU and how best to respond to the challenge of globalisation, rather than simply a narrow focus on institutional architecture.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* technical committees and *(b)* working parties of the EU Council of Ministers have been held since 1 July 1999; and how many were (i) attended and (ii) led by Scottish Executive officials in a UK capacity. [39217]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In accordance with Council Decision 1999/468/EC (the "Comitology decision"), the Commission publishes an annual report on the workings of committees operating in accordance with arrangements set out in that decision. The report for 2004 (reference 14850/05, COM(2005)554) was published on 11 November 2005 and was deposited in Parliament on 1 December 2005 in accordance with the arrangements for the scrutiny of EU documents.

We estimate that there have been nearly 5,000 working group meetings during the UK's presidency of the EU, many of which relate exclusively to reserved matters. We do not have figures for earlier periods and it would incur disproportionate cost to attempt to quantify how many have been held since 1 July 1999.

The Scottish Executive do not keep records of attendance at working group or committee level, although where the subject matter of such groups is of sufficient relevance to the Scottish Executive then officials from either the Scottish Executive's EU Office in Brussels or visiting officials from Scotland will attend. Attendance is at the discretion of lead departments, the Scottish Executive being consulted where the matter is of devolved interest.

EU Documents

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many and what proportion of EU documents have been classed as restricted and therefore not available to the European Scrutiny Committee in each year since 1997. [40944]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government does not keep figures on this issue. Documents subject to scrutiny by the European Scrutiny Committee are defined by the Committee's Standing Order, SO 143, and the vast majority are publicly available texts. In a very small number of cases, for example, negotiating mandates with third parties, the documents are classed as restricted. In these cases, the Government makes

unclassified summaries of the decisions available to the European Scrutiny Committee and provides a full explanatory memorandum at the concluding stage.

EU Legislation

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many pieces and what proportion of EU legislation has been passed during periods when the House has been in recess in each year since 1997. [40945]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There are periods during the year when the Council of Ministers meets but when Parliament is in recess. However, the Government works closely with the European Scrutiny Committee so that business is planned in a way which limits the occasions when legislation is agreed before the Committee has completed its scrutiny. There are, however, occasions when this is not possible. In the years since figures have been available, there were 20 occasions in 2003, and five in 2004.

Parliamentary figures show that in 2005 there were 68 occasions when the Council adopted uncleared proposals when the House was in recess. Figures for 2005 included 51 occasions when there were overrides when the House was in dissolution, and 17 occasions during summer recess. Final confirmed figures for the second half of the year will be provided by the Government to the European Scrutiny Committee in line with the commitment to provide twice-yearly reports on scrutiny overrides.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41201]

Mr. Straw: To answer this question each transaction paid to a consultancy supplier, either in the UK or at posts, would need to be checked against the employment information of each individual contractor whose services the payment covered. This information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Scrutiny Reserve

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the occasions on which the scrutiny reserve was overridden in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and what the reason was in each case. [40946]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1900W about the number of occasions the Government has overridden the scrutiny reserve resolution since 1980. That answer provided statistics from 2001 until June 2005, the period for which figures were available.

Final figures for the last six months of 2005 are still being collated but preliminary information suggests a figure of about 36. Details of these occasions will be sent to the European Scrutiny Committee once the figures have been confirmed in line with the Government's commitment to provide the Committee with twice yearly reports on scrutiny overrides. Ministers override the scrutiny reserve resolution they account for their action in doing so by writing to the Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee.

HEALTH

A and E Services

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what improvements have been made to the accident and emergency services in *(a)* the Sunderland Royal general hospital, *(b)* Hartlepool university hospital and *(c)* Durham university hospital since 2002; and if she will make a statement. [34064]

Mr. Byrne: As at September 2005, over 99 per cent. of patients spent less than four hours in the accident and emergency (A and E) departments of the County Durham and Darlington acute hospitals national health service trust and the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS.

Both NHS trusts have benefited from improvements to their A and E departments since 2002. Initiatives include:

a new discharge unit at the university hospital of North Durham to help smooth the discharge of patients from hospital;

a local primary care trust initiative to provide extra support to local nursing homes with high rates of A and E attendances;

additional staff recruitment for the A and E department at the university hospital of North Durham; extension of resuscitation facilities at the university hospital of Hartlepool;

provision of secure paediatric facilities at the university hospital of Hartlepool together with an increase in the number of staff with specific paediatric nursing qualification; and

additional patient monitoring equipment both for adults and children at the university hospital Hartlepool.

The information relating to the City Hospitals NHS Foundation Trusts is a matter for Monitor, the statutory name of which is the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts. The Chairman of Monitor will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Administrative Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total administration costs of her core Department were in the last period for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39831]

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the administrative costs were of each agency for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39847]

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39824]

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40055]

Jane Kennedy: The administration budgets regime which HM Treasury oversee applies to Whitehall Departments only. The Department's non-departmental public bodies are not covered by this regime.

Information on the Department's administration costs, including the Department's executive agencies, is given in the Departmental Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6524, tables 8.1 and 8.2). The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (Cm 6639) gives some provisional information on the 2004–05 outturn for departmental administration costs.

The latest information on gross expenditure of the Department's executive non-departmental public bodies for 2004–05 is given as follows:

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health—£33,300,000

Health Care Commission—£62,863,000

Commission for Social Care Inspection—£156,603,000

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority—£8,568,056

Health Protection Agency—£204,255,000

Human Tissue Authority—nil: not in existence in 2004–05. 2005–06 budget is £1 million

Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts (Monitor)—£16,011,000

National Institute for Biological Standards and Control—£22,752,000

The core Department's functions are all carried out within England. The Department operates from two main sites, in London and Leeds, and has smaller numbers of staff at a number of other sites within England.

All this expenditure is regarded as identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses.

Arrowe Park Hospital

Andrew Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of patients treated in Arrowe Park Hospital in the last 12 months were resident *(a)* in the borough of Ellesmere Port and Neston and *(b)* within the area of Chester city council; [38367]

(2) how many patients have been treated in Arrowe Park Hospital in 2005 who were resident in *(a)* in the borough of Ellesmere Port and Neston and *(b)* within the area of Chester city council. [38753]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows the number of patients living in the local authority of Chester and the Ellesmere Port and Neston primary care trust (PCT) area who were treated at the Wirral hospital national health service trust in 2004–05.

Count of patients for Wirral hospital NHS Trust; detail of patients in residence in Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT and Chester local authority, data for all NHS hospitals in England, data year 2004–05

	Patients	*Percentage of total*
Total patients for Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	50,612	—
Patients treated who live in the local authority of Chester	253	0.5
Patients treated who live in the area covered by Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT	2,795	5.5

Notes:
Patient counts:
Patient counts are based on the hospital episode statistics unique patient identifier (HESID). This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data are incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.
Data Quality:
Hospital episode statistics (HES) are compiled from data sent by over 300 NHS trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) in England. The Health and Social Care Information Centre liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of complete and valid data and seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data via HES processes. While this brings about improvement over time, some shortcomings remain.
Ungrossed data:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Audiology Services

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether treatment will be defined as the fitting of a hearing aid if one is required in relation to the target due to be introduced in 2008 that no one will wait more than 18 weeks for treatment in audiology services; [35571]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effects of the new 18-week target on NHS hearing aid users who are waiting to switch from analogue to digital hearing aids; [35572]

(3) whether the 18-week target for treatment in audiology to be introduced in 2008 will be limited in its application to those patients accessing audiology services by consultant referral. [35826]

Mr. Byrne: Proposed principles and definitions to underpin the 18 weeks target are available at www.18weeks.nhs.uk The Department is currently collating the responses of a service-wide listening exercise on these proposals and will publish the outcome in 2006.

Capio Healthcare UK

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date Dr. Thomas Mann, chief executive of Capio Healthcare UK, left the employment of the NHS as director of the NHS national implementation team for Independent Sector Treatment Centres (ISTCs); on what dates the process for selection of Capio Healthcare

UK to operate a group of ISTCs *(a)* started and *(b)* finished; and on what date her Department signed contracts with Capio Healthcare UK for ISTCs across England. [38278]

Mr. Byrne: Dr. Thomas Mann left the post of director of the national implementation team in October 2003 and left the employment of the civil service on 29 February 2004.

The procurement for independent sector treatment centres was launched in December 2002, when a series of advertisements were published in the then titled, "Official Journal of the European Union", and is still ongoing. To date, Capio Healthcare UK has been awarded one contract in the programme for the provision of a national chain of treatment centres, signed on 13 May 2004. In addition to this procurement, Capio Healthcare UK were awarded a one-year contract for the provision of supplementary surgical activity on 25 May 2004.

Carers Special Grant

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was allocated to each county in Carers Special Grant in each year since 2000. [38342]

Mr. Byrne: The data requested have been placed in the Library.

Chelmsford PCT

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her oral answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1700, when she expects the turnaround team to conclude its work in investigating the financial situation at Chelmsford primary care trust. [40742]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State announced the formation of turnaround teams at the beginning of December 2005. The aim of these teams is to restore financial balance to the national health service organisations concerned.

Chelmsford primary care trust (PCT) is subject to the first phase of the work, which is an initial assessment to establish the position of the PCTs financial control and actions to restore financial balance.

This assessment has now finished and the strategic health authority is currently reviewing the results with the aim of forming a tailored package of turnaround support.

Child Health and Social Services

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1802W, on child health and social services, if she will make a statement on the increases in *(a)* high cholesterol, *(b)* heart failure and *(c)* diabetes in the last 10 years. [37857]

Caroline Flint: Information on the number of episodes of heart failure, diabetes and high cholesterol is shown in the table. Data prior to 1998–99 are not available and are therefore not included in the table.

Count of finished consultant episodes for heart failure, diabetes and high cholesterol. Data for all national health service hospitals in England from 1998 to 2005

	Finished consultant episodes		
	Heart failure	*Diabetes*	*High cholesterol*
1998–99	111,722	71,877	1,145
1999–2000	110,367	72,241	1,977
2000–01	106,080	72,352	2,831
2001–02	104,694	69,120	4,455
2002–03	107,471	68,232	5,546
2003–04	105,569	68,099	6,640
2004–05	106,567	71,195	9,772

Source:
Hospital episode statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Counsellors

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on plans to regulate counsellors; whether this will include voluntary counsellors; and if she will make a statement. [41498]

Jane Kennedy: The Government intend to regulate counsellors in the interests of patient and client safety. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate and proportionate form of regulation for voluntary practitioners once agreement has been reached on the roles, competences and training for their safe practice.

Dentistry

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure adequate provision of NHS dentistry in East Yorkshire. [41228]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The East Yorkshire and Yorkshire Wolds and Coast primary care trusts are working together to improve access to NHS dentistry in East Yorkshire. A national health service dental access centre opened in Withernsea in 2001. In 2004–05, the dental access centre, and associated clinics in Hornsea and Beverley, provided treatment to 5,250 patients.

A new dental practice opened in Beverley in January 2005, which will provide NHS dental care for 5,500 patients, and a further new practice will be opening soon in Beverley with an agreement to provide a dental care for an additional 3,000 NHS patients.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists serve the *(a)* Yorkshire Wolds and Coast primary care trust and *(b)* East Yorkshire primary care trust. [41378]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, there were 51 national health service dentists with a general dental services or personal dental services contract within Yorkshire Wolds and Coast primary care trust (PCT). The equivalent figure for East Yorkshire PCT is 63.

Data on private dentists is not held centrally.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in the Beverley and Holderness constituency *(a)* operate fully within the NHS and *(b)* offer NHS treatment only for children. [41379]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, there were 31 national health service dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract within Beverley and Holderness parliamentary constituency.

Dentists are independent contractors and those with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the primary care trust (PCT). The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to private or NHS work by individual dentists.

Information about who dentists offer to treat is not collected centrally. However, an analysis of NHS patient registrations data as at 1 June 2005 show that within East Yorkshire PCT there was one dentist having only children registered and none in the Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT area.

Notes:

This figure has been provided by the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre. The data source is the Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether an individual primary care trust will be permitted to vary the value of a unit of dental activity between different dentists with whom it holds contracts from April 2006. [41968]

Ms Rosie Winterton: From April 2006, general dental services contracts and personal dental services agreements are a matter for local agreement between primary care trusts and dentists, subject to the provisions set out in the General Dental Services and Personal Dental Services Transitional Provisions Order 2005 (SI2005/3435). The value of a unit of dental activity may vary between dentists depending on a range of factors. These include the relationship between national health service earnings and dental activity during the reference period October 2004 to September 2005, which in turn will reflect the average treatment needs of a dentist's patients.

Departmental Correspondence

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much departmental correspondence was addressed to people who had *(a)* died and *(b)* moved house in each of the last five years. [41053]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold customer information for the purpose of proactively writing to customers. We only ever reply to correspondence directly sent to us.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40152]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The Department does not collect information on such categories of expenditure made by its executive agencies and executive non-departmental public bodies but details of their financial position can be found in their published annual reports.

Departmental Funding

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding her Department has granted to the *(a)* General Chiropractic Council, *(b)* General Dental Council, *(c)* General Medical Council, *(d)* General Optical Council, *(e)* General Osteopathic Council, *(f)* Health Professions Council, *(g)* Nursing and Midwifery Council and *(h)* Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain in each of the last three years. [39810]

Jane Kennedy: The Department granted the following amounts to the following organisations over the past three years, which is shown in the table.

Departmental funding to regulatory bodies, 2003–04 to 2005–06

Regulatory body	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
General Chiropractic Council	0	0	0
General Osteopathic Council	0	0	0
General Dental Council	2,321.10	378,351.44	234,982.40
General Medical Council	212,753.65	20,759.24	0
General Optical Council	0	0	0
Health Professions Council	1,330,000.00	0	0
Nursing and Midwifery Council	1,962,749.67	937.04	762.14
Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain	4,254,502.93	3,231,191.85	5,413,614.20

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions of the morning after pill were given in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority in the last 10 years, broken down by age of the patient. [36418]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Prescription data for strategic health authorities (SHAs) is only available from 2001.

It is not possible to provide an age breakdown for this data.

Prescriptions for morning after pill, 2001–04

	Number
2001	12,685
2002	12,682
2003	12,646
2004	11,856

Emergency contraception is also available through community contraception clinics, and can be purchased over the counter by those aged over 16. The Department does not hold data centrally on the latter.

Two national health service trusts provide community contraception clinic services in this SHA. The data for 2001–02, when the SHA came into being, to 2004–05 is shown in the table.

Occasions on which hormonal post-coital contraceptives dispensed at family planning clinics in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA, by age, 2001–02 to 2004–05

Age group	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Under 15	198	251	130	74
15	306	321	269	186
16–19	1,192	937	970	738
20–24	779	602	555	510
25–34	434	355	359	304
35 and over	144	124	118	119
Total	3,053	2,590	2,401	1,931

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre KT31 return.

Free Eye Tests

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pensioners in Hendon received free eye tests in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [41617]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the number of sight tests by constituency or by pensioners is not collected or held centrally. The Department does not count the number of pensioners receiving free sight tests, but does count the number of free sight tests given to persons aged 60 or over.

The Hendon constituency lies solely within the Barnet primary care trust (PCT). The estimated number of free national health service sight tests for persons aged 60 or over, paid by Barnet PCT for the year ending March 31 2005 is 24,477.

Greater Peterborough Primary Care Partnership Area

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to tackle health inequalities in the Greater Peterborough primary care partnership area. [40988]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service is in receipt of record resources as a result of the Government's policy on funding the NHS. Funding of the NHS has increased from £34.7 billion in 1997–98 to £69.7 billion in 2004–05. By 2007–08, spending on the NHS will have increased to over £92 billion.

This means that compared to the £84.6 million it received in 2003–04, North Peterborough primary care trust (PCT) will receive a funding allocation of £153.2 million in 2007–08. Over the same period, South Peterborough PCTs funding allocation will rise from £64.8 million to £114.2 million in 2007–08.

The responsibility for local health services lies with the local NHS. It is for PCTs in conjunction with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan and develop services to meet the needs of their populations using the funding allocated.

Group B Streptococcus Screening

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what analysis her Department has made of research and experience in other countries of Group B streptococcus screening during pregnancy; [39245]

(2) what guidance is given on when a patient should be advised that Group B streptococcus has been detected in a test. [39247]

Mr. Byrne: It is for clinicians, in partnership with their patients, to decide on when and how to advise patients of test results. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' guideline number 36, "Prevention of Early Onset Neonatal Group B Streptococcal Disease" and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline, "Antenatal Care: Routine care for the healthy pregnant women" give guidance based on research evidence.

The NHS Health Technology Programme has commissioned a study of different approaches to the management of Group B Streptococcus in pregnancy. A review of the international evidence forms part of this work.

Havering Primary Care Trust

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Havering primary care trust was successful in obtaining a share of the £95 million which was offered to those PCTs which had successfully implemented the new 'Choose and Book' system within the Government's deadline of 31 December 2005. [40882]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Havering primary care trust (PCT) was successful in obtaining £312,000, from stage one of the incentive scheme. This was awarded to the PCT in December 2005.

Health Committee Evidence

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral evidence from Mr. John Bacon to the Health Committee on 1 December 2005, HC736-i, on public expenditure on health and personal social services 2005, if she will place in the Library the details of diagnostic waiting times referred to in answer to question 188. [36479]

Mr. Byrne: The Department will respond to the Health Select Committee in due course.

Health Services (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* target waiting time to see a (i) psychiatrist and (ii) psychologist was for (A) adults and (B) children in the West Lancashire constituency in each of the last five years. [38372]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not routinely collect information on waiting times for appointments with psychologists as waiting times targets apply to consultant-led services only.

The maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a psychiatry consultant is 17 weeks.

From the end of 2005, the target will reduce to 13 weeks. The maximum waiting time for in-patient treatment under the care of a psychiatry consultant is nine months. From the end of 2005, the target will reduce to six months.

Information on the estimated average waiting from general practitioner written referral to first out-patient appointment with a psychiatry consultant working in national health services organisations covering the West Lancashire constituency is shown in the table.

Estimated average waiting time from GP written referral to first out-patient appointment, September 2001 to September 2005

	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)				
North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS trust (provider based)					
Quarter September:	*0 to <4*	*4 to <13*	*13 to <26*	*26 plus*	*Median wait*
2001	65	91	0	0	5.3

Estimated average waiting time from GP written referral to first out-patient appointment, September 2001 to September 2005

	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)					
Quarter September:	*0 to <4*	*4 to <13*	*13 to <17*	*17 to <21*	*21 plus*	*Median wait*
Lancashire Care NHS Trust (provider trust)						
2002	480	332	39	5	5	3.6
2003	470	289	28	19	0	3.4
2004	419	232	25	0	0	3.2
2005	299	156	0	0	0	3.1
West Lancashire PCT (provider based)						
2002	29	35	0	0	0	4.9
2003	23	25	0	0	0	4.5
2004	3	4	0	0	0	6.3
2005	0	0	0	0	0	—
West Lancashire PCT (commissioner based)						
2002	2	5	0	0	0	7.6
2003	38	64	2	1	0	6.1
2004	4	4	0	0	0	5.1
2005	15	32	0	0	0	6.5

Notes:
Data for specialties:
710: Mental Illness
711: Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
712: Forensic Psychiatry
713: Psychotherapy
715: Old Age Psychiatry
Due to small numbers, the calculation of the median wait is prone to fluctuation at primary care trust (PCT) and strategic health authority level. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures.
Waiting times apply to consultant-led appointments only. Services in many areas are now run by multi disciplinary teams.
Lancashire Care NHS Trust was formed in an April 2002 merger of the following organisations:
RMB—Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare NHS Trust (mental health services)
RML—Blackpool, Wyre and Fyde Community Health NHS trust (mental health services)
REU—Burnley Health Care NHS Trust (mental health services)
RJU—Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust (mental health services)
RME—Communicare NHS Trust (psychology and drugs services)
RMG—Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust
RVT—North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust
PCTs have been in existence since April 2002.
Source:
Department of Health form QM08 and QM08R

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding was allocated for mental health services in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* Lancashire in each of the last three years. [38376]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally. Current funding arrangements mean that primary care trusts are allocated resources on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the waiting time is for people to be taken on by an NHS dentist in *(a)* West Lancashire constituency and *(b)* Lancashire; and if she will make a statement. [38377]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on waiting times is not collected centrally.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) across Lancashire received some £1.9 million in access funding in 2004–05 to improve access to dentistry. The Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority (SHA) advise that from this money, the equivalent of 16.1 whole-time additional dentists are now working within the Lancashire area. PCTs across Lancashire have been

working with dental practices to support them in moving over to the new personal dental service (PDS) contract. As at the beginning of December 2005, 37 per cent. of practices had converted to PDS. The SHA advises that all PDS contracts have growth included in them for extra national health service registrations and practices have been increasing their registrations on a steady basis.

Health Visiting Services

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to primary care trusts on the minimum level of funding that should be provided for health visiting services. [37985]

Mr. Byrne: It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities, local authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services. This process provides the means for addressing local needs within the health community including the provision of health visiting services. All primary care trusts will commission these services to meet the needs of their local population.

Infertility Treatment

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action she is taking to ensure that the social eligibility criteria applied by primary care trusts to couples seeking infertility treatment is the same throughout the country. [29840]

Caroline Flint: The primary responsibility for the implementation of the clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems produced in February 2004 by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence rests with the national health service at local level, in discussion with patients' groups and local health bodies. Local policies will reflect local needs and priorities.

Influenza

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pensioners have been unable to obtain influenza vaccines in each London borough in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [41697]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1406W, on influenza vaccines, what steps she is taking *(a)* to expand and *(b)* to diversify production capacity for production of influenza vaccine. [40822]

Caroline Flint: We have invited manufacturers to tender for a contract to supply pandemic flu vaccine once the pandemic strain is known. The United Kingdom will need approximately 120 million doses to be available as soon as possible. This proposal to purchase in advance the capacity needed to make pandemic flu vaccine will make sure that an effective vaccine is available for use in the UK as quickly as possible after a flu pandemic starts.

We are finalising a contract for the purchase of two to three million doses of vaccine against the H5N1 strain currently circulating in South East Asia and other areas. This vaccine can be used for research and for possible use for healthcare workers in an emergency, and may provide some limited protection against a pandemic emerging from that source. We hope to award this contract shortly and should receive some stocks in the next few months. Award of these contracts will provide manufacturers with resource to develop vaccines and increase production capacity.

We have already met with several manufacturers to discuss a range of vaccine production technologies, in addition to the standard egg based technology, such as DNA and cell-culture vaccines which may allow production capacity to be increased.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress is being made towards ensuring that an adequate vaccine against the human form of avian influenza is available in the UK. [41232]

Caroline Flint: On 19 October 2005, the Chief Medical Officer announced that the Department is inviting manufacturers to tender for a contract to supply pandemic flu vaccine once the pandemic strain is known. The United Kingdom will need approximately 120 million doses to be available as soon as possible. The proposal to purchase in advance the capacity needed to make pandemic flu vaccine will make sure that an effective vaccine is available for use in the UK as quickly as possible after a flu pandemic starts.

On 20 July 2005, the Department invited manufacturers to tender for a limited supply of H5N1 vaccine. The move is part of the work to prepare for and reduce the impact of a possible flu pandemic. We hope to award this contract shortly.

Lymphoedema

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been diagnosed with lymphoedema in *(a)* Tamworth constituency, *(b)* Staffordshire, *(c)* the West Midlands and *(d)* England in each year since 1997. [22154]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the incidence of lymphoedema are not available centrally.

Macular Degeneration

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to make photodynamic therapy available on the NHS to treat age-related macular degeneration. [40605]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued their guidance on photodynamic therapy on 24 September 2003. Implementation of the NICE guidance was co-ordinated by local specialist commissioning groups. All primary care trusts are funding photodynamic therapy treatment for patients with both the wholly classic and predominantly classic forms of age-related macular degeneration.

Media Monitoring

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library copies of *(a)* print and *(b)* broadcast media monitoring undertaken for her Department since 2002. [36975]

Jane Kennedy: The current arrangements for regular national and regional media monitoring and analysis started in late 2004. The Department monitors the print media only in the regional media. A small proportion of the national broadcast media is monitored but the large majority of media monitoring covers the print media only.

Over the summer of 2005, a summary of media coverage for December 2004 was published as part of the Department's communications research publication scheme under the freedom of information (FOI). Officers considered the merits of different methods of publication for all the research, including the Department's Library and its website. The Department's website was chosen as the most cost-effective method and the best fit with FOI requirements.

The Department has committed to publishing summaries of its communications research every six months. The next publication date is February 2006. This will include summaries of media analysis from January to June 2005. Copies of the December 2004 analysis has been placed in the Library.

Nappies

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much the NHS spent on disposable nappies in each year since 1997; [40972]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues in the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs with regard to the use of reusable nappies in NHS hospitals; [40973]

(3) what estimate she has made of the effect on costs to NHS hospitals of supplying reusable nappies on maternity wards in place of disposable nappies. [40974]

Mr. Byrne: Information on national health service expenditure on disposable nappies is not collected centrally.

I have had no recent discussions with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about the use of reusable nappies in national health service hospitals. It is for individual NHS trusts to decide on the practicalities, including the effect on costs, of promoting the use of reusable nappies in their own maternity units.

NHS Central Registration System

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of new registrants with general practitioners who had previously been resident outside the UK in each of the last three years for which information is available, broken down by local authority area. [38507]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not hold this information centrally.

NHS Gift Card Scheme

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what involvement her Department has had in the NHS Gift Card Scheme; and if she will make a statement. [40376]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The Department has had no involvement in the NHS gift card scheme.

NHS Tariff Uplift

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the size of the NHS tariff uplift *(a)* will be between 2005–06 and 2006–07 and *(b)* was between 2004–05 and 2005–06. [39283]

Mr. Byrne: Details on the 2006–07 tariff will be published in January 2006.

NICE Guidance

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what direction her Department has given to the NHS regarding the implementation of clinical guidelines emanating from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [40234]

Jane Kennedy: Clinical guidelines issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) are included within the national standards set out in "Standards for Better Health" (2004). NICE'S clinical guidelines are part of the developmental standards which national health service bodies are required to take into account in discharging their functions. The Healthcare Commission also takes these standards into consideration when undertaking their annual review of NHS bodies.

Nurses

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified nurses are on maternity leave from the NHS; and how many of these nurses qualified in the last 12 months. [39303]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally.

Nursing and Midwifery Council

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints were referred to the Fitness to Practice Department of the Nursing and Midwifery Council in each of the last five years. [41105]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not held centrally. Data about fitness to practice cases can be obtained directly from the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Osteoporosis

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received advocating the incorporation of osteoporosis in the new Quality and Outcomes Framework of the General Medical Services contract from April 2006. [39327]

Mr. Byrne: The quality and outcomes framework is a national agreement as part of the general medical services contract. Negotiations have just concluded for the 2006–07 contract and were held between NHS

Employers (NHSE) and the General Practice Committee of the British Medical Association. As part of the review process NHSE secured an independent review panel at the University of Birmingham to receive submissions and representations from interested parties.

Payment-by-results

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether any NHS organisations which have suspended the operation of payment by results for elective activity; whether suspension of payment by results has been sanctioned by her Department; and if she will make a statement. [39368]

Mr. Byrne: 2005–06 is the first year of transition from locally negotiated prices to a national tariff. The use of risk-sharing mechanisms by a few health authorities is reasonable in this context. This is a mature and sensible approach and amounts to a minor modification of the planned roll out of payment by results rather than its suspension.

Pesticide Residue

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent *(a)* assessment she has made of and *(b)* reports she has commissioned into the health implications arising from the presence in food of a combination of (i) additives and (ii) pesticide residues. [41920]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The independent Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) considered the health implications of mixtures of pesticides in 2002 and mixtures of additives in 2004. They advised that the health hazard due to mixtures of such chemicals at levels found in food is likely to be small. The COT report can be found on the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) website at: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/researchinfo/foodcomponentsresearch/mixturesresearch/t10prog/

The FSA advises that it is funding research to meet the COT recommendations to investigate possible health effects of mixtures of chemicals, including a project on food additives and a programme on mixtures of pesticides. Details of this research can be found on the FSA's website at: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/researchinfo/foodcomponentsresearch/mixturesresearch/t10prog/

Prescribing Practice (Budget Overruns)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding occurrences of the prescribing practice where patients are denied access to certain treatments at times of the year or month when budgets are likely to over-run; and what assessment she has made of how widespread this practice is. [39397]

Jane Kennedy: I have received a number of representations on the potential impact of local national health service deficits on patients.

Psychology

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of *(a)* chartered psychologists and *(b)* chartered educational psychologists currently have a doctorate in psychology. [39506]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the revised advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation on preventative treatment for respiratory syncytial virus will be disseminated to trusts; and whether additional funds will be available to trusts to allow the implementation of such guidance. [30159]

Caroline Flint: The recommendations from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation are made available on the website. It is a matter for clinical governance on how these recommendations are implemented.

Scanning Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to make a decision concerning a new data collection procedure for waiting times for scans and tests. [34614]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley) on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1579W.

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme in 2005–06 is expected to be; what the cost was in 2004–05; and what has been the unit cost per item of fruit supplied and distributed. [42409]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The total cost of the school fruit and vegetable scheme in 2005–06 is expected to be £37,354,000.

The cost of the scheme in 2004–05 was £28,840,000. The lower costs in 2004–05 are due to the roll out of the scheme to schools in all the English regions which was not complete until November 2004.

The unit cost per piece of fruit and vegetable supplied is 10p.

Smoking

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how bingo halls will be treated under the proposed ban on smoking in public places. [28653]

Caroline Flint: The smoke free provisions of the Health Bill do not single out bingo halls for any special treatment. Bingo halls will be covered by the Bill in the same way as other premises.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the reduction in smoking prevalence rates that would be achieved by implementing option four in the regulatory impact assessment for the Health Improvement and Protection Bill. [29751]

Caroline Flint: A regulatory impact assessment (RIA) has been published alongside the Health Bill. The RIA contains estimates of costs and benefits of legislation to

end smoking in enclosed public places and workplaces, including potential impact on smoking prevalence rates. A copy is available in the Library.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether smoking on stage in theatres as part of the presentation will be permitted under the Government's proposed ban on smoking in public places. [41970]

Caroline Flint: As part of the public consultation on the smoke-free parts of the Health Bill, we received representations from the theatre industry to exempt theatrical performances. We are considering the points made and will take them into account in drafting regulations.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish her response to the Health Select Committee's report advocating a wider ban on smoking than that contained in the Health Bill prior to that Bill's report stage; and if she will make a statement. [39597]

Caroline Flint: The Government will publish their response to the Health Select Committee's report in due course.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to improve access to smoking cessation services for hard-to-reach groups; [39432]

(2) if she will take steps to increase referral from the NHS and partner agencies to smoking cessation services; [39433]

(3) if she will expand the current capacity of NHS smoking cessation services. [39434]

Caroline Flint: The Department funded an evaluation of the national health service stop smoking services in England. The evaluation included an analysis of how well the services were doing in enabling access to the services of smokers from hard-to-reach groups. Results from the evaluation show that the NHS stop smoking services in England are successfully reaching smokers living in the most disadvantaged areas. The evaluation was published in a special supplement of the journal, "Addiction" in April 2005. A copy is available in the Library.

The Department has also asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to look at two areas of smoking cessation: the first is for brief interventions and referral, the second is for optimal provision of services for smokers. The scopes for these two pieces of work are available on NICE'S website. In both cases the scopes place particular emphasis on looking at groups where smoking rates are high including manual working groups, pregnant women, low income/lone parents and homeless people.

The Department ran a major marketing campaign during 2005 to raise awareness of local NHS stop smoking services. This campaign included television, press, radio and ambient advertising. As with all tobacco education campaigns, the campaign had a strong focus on the routine and manual audience. In February 2006, a new major campaign, promoting local NHS stop smoking services will be launched. This will again focus on the routine and manual group audience.

To build on the continued good progress of the NHS stop smoking services in reaching and exceeding previous targets for helping smokers to quit, the Department set from April 2003 a more demanding national target of helping 800,000 smokers to quit by March 2006. To help meet this increased target, the services have expanded substantially, supported by extra investment of £138 million over the three years. The table shows the substantial and continued increase in capacity in NHS stop smoking services.

NHS stop smoking service results 1999—June 2005

	People setting a quit date through NHS stop smoking service[1]	*Number who remained quit at the four week follow up with NHS stop smoking service*
1999–2000	14,598	5,761
2000–2001	132,544	64,554
2001–2002	227,335	119,834
2002–2003	234,858	124,082
2003–2004	361,224	204,876
2004–2005	529,567	298,124
1 April—June 2005	140,177	73,396
Total 1999—June 2005	1,640,303	890,627

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the reasons for Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust's budget deficit; [38375]

(2) when the turnround team sent into Southport and Ormskirk Hospital is expected to report its findings; and whether the findings will be made public. [38671]

Mr. Byrne: Turnaround teams, comprising financial and management specialists, are to be sent into a small number of national health service organisations to help them provide more cost-effective services for patients.

An initial piece of work, the baseline assessment, is under way to identify the NHS organisations that will most benefit from the support of the turnaround teams. Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust is one of the organisations involved in the baseline assessment and was chosen because of the financial challenges it faces.

The baseline assessment is planned to be concluded before Christmas. No decision has been made as to whether the findings will be made public.

The turnaround teams will support the chief executives of each of the organisations identified as needing their support. The type and length of engagement will be tailored to the needs of specific organisations but the programme is expected to be of an 18-month duration.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the future capital investment programme is for Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust. [38378]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested can be obtained from the Southport and Ormskirk hospital national health service trust and the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the performance management abilities of strategic health authorities in managing NHS trusts and primary care trusts which are failing in their duties to break even year-on-year. [39346]

Mr. Byrne: It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to deliver both overall financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. The Department works with SHAs to support them in this task.

To strengthen the ability of SHAs to deal with organisations with financial challenges we recently announced the creation of turnaround teams. These teams will support the national health service in identifying opportunities to deliver services with greater cost-effectiveness and to make financial savings. They will help the local NHS ensure that it delivers both its key targets and financial balance.

We have re-emphasised to all SHAs the importance of sound financial management, and the key role that system reform will play to achieve this goal, and we have also increased the level of monitoring and analysis, and have developed a more active way of challenging SHAs about the financial performance of their health economy.

Therapy Providers

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with which organisations she has held discussions on professional accreditation of therapy providers; and if she will make a statement. [40896]

Jane Kennedy: Departmental officials have held discussions with over 30 organisations in the fields of psychotherapy and counselling over the last five years with a view to establishing agreed roles and the competences and training necessary for their safe practice. These will form the basis of regulation which would include accreditation of training and registration of practitioners who are fit to practise.

Tobacco Control Alliance

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much her Department has spent supporting local tobacco control alliances since 1997; [39409]

(2) how much public funding has been provided to the Kent Alliance on Smoking and Health since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [39410]

Caroline Flint: The NHS Cancer Plan published in September 2000, announced the establishment of local tobacco control alliances, with funding of up to £1 million a year.

After the initial three years, decision making on local tobacco control was devolved to the nine Government office regions (GOR). The tobacco control budget was increased to £2 million a year for the three years 2003 to 2006, to provide funding for regional tobacco control work together with funding of local tobacco control alliances.

According to the GOR for the South East, the Kent Alliance on Smoking and Health has received funding of £43,040 in 2003–04, £30,706 in 2004–05 and £30,706 in 2005–06.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many reported cases of tuberculosis there were in Gloucestershire in each of the last 10 years. [41502]

Caroline Flint: The number of tuberculosis notifications for Gloucestershire for the years 1995 to 2004 is shown in the following table. These are the latest figures available.

Tuberculosis notifications, Gloucestershire, 1995 to 2004

	Number
1995	37
1996	38
1997	26
1998	30
1999	27
2000	35
2001	22
2002	21
2003	22
2004	31

Notes:

1. Data prepared by: Health Protection Agency Centre for Infections.
2. Data as at 10 January 2006.

Source:

Statutory Notifications of Infectious Diseases (NOIDs)

Waiting Times

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to paragraph 67 of the document "Commissioning an 18 week patient pathway:" Proposed principles and definitions: A discussion document, what steps she is taking to ensure that the decision that subsequent treatment courses will not fall within the initial 18 week waiting target does not create an incentive for NHS trusts to make patients wait longer for subsequent treatment; and if she will publish information on these waiting times. [38006]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is currently collating responses to the listening exercise on the proposed principles and definitions for 18 weeks, which closed on 8 December 2005. The conclusions drawn from the listening exercise will help inform the final principles and definitions, and will be published in 2006. As the principles and definitions are still under constant review until the time that they are published, we cannot presently give any further information about their content.

While 18 weeks will be the maximum, most patient journeys will be much shorter than this. In particular 18 weeks does not replace other waiting times targets or standards where these are tighter than 18 weeks, for example, rapid access chest pain clinics. There will be other mechanisms to reduce the patient pathway in areas not included in 18 weeks, as outlined in the NHS improvement plan, and the 18 weeks maximum wait may be extended to other areas in the future.

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* maximum and *(b)* average waiting times for outpatient appointments subsequent to an initial appointment were for each strategic health authority in England in each quarter of the last eight years. [40266]

Mr. Byrne: Waiting times for outpatient appointments subsequent to initial appointments are not collected centrally.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Avon Fire Authority

Stephen Williams: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the Avon fire authority, *(b)* the chief fire officer of Avon and *(c)* fire servicemen and women working in the Avon fire authority about proposals to move fire appliances from Temple Back station, Bristol to Patchway, Bristol as part of the integrated risk management plan. [42284]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No representations have been made. It is not the role of Ministers to agree the operational proposals in an authority's plan; that is for elected members of the authority concerned. They are best placed to act on the professional advice of principal officers and to balance the competing local demands on available resources for the benefits of the communities they serve. Furthermore, Avon fire authority's proposals will, of course, be subject to consultation with the local community, as required under the integrated risk management plan (IRMP).

Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have indicated that they do not wish to transfer their council housing. [41158]

Yvette Cooper: Of the 354 local housing authorities, 185 have selected large scale voluntary transfer. The remainder have opted not to transfer but rather have decided to: set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (59), implement a mixed solution of more than one option (nine), or opt for local authority retention (98). Three local authorities have still to finalise their option.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the number of local authorities which will be able to meet the local demand for affordable rented housing by 2007. [40846]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are investing increased resources made available through the Spending Review 2004 to provide 75,000 social rented homes by the year 2007–08. With the advice of the Regional Housing Boards, set out in their regional housing strategies, resources are being targeted at those areas in greatest need.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what impact he expects the *(a)* Thames Gateway, *(b)* Olympic facilities and *(c)* Kings Cross development to have on building cost inflation in London; and what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the allowances for London local authority housing revenue accounts. [40850]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not forecast building cost inflation. The Office of Government Commerce is currently assessing public sector construction procurement demand, capacity, supply and performance. This will include a particular project to examine the construction industry's capacity to deliver planned national capital construction programmes, including the provision of Olympics infrastructure, in the period 2005–15.

The Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) in the Housing Revenue Account is designed to meet the average annual costs of major repairs. It is up-rated each year in line with general inflation. A local authority can react to high building costs by putting some or all of its MRA into a Major Repairs Reserve.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister from which budget the additional resources made available to arm's length management organisations (ALMOs) to improve council homes comes; what level of funding is available from applications from new ALMOs; and what the total cost was in each year since 1997. [40876]

Yvette Cooper: The arm's length management organisation (ALMO) programme has its own separate budget created from increased resources from Treasury. A total of £3.7 billion has been allocated to the ALMO programme under the two most recent spending reviews for the five years up to 2007–08. Funding beyond 2007–08 will be considered in the context of the next spending review, CSR 07. The ALMO programme has only been running since 2002. Total expenditure was £56 million in 2002–03, £321 million in 2003–04, £577 million in 2004–05 and is projected to be £846 million in 2005–06.

Fire Services

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what financial help will be offered to Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority in relation to the expansion of Milton Keynes. [42064]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 that was announced on the 5 December 2005 by my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government included the use of population projections as the dominant data drivers of population in the settlements.

Government Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the Government Bills sponsored by his Department that are expected to be introduced during the current session; what the proposed date of presentation is of each; and into which House each will be introduced. [41024]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Council Tax (New Valuation Lists for England) Bill, (Bill 57 2005/06) was introduced into the House of Commons on 13 October 2005. There are no plans for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to introduce further Bills this session.

Government Papers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many copies of Cm 6526 were produced; how many copies were supplied free by his Department; and to whom such copies were supplied. [41016]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Annual Report, Cm 6526, was published on 20 June 2005 and is freely available on the ODPM's website.

The commercial decision as to the number of copies printed was made by The Stationery Office Ltd, who advise that 1,000 copies of the report were printed. Of these, approximately 500 copies were provided free of charge to the Libraries of the House, the Vote Office, the ODPM Select Committee, Ministers and officials in the ODPM, and to other Government Departments.

Homelessness

Nick Harvey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to address rural homelessness. [40638]

Yvette Cooper: Earlier this year, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published our future strategy on homelessness "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives". The strategy contains our commitment to continue working to ensure that the needs of rural communities are met.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to support all local authorities with additional resources to help them implement requirements of the Homelessness Act and tackle and prevent homelessness in their area. Rural authorities have received around £7 million in each year since 2003–04 and as confirmed last month over £7.5 million has been allocated to rural authorities for 2006–07 and 2007–08. In addition, the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate in ODPM has appointed a specialist adviser from a local authority who is tasked specifically with promoting good practice in tackling homelessness in rural areas.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to promote approaches that work in a rural context, where access to affordable housing can be more limited, where remoteness can act as a barrier to accessing relevant services and where there may be less developed partnerships.

Through regional workshops and training the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will help the preparation of sub-regional homelessness strategies that link into the Regional Housing and county Supporting People strategies, and draw on the strengths of the Local Strategic Partnerships, to tackle the causes of homelessness in rural areas.

The number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty in rural authorities during 2004–05 fell by 6 per cent. compared with 2003–04.

Housing Performance Indicators

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 260–61W, if he will provide the figures for best value performance indicator 64 for *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 expressed as a percentage of the number of dwellings returned to occupation or demolished in those years. [41893]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Kent County Council

Mr. Byers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will raise with Kent county council its requirement that *(a)* small businesses submit full accounts rather than abbreviated ones and *(b)* all potential suppliers of goods and services have public liability insurance of at least £5 million. [42928]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I have raised these issues with Kent county council and am awaiting a response. I will write to my right hon. Friend once the relevant information is received, and a copy will be published in the *Official Report*.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that the standard terms of contract adopted by Kent county council do not *(a)* discriminate against and *(b)* place an undue burden of regulation on small businesses. [42929]

Mr. Woolas: I have raised these issues with Kent county council and am awaiting a response. I will write to my right hon. Friend once the relevant information is received, and a copy will be published in the *Official Report*.

Land Development

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps the Government is taking to tackle speculative and misleading sales and marketing of land without planning permission as land with development opportunities; and what advice the Government has given to trading standards officials on this issue. [42589]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The Property Misdescriptions Act 1991 makes it a criminal offence to make false or misleading statements about specified aspects of land (which includes buildings) offered for sale by those in the estate agency or property development business. The categories of information which fall into those controls include the existence or nature of any planning permission or proposals for development, construction or change of use. There is no general requirement to disclose information, but where information is given it must be accurate and must not be misleading.

Trading Standards Officers can, where they have reasonable cause to suspect that an offence has been committed, require the production of books, documents or hard copy of information held on computers and can take copies of them. Where they have reasonable grounds to believe that an offence has been committed they can seize and retain such material. On summary conviction, the penalty under the Act is a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum (currently £5,000). For conviction on indictment, e.g. before a Crown court, this is an unlimited fine. These provisions follow the standard pattern for legislation of this kind.

Local Authority Accrued Liabilities

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of each local authority's assets were accrued liabilities according to the most recent actuarial valuation. [42463]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The 89 funds that comprise the local government pension scheme are valued by actuaries every three years, most recently in 2004. The results for English and Welsh local authorities participating in the scheme are given at:
www.xoq83.dial.pipex.com/actvale.pdf and
www.xoq83.dial.pipex.com/valwal.pdf respectively.

Local Authority Mergers

Mr. Bone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if the Government will assess the merits of mergers of local authorities across county boundaries. [41175]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has launched a public debate about the governance arrangements for local areas and are interested to hear views on the merits of change and how it might be made. We plan to publish a White Paper on the future of local government in the middle of next year.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the ranking was for each local authority which undertook a *(a)* full or *(b)* partial transfer under (i) the 1998 Index of Local Deprivation, (ii) the Indices of Deprivation 2000 and (iii) the Indices of Deprivation 2004 for each year in which transfers took place since 1997. [40872]

Yvette Cooper: A table presenting the rank for each local authority which undertook *(a)* a full or *(b)* partial transfer under (i) the 1998 Index of Local Deprivation, (ii) the Indices of Deprivation 2000 and (iii) the Indices of Deprivation 2004 has been made available in the Library of the House.

Please note that these Indices are not strictly comparable as they are made up of different indicators and domains, and the methodology was fundamentally changed between the 1998 and 2000 Indices.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual per capita allocation of revenue support grant was in Tamworth borough council in each of the last eight years; what the annual percentage increase was; and what the average per capita allocation was for English local authorities in each of the last eight years. [42103]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows formula grant per head for Tamworth, and all English local authorities for 1998–99 to 2005–06. Formula grant comprises revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and principal formula police grant.

It should be noted that Tamworth only provides some services within their area; for example education, social services, highway maintenance, police and fire services are provided by other authorities. The "all English local authorities" column covers all services.

	Tamworth	*All English local authorities*
1998–99	59.87	721.89
1999–2000	60.37	753.00
2000–01	61.98	778.19
2001–02	64.85	804.47
2002–03	66.77	806.51
2003–04	72.54	892.49
2004–05	70.26	930.64
2005–06	74.52	983.15

The following table shows the percentage increase in formula grant per head year-on-year on a like-for-like basis for Tamworth, and all English local authorities for 1998–99 to 2005–06.

Please note that the figures provided in the first table cannot be compared directly as there have been a number of changes in the funding and functions covered by formula grant over this period.

Percentage

	Tamworth	*All English local authorities*
1998–99	-6.1	1.4
1999–2000	0.8	4.3
2000–01	2.7	3.3
2001–02	3.8	3.8
2002–03	4.4	4.5
2003–04	11.2	7.7
2004–05	5.1	4.7
2005–06	5.7	4.9

Please note that all of these figures are based on the respective year's settlement. In some years these figures have subsequently been subject to an amending report.

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will, as part of the review of local government finance, take account of the additional spending needs of authorities with a disproportionately high number of un-adopted, privately owned, roads, walls and bridges in need of repair. [42172]

Mr. Woolas: Routine road maintenance is financed partly by the local government finance settlement and partly by council tax. The maintenance of un-adopted, privately owned, roads, walls and bridges is not a matter for the local highway authority instead this is the responsibility of the owners.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Lyons Inquiry into council tax is expected to finish taking evidence. [42218]

Mr. Woolas: On 20 September, the Government extended Sir Michael Lyons' independent inquiry into local government funding so that he can consider issues relating to the wider functions of local government and its future role. It is for Sir Michael to decide when the Inquiry will stop taking evidence, before producing his final report at the end of 2006.

Meanwhile, Sir Michael published an interim report and consultation paper on 15 December 2005. That report welcomed views on the proposals and issues outlined in it by 13 March 2006.

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public money has been provided to the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital grants in each year since 1996–97. [41609]

Mr. Woolas: The amount of central government funding provided to the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each year since 1996–97 is tabled as follows.

	£000
1996–97	135,002
1997–98	136,577
1998–99	142,640
1999–2000	152,034
2000–01	165,320
2001–02	180,845
2002–03	190,898
2003–04	213,397
2004–05	223,648

The data are taken from Revenue Summary (RS) returns for 1996–97 to 2004–05.

Central government funding is defined here as the sum of Specific grants inside Aggregate External Finance (AEF) and Formula grant (Revenue Support Grant, Redistributed business rates and Police Grant).

Specific grants inside Aggregate External Finance are those revenue grants paid for councils' core services (such as waste collection), excluding funding for local authorities' housing management.

Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changing local authority responsibilities.

The information excludes those grant programmes, such as European funding, where authorities are simply one of the recipients of funding paid towards an area.

The information requested on capital grants is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Neighbourhood Wardens (Haringey)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will increase funding for neighbourhood wardens in the London borough of Haringey; and if he will make a statement. [42634]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There are no plans to increase funding for neighbourhood wardens schemes in Haringey.

North-East Lincolnshire Council

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many findings of maladministration there have been against North East Lincolnshire council since 2003; and if he will provide a summary for each case. [42972]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Since 2003, the local government ombudsman has issued two formal public reports setting out findings of maladministration. The local government ombudsman's summaries are set out as follows:

1. North East Lincolnshire council (03/C604) social services for children (report issued 11 March 2004).

'John Swift' (not his real name for legal reasons) is a young person whose care is the responsibility of the council. He complains about the standard of care he received in a foster placement and that the council failed to consider his complaints properly.

The ombudsman found that there was inadequate preparation before and during the early part of the John's placement with his foster parents. She was also critical of the council's failure to have guidance for foster carers about whether and when it might be appropriate to ask fostered young people to be out of the house when the foster carer was not present.

The Ombudsman recommended that the council should:

Pay John £100 in compensation;

Complete its current review of the issue of requiring young people in foster care to vacate the foster home in certain circumstances and issue guidance to foster parents on the subject.

The council has agreed, and the ombudsman considers this will remedy the injustice caused by the maladministration identified.

2. North East Lincolnshire council (03/C/4267 and 7084) public rights of way (report issued 15 December 2005).

Mr Jennings' and 'Mr Crosby' (not their real names) complained about the obstruction of a footpath near their homes. The footpath had been inaccessible for its whole length for a number of years despite complaints and representations from a number of people and the Ramblers Association. The ombudsman had been critical of Humberside county council, by public report, for its failure to take action to reopen this footpath.

This problem was one inherited by the council from its predecessor, Humberside county council. The council was aware of this problem at the time, and indeed considered the matter at committee level in October 1996. Nothing more was done though until 2005 when another committee took action which is likely to re-establish this footpath.

The ombudsman acknowledged the financial difficulties which had confronted the council and made prioritising work and expenditure difficult, but she had to remind the council that Parliament had placed upon the council a statutory duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy public footpaths. The failure here to respond to this statutory duty was, in the ombudsman's view, maladministration. The ombudsman felt this was aggravated by the failures of both the council and its predecessor to comply with recommendations contained in the previous report issued about this matter.

Although the ombudsman commended the council for the action it is taking now, she was critical of the time taken to reach this point. The ombudsman felt that the council's failure to respond to the previous report, and the failure over many years to take any effective action, reflected very poorly on the council.

The council has now instigated action which should resolve this matter and re-establish the footpath. However the ombudsman felt that the complainants had

been put to great trouble in being forced to pursue their complaints as they did and, commending their patience, felt that the council should pay each of them £500 to compensate them for their time and trouble.

Planning Applications

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications were appealed in respect of proposals to replace houses and bungalows with flats in each of the last five years. [42216]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures are in place to ensure that planning applications that are in the eight-week target category, but which are not processed by a local planning authority within eight weeks, are not then given a lower priority than other applications where the target is achievable. [41567]

Yvette Cooper: The Government has set a target for all local authorities to determine 65 per cent. of 'minor' applications, and 80 per cent. of 'other' applications, within eight weeks, by 31 March 2007. These figures are set in recognition that not all such applications may be capable of being decided within the eight-week period. However, the Government also provides incentives, through Planning Delivery Grant, for authorities to decide a higher proportion within time scales. As announced in December some of the Planning Delivery Grant would be used to reward authorities for effective management of their application processes, including ensuring that they do not have unacceptable backlogs.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department consults the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs before it publishes new *(a)* planning regulations and *(b)* housing plans. [39902]

Yvette Cooper: Yes. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consults all other interested Government Departments including the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs before publishing or consulting on new planning regulations, or new housing planning policy statements.

Primary Care Trusts

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions Ministers and officials in his Department had with their counterparts in the Department of Health on the reorganisation of primary care trusts in Kent and Medway prior to the publication on 14 December 2005 by Kent and Medway strategic health authority of the consultation on new strategic health authority and primary care trust arrangements in Kent and Medway. [42200]

Mr. Woolas: Ministers and officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have had a number of discussions with their Department of Health counterparts about the potential interaction with local government of the proposals for reorganising Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) across England, including Kent and Medway.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is his policy to write to hon. Members presenting a Private Members' Bill on a subject within his Department's responsibility to express his support, opposition or neutrality; and if he will make a statement. [41017]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's response to Private Members' Bills is normally set out by Ministers during the Second Reading debate.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list those Private Members' Bills introduced during the current session where policy responsibility rests with his Department. [41020]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has policy interests in a number of Private Members' Bills introduced by hon. Members during the current session.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will list those Private Members' handout Bills prepared by his Department that are expected to be introduced during the current session; what the proposed date of presentation is of each; and into which House each will be introduced; [41021]

(2) if he will list the Private Members' handout Bills put forward by his Department in each session since 1997; and which such Bills received Royal Assent. [41023]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002. Since that time two Private Members' handout Bills where policy responsibility rests with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been introduced. None are planned for the current session.

High Hedges (No.2) Bill was introduced on 11 December 2002.

Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill was introduced on 7 January 2004, it received Royal Assent on 16 September 2004.

Public Relations Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department since May 1997. [39111]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002. This information is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Supporting People Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account his Department takes of the single assessment process in the guidance for the Supporting People assessment; and how the resulting support plan operates in relation to the single assessment care plan. [41902]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1970–1W. As that explained, there is currently no standard approach to Supporting People assessments, but our Supporting People strategy development work commits us to working towards one and to integrating that with those for care and other relevant services. As such, arrangements, and the links between support plans and care plans, will currently vary between local authorities and between providers.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister to what assessment a person applying for access to an Extra Care scheme under Supporting People is subject. [41904]

Mr. Woolas: There is no standardised approach to assessments for Supporting People services, and arrangements will vary between authorities and between providers. It is, however, usual for an assessment to be made of an individual's personal circumstances in order to obtain housing-related support. This could take account of things like physical and mental health, social, family, domestic and financial circumstances. The basic aim will be to determine eligibility, so a decision can be made on who is entitled to a service funded through Supporting People and in accordance with grant conditions applying to the programme; and why, and what, if any, charges for the service should be made.

Assessments governing access to Extra Care schemes are not governed or determined by the Supporting People programme.

Standards Board for England

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government has to *(a)* move the location of and *(b)* abolish the Standards Board for England. [39479]

Mr. Woolas: As is clear from the Government's Discussion Paper, 'Standards of Conduct in English Local Government: The Future', published on 15 December 2005, we have no plans to abolish the board. We consider that the new style strategic board as proposed in the paper, if Parliament legislates to establish it, should be re-located out of London. In advance of this, I have given approval for the board to re-locate a small number of posts to Manchester in 2006, provided this can be achieved without the need for any extra grant funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 18 January 2006

WALES

Offshore Wind Farms

8. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the future development of offshore wind farms in Wales. [41801]

9. **Mr. Ellwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the future development of offshore wind farms in Wales. [41802]

Mr. Hain: The Government are deeply concerned about the extent of climate change and the future security of energy supply. Offshore wind and other forms of renewables will be vital to meeting the UK's energy needs.

National Health Service (Capital Investment)

10. **Mrs. Betty Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with National Assembly for Wales colleagues on capital investment in the NHS in Wales over the next three years. [41803]

Nick Ainger: I have regular discussions with the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services on a range of issued including the capital investment programme in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government is overseeing significant new capital expenditure in the NHS which will increase from £120 million in 2005–06 to £309 million in 2007–08.

Employment Levels

11. **Paul Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what change has occurred in the level of employment in Wales since 1997. [41804]

Mr. Hain: There are over 100,000 more people in employment in Wales today than there were in 1997. This represents an increase in the employment rate of almost 4 percentage points.

12. **Mark Tami:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on employment levels in *(a)* Alyn and Deeside and *(b)* Wales. [41805]

Mr. Hain: Over the past year, employment levels in Wales have been historically high-over 1.3 million peple in Wales are in employment. Alyn and Deeside also enjoys high employment, with an employment rate that is higher than the Wales average.

Wylfa Nuclear Power Station

13. **Mr. Goodwill:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the future of the Wylfa nuclear power station. [41806]

Nick Ainger: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005. The NDA has set out its plans for the decommissioning and clean up of its sites including Wylfa in its draft Strategy. The draft indicates that Wylfa will cease generation by 2010.

Anglesey Aluminium Metal Ltd, which is a significant employer to the area, currently takes most of its energy from Wylfa, is reviewing its future energy supply beyond 2010, in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Homelessness

14. **Jenny Willott:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the take-up of benefits available to tackle homelessness in Wales. [41807]

Nick Ainger: In 2004–05 housing benefit payments in Wales totalled £560 million.

An additional £900,000 was provided in discretionary housing payments to claimants who needed further assistance in meeting rent or council tax payments.

This year, the Welsh Assembly Government have provided £76.4 million in social housing grant. This is an increase of £17 million over last year and will rise to £96.4 million in 2007–08.

National Police Force

15. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate he has made of the proportion of the Welsh electorate which supports the establishment of a national police force for Wales. [41808]

Mr. Hain: I have not made such an estimate. Police authorities in Wales have led on consultation with the public and stakeholders in developing their proposals for restructuring. I expect that this consultation will continue throughout January.

However, having discussed the issue with a wide-range of interested parties, I can see no realistic alternative to a single strategic force for Wales.

Anti-poverty Strategies

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Aberavon of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2275–6W, on anti-poverty strategies, under what section of the Government of Wales Act 1998 the National Assembly is empowered to formulate an international development strategy. [42282]

Mr. Hain *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The draft Welsh international sustainable development framework covers a broad range of activity some of which will fall within the Assembly's duty to promote sustainable development under s 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998.

The National Assembly for Wales will have additional powers from April 2006 under the International Development Act 2002. These powers are subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for International Development.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what proportion of the premises occupied by the Church Commissioners is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42887]

Sir Stuart Bell: All the offices occupied by Church Commissioners' staff (at 1 Millbank and Elizabeth House, Waterloo) are fitted with audible fire alarms.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what proportion of the premises occupied by his Office is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42876]

Mr. Hoon: All space occupied by the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons at 2 Carlton Gardens is fitted with an audible fire alarm.

My Office also occupies office space in the House of Commons. Fire alarms are the responsibility of the Serjeant at Arms.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to make a definitive statement about the deployment of troops into Helmand Province in Afghanistan; and what their role will be. [42047]

John Reid: I refer the right hon. and learned Member to the statement made on 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 41WS by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Armed Forces.

As he said then, and as I previously informed the House on 7 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 479, the United Kingdom has preliminary plans to support the expansion of the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan by establishing a British-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in the province of Helmand.

Work continues within NATO on the configuration of the international force package for ISAF expansion in southern Afghanistan. We will take decisions in light of this work, and will inform the House at the earliest opportunity.

Atomic Weapons Establishment (Aldermaston)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Crown immunity applies in the case of the AWE planning application for a new laser facility at Aldermaston; and if he will make a statement. [41945]

Mr. Touhig: The normal planning process cannot be used for the proposed Atomic Weapons Establishment Orion Laser Development at Aldermaston because the Ministry of Defence (MOD), as a Crown Department, is not subject to the statutory planning process and is therefore not legally able to submit formal planning applications.

I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1348W. It explained that the MOD follows a consultation process with the local planning authority under DoE Circular 18/84 which largely mirrors the statutory planning system. It is this Department's policy to support any development proposals with the same level of background information that would be required under the statutory planning system.

The MOD works closely with local authorities to address any concerns raised in connection with any development proposals. The Local Planning Authority can also stipulate conditions when responding. While the perception may be that my Department claims "Crown Immunity" from planning regulation, it does in fact follow the practice of the normal planning process and also strives to follow its principles.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what commercial services the Defence Export Services Organisation provides to companies in relation to identifying potential agents in export markets. [10677]

Mr. Ingram *[pursuant to the reply, 13 July 2005, Official Report, c. 1076W]:* This should have read, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 259W. Any information provided to United Kingdom companies by the Defence Export Services Organisation is concerned only with the selection of suitable agents. It is our policy not to advise on agents' commission.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, (1) on how many occasions the Defence Export Services Organisation has provided advice to UK companies on the selection of agents in the last 12 months; [15340]

(2) what mechanisms the Defence Export Services Organisation uses to record the advice given by its *(a)* British-based and *(b)* overseas staff to companies on the selection of agents; [15341]

(3) whether the Defence Export Services Organisation provides *(a)* off the shelf lists and *(b)* bespoke lists of companies in relation to the selection of agents. [15342]

Mr. Ingram *[pursuant to the reply, 10 October 2005, Official Report, c. 10W]:* I regret that in referring the hon. Member to an earlier answer, I gave inaccurate details. I should have referred to the answer I gave him on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 259W.

Project Coast

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Government became aware of the South African Government's Project Coast. [39802]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The Government was aware of the existence of legitimate South African chemical and biological defence programmes from the 1980s. Initial reports indicating offensive chemical biological weapons activities (later known as "Project Coast") were not received until 1993, but they were inconclusive, although there were unsubstantiated claims of chemical weapon use by South African forces in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the 1980–90s. More detailed evidence of previous offensive activities was received in the years leading up to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings in 1998, when further details of the offensive activities emerged. In 1994, we understood that the South African Government had terminated offensive chemical and biological weapon activities.

UK Nuclear Deterrent

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions his Department has had with his US counterparts about bilateral co-operation on stockpile stewardship and maintenance of Trident. [43004]

John Reid: Discussion and co-operation involving MOD officials, AWE personnel, and their US counterparts, on issues relating to stockpile stewardship and the maintenance of Trident, takes places regularly under the auspices of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement and the Polaris Sales Agreement (amended for Trident). The principal purpose of this co-operation is to help us to ensure the continued safety, availability, and reliability of the deterrent.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what discussions his Department has had with his US counterpart about the Government's policy that decisions on Trident's replacement will be taken in this Parliament; [43005]

(2) what recent discussions his Department has had with his US counterparts about the next generation of the UK nuclear deterrent; and if he will make a statement. [43003]

John Reid: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the hon. Member for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk (Mr. Moore) on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2120W, and the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Lewis) on 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 560W.

White Phosphorus

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what guidelines *(a)* he and *(b)* his predecessor has set out for UK armed forces on the use of white phosphorus; when these guidelines were last (i) reviewed and (ii) amended; and if he will make a statement. [30719]

John Reid *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* British Forces possess white phosphorus munitions in Iraq for the purpose of producing a smoke screen to provide cover and thus protection for our soldiers on the battlefield. Guidelines for its use emphasise that it should not be deployed as an anti-personnel weapon. The relevant infantry training guidelines were last reviewed and training literature subsequently amended in 2003 in order to reinforce the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus against personnel.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Anti-retroviral Medicines

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress is being made in developing new anti-retroviral medicines for children suffering from HIV/AIDS in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [41941]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has been working with the international pharmaceutical industry in a number of ways to increase access to medicines, including for the treatment of HIV and AIDS, and for children.

In March 2005 DFID, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health, launched a framework encouraging 'good practice' in the pharmaceutical industry to increase access to medicines. The framework contained a number of recommendations on how companies could increase access to medicines in developing countries, including through making medicines more affordable and through more research on diseases affecting developing countries. The framework encourages investment into new medicines for children among other areas.

The UK also provides support to increase research into treatments and vaccines for diseases affecting developing countries, including for HIV and AIDS. This includes tax credits and direct support to product development public private partnerships. DFID has funded research on the use of existing medicines in developing country settings, such as a trial of co-trimoxazole that significantly reduced mortality among children living with HIV.

DFID will continue to ensure the needs of children and other vulnerable groups are addressed as we work towards scaling up to universal access to treatment by 2010, as agreed by the G8 and by the millennium review summit. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), has established a Global Steering Committee, which the UK will co-chair. Plans will be based on the principle of country ownership—recognising the need to work through existing national structures and processes and focus on mobilising countries to scale up in line with the 2010 target.

In addition the Global Steering Committee will encourage countries to identify obstacles and develop solutions, including addressing the development of appropriate treatments for key groups, such as children.

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003–04 and *(y)* 2004–05. [40095]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the Member to the reply given by my right. hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, to the hon. Member for

Tatton, on 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 21W, for the total figures for each asset type in DFID for 2004–05.

DFID maintains a database of current assets, and records of purchases made in each year. Neither provides breakdowns of specific types of equipment owned in previous financial years, to obtain this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

HIV/AIDS (Paediatric Care)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will list the countries in which his Department has funded projects which aim to improve access to paediatric anti-retroviral therapy; [43194]

(2) if he will list the *(a)* organisations and *(b)* countries his Department is working with on paediatric HIV/AIDS projects; [43200]

(3) how much of the £150 million the UK has committed to spend on children living with HIV will be spent on paediatric treatment programmes; [43181]

(4) what measures his Department has in place to monitor the proportion of child beneficiaries of the treatment programmes it funds; [43196]

(5) what further work has been undertaken to ensure HIV-positive children receive co-trimoxazole since the funding by his Department of Medical Research Council research into its benefits in 2004. [43199]

Mr. Thomas: Taking Action, the UK's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the developing world, published in 2004, states that, our support for children affected by AIDS is reflected in all of DFID's country assistance plans in all affected countries. This comprehensive approach includes prevention, care and treatment as well as recognising the impact AIDS has on society, including increasing orphan rates. DFID's expenditure reporting reflects this comprehensive approach and given the aid instruments we use, it is not possible to disaggregate between moneys spent on treatment and those used for other AIDS related activities.

The UK funds AIDS programmes in nearly 40 countries and works with a variety of organisations in respect of children affected by AIDS. DFID's spend on AIDS is not solely through bilateral programmes. A significant proportion is spent through multilateral instruments including the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the World Bank, UNICEF and the World Health Organisation (WHO); these play a role in funding paediatric treatment and care. The UK also finances a wide range of Civil Society organisations, including local NGOs such as the Dananai and Mavambo Trust in Zimbabwe, who are ensuring over 4,000 vulnerable children are able to attend school and that traumatised children receive appropriate counselling.

In Malawi, for example, as part of DFIDs support to the National AIDS programmes, there are now over 60 facilities in Malawi delivering anti retroviral therapy for HIV and over 37,000 people on treatment. The numbers are increasing, around 4,500 people starting on therapy in the first three months of last year. 95 per cent. are over 13 years old and 81 per cent. of people who have ever taken treatment are alive. The UK will continue to advocate for comprehensive AIDS programmes that meet the needs of children as well as adults.

The WHO reports[1] that access to HIV care and anti-retroviral therapy has not been extended widely to children. However, data is incomplete and the UK has urged the WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and others to track the extent to which treatment and care programmes are meeting the needs of the poor, women and children.

The Global Partners Forum on Children Affected by HIV and AIDS, which the UK is hosting in early February, will explore the current obstacles to treatment of children with HIV and AIDS, as well as other services and needs. In addition, the Global Steering Committee on Scaling up Towards Universal Access, which in turn is due to report to the UN General Assembly High Level meeting in June 2006, is considering the obstacles to scaling up access to treatment for children, including the lack of appropriate and effective diagnostic tools and treatments.

Following publication of the DFID-funded Medical Research Council research findings, the WHO, UNAIDS and UNICEF issued a joint statement in November 2004 on the use of cotrimoxazole as a prophylaxis in HIV exposed and HIV affected children.

The joint statement advocates that prophylactic dosing with Cotrimoxazole for HIV infected children with any sign or symptoms suggestive of HIV is a key intervention that should be offered as part of a basic package of care to reduce morbidity and mortality.

The document further states that Cotrimoxazole prophylaxis is also a crucial potentially life saving intervention that should be given to all HIV exposed children born to HIV- infected mothers, in settings where HIV infection status cannot be reliably confirmed in the first 18 months of life.

Following the joint statement, Cotrimoxazole is now universally accepted as a standard treatment package for all children exposed to HIV and on treatment and it is advocated for all children with HIV, regardless of whether they are receiving treatment.

As a follow on to the Cotrimoxazole study DFID is providing funding support for a further trial through the Medical Research Council to examine the best use of anti-retrovirals for children.

[1] Progress on Global Access to HIV Antiretroviral Therapy—an update on "3 by 5" June 2005

Terminator Seeds

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his policy is on proposals for changes to the United Nations convention on biological diversity to legalise an international market in terminator seeds. [41100]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Terminator seeds are plants bred using genetic use restriction technologies known as GURTs. The parties to the United Nations convention on biological diversity decided, in 2000, that there should be a

precautionary approach to the use of GURTs while research into the possible impacts of these technologies was carried out. Parties at the meeting in March, this year, will consider a recommendation by the convention's subsidiary body for scientific technical and technological advice to reaffirm the previous decision. The subsidiary body's recommendation also encourages parties to continue to undertake further research on the impacts of GURTs and to share information from these studies and addresses capacity building for decision making in developing countries. Parties at the meeting will also consider a report on related matters from one of the convention's inter-sessional working groups before deciding what further decision is appropriate.

Our position at the meeting will take full account of these reports, as well as the EU's own regulatory regime which requires that no GM seed may be marketed in the EU unless it has been specifically approved by the member states. Decisions on applications to market GMOs are made on a case-by-case basis taking full account of a scientific assessment of the particular GMO and the risks associated with its use against the criteria in the EU legislation. An application for a GMO incorporating GURTs would be dealt with in the same way as any other GMO. Approval would only be granted if the evidence showed that a deliberate release of the GMO would not pose an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.

World Trade Organisation

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will *(a)* place in the Library and *(b)* post on his Department's website documents prepared by his Department for the trade negotiations meeting in Hong Kong; which departmental officials accompanied him to the meeting; and what carbon offset measures were established to cover the Department's delegation. [41570]

Mr. Thomas: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, attended part of the conference; he was accompanied by his principal private secretary. DFID officials who attended all or part of the conference with my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, as part of the UK delegation, were: the Director of Europe, Trade and International Financial Institutions Departments, the Head of the International Trade Department and other departmental officials.

No carbon offset measures specific to this conference were established, but DFID is committed to reducing carbon emissions from official air travel and, together with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, has developed a pilot programme to help neutralise greenhouse gases. Under this pilot Programme, DFID staff can exchange air miles earned on official travel for "earth miles" at an agreed conversion value. Our aim is for partner airlines to return some of the revenue from flights sold to DFID to pay for a portfolio of 'carbon offset' projects. Carbon offsets, for example, clean energy technology or sustainable land use would neutralise carbon dioxide emissions and contribute to sustainable development in developing countries. We have set up agreements on this with three major airlines. In addition to this pilot programme, the Prime Minister has announced that offsetting would apply to all central Government Departments from April 2006.

I have arranged for the document entitled 'trade and development package for G90' which was prepared by DFID for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) ministerial in Hong Kong to be deposited in the Libraries of the House. It sets out our view of a package of measures to assist the least developed and other poor and vulnerable WTO member countries—a 'development package'. The UK has been working to build international support for these measures, on which some progress was made in Hong Kong. Other documents produced in the run up to the ministerial will not be made public, since to do so may prejudice the Government's ability to negotiate in the UK's interests and would be likely to prejudice our relations with other states.

Additionally, for further information, I have also arranged for the document entitled 'trade matters' to be deposited in the Libraries of the House.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Electricity Consumption

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate has been made by his Department of the amount of electricity used by *(a)* television sets, *(b)* video recorders, *(c)* DVD player recorders, *(d)* microwave ovens, *(e)* modems and *(f)* answerphones in stand-by mode. [41532]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

While we do not collect detailed information available about all appliances that have a stand-by function the Government's Market Transformation Programme (MTP) does have information relating to the energy consumed in stand-by for those appliances that account for the large majority of energy consumed in UK households. This information is set out in MTP Briefing Note BNXS36 (available via www.mtprog.com).

Estimates of the electricity used in stand-by mode in 2004 for those appliances listed in the question is set out as follows:

	GWh
(a) Television sets	1,113
(b) Video recorders	2,282
(c) DVD Player recorders	[1]238
(d) Microwave ovens	415
(e) Modems	[2]19 to 456
(f) Answerphones	[3]c140

[1] Information only available for all DVD's including players and recorders.

[2] The actual figure will depend on determining more exact usage patterns. At present MTP has only limited information on usage.

[3] This figure is a best estimate based on limited information.

Exports (Poland)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of UK exports to Poland was in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [41375]

Ian Pearson: In 2003, the UK's exports of goods and services to Poland amounted to £1,861 million. In 2004 this increased to £1,889 million.

Food Retail Sector

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of current trends in food retailing in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [41428]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The Department's economists keep abreast of the considerable body of research that is publicly available on food retailing trends in the UK. The Department itself also commissions and publishes relevant food and drink research from time to time, such as AEA Technology's report on 'food miles' published in July 2005 and work currently under way regarding productivity levels.

Imports (Burma)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of imports from Burma into the United Kingdom in 2005, broken down by type of product. [41592]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's imports of goods from Burma are not yet available for the whole of 2005. The latest data available is for the period January to October 2005. This is provided in the following table:

UK imports of goods from Burma January to October 2005: At 2 digit Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) level

SITC	Description	£000
84	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	17,209
03	Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, etc. (not marine mammals)	4,514
82	Furniture, bedding, mattresses, cushions and similar stuffed furnishing	3,711
63	Cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture)	1,073
69	Manufactures of metal nes	820
85	Footwear	804
24	Cork and wood	783
05	Vegetables and fruit	531
89	Miscellaneous manufactured articles nes	313
71	Power generating machinery and equipment	203
07	Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and manufactures thereof	181
76	Telecoms and sound recording and reproducing apparatus	180
9-	Low value and other goods not classified elsewhere	169
77	Electrical machinery, appliances, nes and parts thereof	121
66	Non-metallic mineral manufactures	74
83	Travel goods, handbags and similar containers	42
81	Prefabricated buildings; sanitary, plumbing, heating, lighting	30
62	Rubber manufactures nes	26
75	Office machines and ADP equipment	21
88	Photographic apparatus, supplies & optical goods, watches and clocks	21
65	Textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles, nes	17
64	Paper, paperboard, and articles of paper pulp, etc.	5
12	Tobacco and tobacco manufactures	3
87	Professional, scientific and control instruments (and apparatus nes)	3
67	Iron and steel	2
74	General industrial machinery and equipment, nes	1
79	Other transport equipment	1
	Total UK imports of goods from Burma	30,857

nes = Not elsewhere specified.

Source:

HM Revenue and Customs Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS 1).

Namibia

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to promote trade with Namibia; and what the value of UK exports to Namibia was in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2003. [41374]

Ian Pearson: UK Trade and Investment is the lead UK Government organisation that supports UK companies trading internationally and overseas companies seeking to locate in the UK. UK companies can access the UKTI website for information and contact the Southern Africa Desk for general advice on exporting to Namibia. There is no UKTI commercial representation in Namibia itself. However, our high commissioner in Windhoek can provide lobbying support for UK companies pursuing major contacts in Namibia. UK exports to Namibia totalled £10.1 million in 2003 and increased to £17.4 million in 2004.

Nuclear Industry

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received from the nuclear power industry on pre-licensing agreements. [42127]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* In the course of the Department's normal work, I regularly meet with companies with interests in the nuclear power industry, where we discuss a wide-range of issues relating to energy policy. I have not had any specific representations on pre-licensing arrangements from the nuclear power industry.

QDF Castings Ltd.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations his Department has received about the *(a)* acquisition, *(b)* administration, *(c)* closure and *(d)* liquidation of QDF Castings Limited of Derby. [42285]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not received any representations about the acquisition of this company's assets.

The company went into administration on 1 August 2005 and I have dealt with correspondence concerning the subsequent effect on the employees of this company. The administrators have a duty to provide a report to creditors within eight weeks of the company going into administration and further reports covering periods of six months, from the date of the administration, are also provided to creditors; the Secretary of State does not receive such reports. The administrators are required to report to the Secretary of State on the conduct of the directors but the report is confidential and is not yet due.

The legislation provides that the administration should be concluded within a year unless either the court or the creditors consent to an extension of that time limit. Upon conclusion of the administration a company may not necessarily go into liquidation. If there are no assets left to distribute to creditors it may be dissolved.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles were removed and destroyed in each local authority area in Kent in each of the last five years. [42199]

Mr. Bradshaw: Estimates for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed in England have been compiled in the Defra municipal waste management survey since 2001. The figures for the last five years for local authorities in Kent are shown in the table. The figures from 2004–05 are collated through waste dataflow survey. At present we do not have a full return for 2004–05 but have received the figures for Kent, which are included in the table with the exception of Medway for which 2004–05 data is not yet available.

Local authority	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Ashford	612	686	774	1,071	214
Canterbury	809	974	1,052	625	305
Dartford	483	706	598	200	121
Dover	469	683	524	358	171
Gravesham	884	942	1,035	790	390
Maidstone	1,015	1,386	1,647	648	184
Medway	1,157	2,512	2,618	1,999	—
Sevenoaks	498	532	1,057	338	163
Shepway	733	859	815	643	179
Swale	738	976	882	524	260
Thanet	950	1,271	2,327	1,776	452
Tonbridge and Malling	557	632	607	597	133
Tunbridge Wells	688	695	734	450	168

Air Quality

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies her Department has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* funded into air quality in the UK since 2001. [42563]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department funds an extensive programme of research into the causes, effects and control of air pollution and air quality. Since 2001, the Department has operated between 50 (in 2000–01) and 65 (in 2003–04 and 2004–05) individual research and non-research contracts. These are spread across five research programmes—strategic policy analysis; eutrophication and acidification; photochemical pollution; toxic air pollutants; and ambient air—with a total value of around £10 million per year. Details of the individual contracts, including total value, lead contractor and final reports (where applicable), can be accessed via the UK National Air Quality Information Archive: http://www.airquality.co.uk/archive/contracts/index.php; the majority of contracts span between three and five years.

In 2005, Defra developed a draft Evidence and Innovation strategy, in order to ensure that research programme continued to support and inform departmental priorities. The Department has undertaken a consultation process on its draft strategy, which closed on 12 January. The consultation document can be accessed via the internet (http://defraweb/science/how/strategy.htm). The strategy splits also the air pollution research programme into five categories:

- quantifying the exposure of human populations and/or ecosystems to pollutants through measurement and modelling
- assessing the relative contributions to these exposures from source sectors both in the UK and elsewhere
- assessing the impact of air pollution
- assessing policy options and their delivery
- effective strategies and communication to positively impact on behaviour in order to improve air quality.

The following table lists all of the contracts currently in operation, broken down by Evidence and Innovation category and research need. The total budget for these contracts for 2005–06 is £9.7 million.

Current AEQ projects: Arranged by E and I category and research need

E and I category	*Research need/Project title*	*Current projects*
Quantifying exposure	1. Monitoring—Automatic Urban and Rural Networks	CMCU of the automatic urban and rural networks
		QA/QC services for the Automatic Urban and Rural Monitoring Networks
		To provide standard gases to sites in the UK national automatic air quality monitoring networks
		CMCU of the London automatic air quality monitoring network
	2. Monitoring—hydrocarbon networks	Non-automatic Hydrocarbon network (2004–07)
		Automatic Hydrocarbon network (2004–07)
	3. Monitoring—toxic air pollutants	TOMPs Network
		PAH monitoring in the UK
		Heavy metals monitoring network

Current AEQ projects: Arranged by E and I category and research need

E and I category	*Research need/Project title*	*Current projects*
	4. Monitoring—Smoke, SO_2, NO_2 non-automatic network	NO_2 Smoke and SO_2 Non-Automatic Monitoring
	5. Monitoring—Particle concentrations and numbers	Monitoring airborne particulate concentrations and numbers in the UK—Phase II
	6. Monitoring—Deposition networks	Management and operation of the UK acid deposition monitoring network Ammonia monitoring in the UK Management and Operation of EMEP Supersite (am)
Source attribution	7. Emission Inventories	National Atmospheric Emission Inventory and Greenhouse Gas Inventory EA Fuel Analysis-SCLF
	8. Modelling of atmospheric processes and pollutant concentrations	Global Modelling of Transboundary Air Pollution Acid deposition processes in the UK UK Application of Eulerian Models at Fine Spatial Resolution Modelling concentrations and deposition of long range air pollutants UK Pollution Climate Mapping—Phase II The UK Application of the EMEP Model Modelling of tropospheric ozone Dispersion modelling of air pollutants in urban areas in the UK—Phase II
	9. Research on the characterisation of particles	Non Exhaust Particulate Matter Emissions from Road Traffic Characterization of Particulate matter in the UK
	10. Research on source attribution of particles	How to estimate the benefits to health that might follow reductions in roadside concentrations of pollutants Links between urban ambient particulate matter and health—particle metrics
Assessing impacts	11. Monitoring—Acid Waters Monitoring Network	UK Acid Waters Monitoring Network
	12. Environmental effects of acidification, eutrophication and ozone	Critical Loads and Dynamic Modelling for Acidity and Nitrogen Terrestrial umbrella—eutrophication and acidification of terrestrial ecosystems in the UK—new contract

Avian Influenza

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to improve surveillance to try to prevent avian influenza in the United Kingdom. [42251]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have introduced new surveillance arrangements on certain species of migratory water birds with our European partners, and we are working closely with a range of industry groups. Poultry keepers in the UK have also been advised on improved biosecurity and surveillance measures.

Biodiesel

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the proportion of crops grown for biodiesel production which were used in the production of biodiesel in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement; [40543]

(2) how much land was used to produce crops for biodiesel production in the last period for which figures are available. [40544]

Mr. Morley: In 2005, 39,000 hectares of oilseed rape were grown on non set-aside land in England under the Energy Aid Scheme for use in the production of biodiesel. A further 26,000 hectares were grown on non set-aside land for industrial use but further details of the end-use are not available. 67,000 hectares of oilseed rape were grown on set-aside land for industrial use. Further details of the end-use are not available, but most is likely to be for biodiesel production.

Chemicals (Safety Investigations)

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the Environment Agency report 'Better Environment, Healthier People', (1) which categories of chemicals she will prioritise for health and safety investigation after flame retardants and pharmaceuticals; [40879]

(2) what plans she has to accelerate further research to establish the health and safety implications of the 30,000 untested industrial chemicals in commercial use. [41172]

Mr. Morley: The Government have set up a UK Co-ordinated Chemical Risk Management Programme, led by DEFRA and the Environment Agency. The Programme has been put in place to take forward the hazard and risk assessment, and risk management, of chemicals in the period leading up to the first assessments under REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals), which is the main vehicle for assessing the large number of chemicals in use about which we currently have insufficient data.

The following criteria will be used to help select chemicals for inclusion in the programme:

their potential persistence, bioaccumulation and toxicity;

chemicals being considered as substitutes for a restricted substance;

chemicals that have been nominated by industry and which meet the criteria for inclusion in the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) programme;

chemicals manufactured or widely used in the UK.

The UK Chemicals Stakeholder Forum also continues to investigate groups of chemicals based on their potential persistence, bioaccumulation and toxicity and to make recommendations to the Government based on this work. The categories of chemicals currently being addressed by the UK Chemicals Stakeholder Forum include phenols and cresols, plastic additives and aromatic amines.

Energy Efficiency (Swindon)

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding is available to promote energy efficiency among households in Swindon. [42171]

Mr. Morley: Support for energy efficiency among households is available through a number of routes. Details of grants and offers for energy efficiency measures in a particular area are available, by postcode, on the website of the Energy Saving Trust, which is funded by my Department to promote and support energy efficiency in the household sector. This includes grants under the Government's Warm Front programme—to increase the energy efficiency of vulnerable households, contributing heavily to the eradication of fuel poverty in the UK. The Trust also runs a network of Energy Efficiency Advice Centres (EEACs) which provide free, impartial and locally relevant advice to householders. The Swindon area is covered by the Dorset and Wiltshire EEAC.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of legislation on ambient air quality assessment and management, *(b)* Committee for the adaptation to technical and scientific progress of the air quality limit values and guide values for sulphur dioxide and suspended particulates and *(c)* Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of the directive on air quality standards for nitrogen dioxide have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38787]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were no meetings of the three air quality Committees during the UK presidency.

European Council

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information her Department has obtained from the European Commission on the action plan on energy efficiency to which reference was made at paragraph 17 of the conclusions of the European Council meeting on 17 December 2005. [41541]

Mr. Morley: The European Commission published its Green Paper on Energy Efficiency, "Doing More With Less" in June last year. Consultation on the proposals in the Green Paper for improving energy efficiency within the EU closes on 31 March 2006. Following the close of consultation, the Commission have announced their intention to produce in 2006 an Energy Efficiency Action Plan which will set out those concrete actions that the Commission intend to take forward from the Green Paper, accompanied by the necessary cost-benefit analyses.

Microgeneration

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what work her Department undertakes on the promotion of microgeneration, with particular reference to the promotion of crops for microgeneration; and how many civil servants in her Department are dedicated full-time to such work. [42017]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Department of Trade and Industry leads for the Government on microgeneration. DEFRA works closely with them in the identification and development of cost effective measures to help new and existing microgeneration technologies make a significant contribution to our energy policy goals. DEFRA has a particular interest in micro-combined heat and power (CHP) and is supporting the Carbon Trust in its assessment of the carbon saving potential of this technology.

DEFRA is keen to promote the use of biomass for heat and power generation. Grants are available to establish energy crops and to set up producer groups and supply chains for biomass. Farmers can receive the Single Payment for energy crops grown on set-aside or where the €45/ha energy aid payment is claimed for crops on non set-aside land. Research to improve disease resistance and crop yields is being undertaken. A cross-departmental team is looking carefully at the recommendations from the Biomass Task Force on ways to overcome the barriers to developing biomass energy. The Government will publish a full response by April.

A number of officials work on the promotion of CHP and biomass energy, which includes issues relevant to microgeneration.

Milk Sales

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much milk was sold through retail outlets in each year since 1990; and what proportion of this was imported. [38973]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table shows the relevant figures:

Estimated UK household purchases and imports of drinking milk (million litres)

	UK household purchases[1]	*Imports*[2]	*Imports as a percentage of purchases*
1990	5,854	20	0.3
1991	5,697	36	0.6
1992	5,952	65	1.1

Estimated UK household purchases and imports of drinking milk (million litres)

	UK household purchases[1]	*Imports*[2]	*Imports as a percentage of purchases*
1993	5,876	52	0.9
1994	5,925	66	1.1
1995	5,867	86	1.5
1996	5,680	66	1.2
1997	5,714	62	1.1
1998	5,593	55	1.0
1999	5,482	37	0.7
2000	5,630	35	0.6
2001[3]	5,193	30	0.6
2002[3]	5,059	26	0.5
2003[3]	5,157	22	0.4
2004[3]	5,034	33	0.6

[1] Estimated by Defra using the Expenditure and Food Survey and ONS figures for the resident UK population.
[2] Source HM Revenue and Customs.
[3] From 2001 onwards estimated purchases are for the financial years 2001–02, 2002–03 etc.

Moles

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department issues on allowable products for exterminating moles following the removal of the authorisation for the use of strychnine. [40628]

Mr. Morley: In August 2005 the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD), an Executive Agency of DEFRA, wrote to relevant stakeholders explaining the implications of the removal of the authorisation for the use of strychnine and advising on alternative methods of control. This information is available on the PSD website (www.pesticides.gov.uk/approvals.asp?id = 1475) and includes details of two aluminium phosphide fumigant products currently approved for use (Luxan Talunex and Phostoxin).

Other methods of control are available including traps, repellents, habitat modification and fencing. In 2004, recognising the difficulties that removal of the strychnine authorisation could cause we commissioned the Central Science Laboratory to undertake a review of the range of controls. A copy of the report is available on the DEFRA website (http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/reports/mole-review.pdf).

DEFRA's Rural Development Service has also published a Technical Advice Note (No.3) on mole control, including use of the two fumigant products. This is available on the DEFRA website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/rds/publications/technical/TAN_03.pdf

Operation of Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967; [42304]

(2) if she will make a statement on the operation of the Slaughterhouses Act 1974. [42311]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are satisfied with the operation of the Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967 and the Slaughterhouse Act 1974. Sections of these Acts were repealed by the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995.

Packaging Waste

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to encourage manufacturers and retailers to reduce packaging waste, with particular reference to supermarkets. [41988]

Mr. Bradshaw: Last year the Government launched the Courtauld Commitment, a voluntary agreement between 13 major retailers and WRAP to reduce packaging waste. There are three broad objectives to meet, which are:

i. to design out packaging waste growth by 2008;

ii. to deliver absolute reductions in packaging waste by March 2010; and

iii. to identify ways to tackle the problem of food waste.

The are also two sets of Regulations which cover packaging in the UK both of which encourage producers (including retailers) to minimise packaging. The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2005 are intended to increase the recovery and recycling of packaging waste. The amount of packaging waste producers have to recover and recycle is determined, in part, by the amount of packaging they handle. Therefore businesses can save money if they reduce the amount of packaging they use around their products. The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003 (as amended) place a number of requirements on all packaging placed on the market in the UK, including a requirement that packaging should be manufactured so that the packaging volume and weight are limited to the minimum adequate amount to maintain the necessary level of safety, hygiene and acceptance for the packed product and for the consumer.

Although legislation is one way of reducing packaging consumers also have a part to play. For example, if consumers made a point of choosing goods that are not heavily packaged, or bought 'loose' food rather than pre-packaged, or used their own shopping bags or boxes, manufacturers would be more inclined to reduce the quantity of packaging on their products.

Pesticides

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanisms are in place to monitor the impact of pesticides on biodiversity. [40511]

Mr. Morley: The pesticides forum, and the industry-led voluntary initiative for pesticides, have produced and published biodiversity indicators. These include monitoring populations of indicator bird species such as the grey partridge, corn bunting and yellowhammer and are in line with the Government's overall biodiversity action plan process.

In addition the voluntary initiative's indicator farms project is looking, on an experimental basis, at possible impacts on a wide range of species on individual farms within the project.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of reducing the volume of pesticide on the impacts of pesticides on the environment. [40512]

Mr. Morley: It is Government policy to focus on reducing the environmental impacts of pesticides rather than the total amount of pesticide used. This is because impact depends on a variety of factors of which the volume used is only one. Different pesticides can be active at very different rates and replacing a pesticide used at high volume with a more active one used at lower volume would reduce the volume used but may have no environmental benefit or could even be counter-productive.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanisms she will use to assess the effectiveness of the national pesticides strategy in reducing *(a)* pesticide use and *(b)* the environmental impact of pesticides. [40513]

Mr. Morley: The action plans to deliver the strategy for the sustainable use of plant protection products will contain indicators against which to assess the impact of specific actions. These indicators will include a measure of the quantities of pesticide used which will be monitored through the department's pesticide usage survey. Indicators of environmental impact will include measures of water quality and impacts on biodiversity.

The development of environmental indicators is an active area of research and we envisage that new indicators will be introduced as the strategy is taken forward.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the amenity sector's use of pesticides on biodiversity; and what steps she plans to take to minimise the use of diuron. [40514]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency's monitoring data shows that the impact of amenity use of herbicides is mainly on surface water. The herbicide diuron, which is quite widely used in the amenity sector, is the principal pesticide found.

Diuron is currently under review as part of a wider EC programme under of Directive 91/414 /EEC. We expect a decision on its future authorisation within the next few months.

The new statutory code of practice for the safe use of pesticides, which will be published this month, sets out in detail best environmental practice to minimise the entry of diuron into surface water.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the regulatory system for the approvals of pesticides will include an assessment of the indirect effects of pesticides on biodiversity. [40515]

Mr. Morley: The regulatory system under the EC Authorisations Directive (91/414/EEC) on the marketing of plant protection products requires an assessment of the direct effects of pesticides on various non-target plants and animals. It does not require an assessment of the indirect effects of pesticides on biodiversity.

Directive 91/414/EEC is due to be replaced by a new EC regulation and we expect a proposal from the European Commission later this year. We will be considering whether the regulatory system should be extended to include an assessment of indirect effects and, if so, how that might be done, in the context of that proposal.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects research into the development of a banded pesticides tax will be completed. [40516]

Mr. Morley: A study of key design issues for potential economic instruments carried out by Risk and Policy Analysts Limited (RPA) for the Department was published in September 2004. The review by RPA built on the work by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited in 1999 (reference ISBN 1 851121 60 9, price £50.00). The RPA report is available on the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk/environment/chemicals/pesticides).

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the timetable is for developing a model to evaluate the effectiveness of the voluntary initiative on the environmental impact of pesticide use. [40517]

Mr. Morley: A project has been carried out by Enviresearch Ltd and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne to develop a framework to inform subsequent assessment of the performance of the Voluntary Initiative (VI) in delivering environmental benefits. This project is now being peer reviewed prior to publication, and will be available for use as a basis for the assessment of the current VI programme which runs to the end of March 2006.

We will appoint consultants to carry out an assessment of the initiative in the next few months with a view to the assessment being completed by the end of 2006.

Pigeons (London)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of London's pigeon population in each year since 2000. [42447]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not hold information on London's pigeon population.

Racehorses

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many racehorses were reported as *(a)* being poorly treated, *(b)* lost and *(c)* stolen in each of the last seven years. [43711]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not hold information on the number racehorses being poorly treated, lost or stolen.

Recovered Fuel Oil

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the environmental consequences of a switch from recovered fuel oil to virgin fuels in those industries that use recovered fuel oil; [39340]

(2) what assessment she has made of the alternatives to recovered fuel oil that will be used in *(a)* the manufacture of coated road stone and *(b)* other industrial processes after the Waste Incineration Directive is implemented in domestic law; [39389]

(3) what recent studies she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated to compare the carbon dioxide and other emissions from burning (i) recovered fuel oil and (ii) gas oil. [39390]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not made these assessments and studies. That is because industries switching from the use of recovered fuel oil to virgin fuels will remain subject to environmental regulation under the Pollution Prevention and Control (England and Wales) Regulations 2000. It is therefore for the regulator to set emission limits and other permit conditions according to the general principles of those Regulations that installations should be operated in such a way that *(a)* all the appropriate preventative measures are taken against pollution, in particular through application of the best available techniques; and *(b)* no significant pollution is caused. Those principles apply irrespective of the type of fuel and provide a high level of protection for the environment. However, where oil is waste as defined under the EU Waste Framework Directive, the regulator is obliged to set emission limits at least as stringent as those set out in the Waste Incineration Directive.

Recycling

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many recycling points there are per 1,000 population in *(a)* the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England. [41826]

Mr. Bradshaw: Requested figures, based on the 2003–04 Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey and 2003 mid-year population estimates are shown as follows:

	recycling points per 1,000 population
London borough of Hillingdon	0.29
Greater London	0.55
England	0.41

Recycling points are considered as both civic amenity and recycling sites within the area.

Data at constituency level are not available.

Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department is the lead department drafting the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation. [39915]

Mr. Morley: The Department for Transport leads on the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation. They consult closely with the other Departments, including DEFRA, which have an interest in this issue.

River Thames (Raw Sewage)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cubic feet of raw sewage has been discharged into the River Thames in London in each of the last three years. [41613]

Mr. Morley: The current estimates, from the supplementary report by the Thames Tideway Strategic Study, of average annual volumes of overflow discharges (sewage mixed with collected rainwater) from the London system is 32 million cubic metres from the sewer overflows and 20 million cubic metres from treatment works. A combined average annual total of about 52 million cubic metres.

Work is now in hand to increase the capacity of the treatment works at Beckton, Crossness and Mogden to reduce the frequency and volumes of overflows connected with these works. And I, along with Ofwat, am considering what further actions may be required in the light of the two latest reports on the sewage overflow discharges, received in December 2005, from the Thames Tideway Strategic Study and from the independent review commissioned by Ofwat.

Scrapie (North Ronaldsay)

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many instances of scrapie have occurred in North Ronaldsay sheep in each of the last five years. [42063]

Mr. Bradshaw: Three instances of scrapie have occurred in North Ronaldsay sheep in the last five years. Two cases occurred in 2004 (although one of these was a North Ronaldsay crossbred sheep). One case occurred in 2005.

Sustainable Development

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the report, Leading by Example? Not Exactly, published by the Sustainable Development Commission on 16 December 2005. [41536]

Mr. Morley: The Sustainable Development in Government (SDIG) Report 2005 published by the Sustainable Development Commission demonstrated that there had been some improvement in departmental performance against the operational targets in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. However, it also clearly signalled that there was much more to be done to improve the way that the Government manages sustainably its land and buildings.

The Government accepts that more needs to be done to improve its operational performance. In order to address this issue, the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (Securing the future, March 2005) included a commitment to review the framework and deliver a significant improvement in its operational performance.

The SDC's report was the first SDIG report to be published wholly independently of Government.

The UK SD strategy commits all Government Departments and their Executive agencies to produce focused sustainable development action plans (which cover both policy and operational issues) based on the strategy by December 2005. Departments are then expected to report on their actions by December 2006, for example in their departmental annual reports and regularly thereafter. The Sustainable Development Commission will be commenting on these plans during 2006.

Turkey

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make representations to the Turkish Government requesting that the slaughter of birds in that country necessitated by the spread of avian influenza is carried out humanely. [42798]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Chief Veterinary Officer has already discussed this issue with the European Commission. In addition the State Veterinary Service Director of Operations is travelling to Turkey shortly to lead a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation mission explicitly discussing disease control and animal welfare issues. We have also been asked to provide specific expertise in animal disease emergency work to help with the control of avian influenza in Turkey. We will continue to engage practically and positively on these issues.

UK National Allocation Plan

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the EU is taking concerning the UK National Allocation Plan. [41925]

Mr. Morley: Following the judgment of the Court of First Instance the European Commission must consider the UK's amendment to its National Allocation Plan. It does not direct the Commission to accept our proposed increase in the total cap to 756m allowances. The UK awaits the Commission's considered decision before taking further steps.

Wildlife

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the veterinary profession on veterinarians' responsibilities for the treatment of wildlife. [42252]

Mr. Bradshaw: There have been no specific discussions on this issue with the veterinary profession, although general guidance issued by the British Veterinary Association reminds veterinary surgeons of the need to bear in mind their professional and ethical obligations.

There are, of course, a number of animal diseases where wildlife may act as a reservoir or a source of infection. The veterinary profession is closely consulted on the control of such diseases and is aware of legislative controls relating to animal welfare and the taking, treatment and release of wildlife specimens.

TREASURY

Breast Cancer

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the figures for the number of women who *(a)* were diagnosed and *(b)* died from breast cancer in 2004 to become available; and if he will make a statement. [42947]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning when the figures for the number of women who *(a)* were diagnosed and *(b)* died from breast cancer in 2004 are expected to become available. (42947)

The most recent available information on registration of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer are for the year 2003. Figures for 2004 are due to be published in September 2006.

Figures on the number of women who died from breast cancer in 2004 were published in December 2005 in the volume Mortality Statistics Series DH2 no.31, which is available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_health/Dh2_31/DH2No31.pdf

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 658W on the child trust fund, what estimate he has made of the cost of providing this information. [42280]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of providing the information would have greatly exceeded the disproportionate cost threshold of £600.

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Child Trust fund vouchers have been issued to families in Castle Point to date. [42802]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the my hon. Friend the Member for Paisley and Renfrewshire, North (Jim Sheridan) on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 658W.

Economic Inactivity

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were classed as economically inactive in each of the last 10 years in *(a)* Great Grimsby, *(b)* Cleethorpes, *(c)* Brigg and Goole and *(d)* Scunthorpe. [42673]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning economic inactivity. (42673)

The Office for National Statistics compiles statistics of inactivity for local areas from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. The attached table shows the numbers of inactive people of working age, resident in Great Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Brigg and Goole and Scunthorpe constituencies, for the 12 month periods ending February 1997 to February 2004 from the annual local area LFS and for the 12 months ending March 2005 from the APS. The table also shows the number of inactive people as a percentage of the total working age population resident in each constituency.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Numbers and rates of working age persons resident in Great Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Brigg and Goole, and Scunthorpe parliamentary constituencies who are economically inactive

	Great Grimsby		Cleethorpes	
12 Months ending	*Economically inactive (£000)*	*Economic inactivity rate[1] (percentage)*	*Economically inactive (£000)*	*Economic inactivity rate[1] (percentage)*
February 1997	15	27	9	18
February 1998	11	25	8	16
February 1999	14	27	14	25
February 2000	12	23	14	25
February 2001	12	23	10	18
February 2002	13	24	10	19
February 2003	12	23	12	21
February 2004	11	20	11	22
March 2005	12	23	11	20

	Brigg and Goole		Scunthorpe	
12 Months ending	*Economically inactive (£000)*	*Economic inactivity rate[1] (percentage)*	*Economically inactive (£000)*	*Economic inactivity rate[1] (percentage)*
February 1997	7	14	8	14
February 1998	12	21	10	20
February 1999	10	21	10	21
February 2000	9	23	14	28
February 2001	13	24	11	26
February 2002	10	21	12	26
February 2003	10	20	12	27
February 2004	10	19	13	26
March 2005	9	19	12	24

[1] Rate as a percentage of the resident population of working age (men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59).

Source:
Annual local are labour force survey; annual population survey

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many working-age people not in full-time education were economically inactive in each year since 1997. [42762]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity.

The attached table gives the estimated numbers of economically inactive people of working age, who were not in full-time education, for the three month periods ending in August from 1991 to 2005.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Inactive people of working age[1] who are not in full-time education—United Kingdom

Three month periods ending August	*Thousands*
1997	6,376
1998	6,360
1999	6,254
2000	6,273
2001	6,369
2002	6,361
2003	6,346
2004	6,412
2005	6,311

[1] Includes men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59.

Source:
ONS, labour force survey

Employment (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of those in employment in Castle Point were employed in *(a)* the public sector and *(b)* the private sector in each year since 1996. [42829]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about private and public sector employment. (42829)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organizations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the Annual Population Survey (APS)/annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorization of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the proportions of public and private sector employment in the Castle Point constituency shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1997 to February 2004 and by the APS for the 12 month period to March 2005.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Persons in employment resident in the Castle Point constituency by private-public sector split[1]

	Proportions (per cent.)		
12 months ending February:	*Private sector*	*Public sector*	*Total in employment (000)*
1997	n/a	n/a	37
1998	n/a	n/a	40
1999	84	16	41
2000	83	17	41
2001	83	17	45
2002	84	16	43
2003	86	14	42
2004	83	17	41
March 2005	79	21	44

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey and the Annual Population survey—generally overestimate public sector employment.

Note:
Percentages are based on exact levels for each year and then rounded
n/a—not available.

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Employment Rates

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the percentage employment rate was for the working age population in *(a)* the 12 months to June 1997 or closest equivalent period and *(b)* the last 12 month period for which figures are available in each parliamentary constituency, listed in descending order according to the difference between the two rates. [41026]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about employment rates by parliamentary constituency. (41026)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles employment statistics for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey and the Annual Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. Table 1, attached, shows employment rates for persons of working age, resident in each parliamentary constituency in Great Britain, including the former Scottish constituencies superseded in May 2005, for the 12 months ending February 1997 and for the 12 months ending December 2004, listed in descending order of the difference between the two rates.

Estimates for the new Scottish constituencies introduced in May 2005 are not available for the 12 month period ending February 1997. Table two, attached, shows the employment rate for persons of working age, resident in these constituencies, for the 12 months ending December 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to sampling variability. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Since the information is so extensive, copies of these tables have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

G7 Presidency

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made during the UK's presidency of the G7 on *(a)* the international finance facility, *(b)* proposals for debt relief, *(c)* access to medicine for women in developing countries and *(d)* increasing development aid; and if he will make a statement. [35651]

John Healey: Substantial progress was made in 2005 under the UK presidencies of the EU and the G7/8. The international community has committed to raise an additional $50 billion of aid by 2010, to cancel 100 per cent. of the multilateral debts of the world's poorest countries, and to launch the 'International Finance Facility for Immunisation'.

G8 leaders have also agreed to achieve, as close as possible, universal access to AIDS treatment for all those who need it by 2010, and work on advance purchase commitments for vaccines for malaria, HIV/AIDS and other diseases of poverty.

Government Expenditure

Mr. Hague: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what provision was made in the Government's spending plans contained in the pre-Budget report, in advance of the meeting of the European Council on 15 and 16 December 2005 for *(a)* an increase in UK contributions to the EU budget owing to changes to the rebate and *(b)* an increase in UK contributions to the EU budget due to an increase in the EU budget's share of EU gross national income; and if he will make a statement; [43157]

(2) what provision *(a)* has been and *(b)* will be made to meet the increase in UK contributions arising from (i) the reduction in the EU rebate and (ii) the increase in the EU budget's share of EU gross national income; and whether such provision (A) has been and (B) will be met from (1) a rise in tax revenue and (2) a reduction in expenditure. [43165]

John Healey: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the reply the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave to my right hon. Friend the Member for West Dunbartonshire on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2796W.

Income Levels (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of Castle Point residents were in *(a)* the top 10 per cent. and *(b)* the bottom 10 per cent. of income earners in (i) 1991 and (ii) 2001. [42830]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available at constituency level.

Marine Bill

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the Marine Bill. [43180]

John Healey: The Treasury is in regular and frequent contact with other departments about legislation falling within their spheres of responsibility.

Middle East

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the *(a)* Government's support for the Palestinian Authority's medium-term development plan and *(b)* the outcome of the conference on private sector investment in the West Bank and Gaza held in London on 13 December 2005. [42978]

John Healey: The Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, Mr. James Wolfensohn, has identified several key issues for Israeli disengagement from Gaza to be judged a success. While these mostly concern improved movement and access for Palestinians, the development of a credible Palestinian medium-term development plan is one of the issues where a small amount of support could have a transformative impact. At the request of the Palestinian Authority, the Department for International Development, together with the World Bank, is providing technical assistance with the preparation of such a plan. It will be important that the plan is effectively implemented and that the international community lends its full support. A key outcome from the conference held in London to promote economic growth in the West Bank and Gaza through the private sector was the Joint Declaration from Israeli and Palestinian business leaders on the steps required for promoting Palestinian economic growth and their expectations from the Palestinian Authority, Government of Israel and the international community. The Declaration (available in PN109/05 on the HM Treasury's website) includes an action plan to overcome obstacles to private sector led investment and growth with the establishment of a Private Sector Working Group. The first meeting of the Private Sector Working Group is expected to take place this month, at which the parties will agree their forward work plan. The Government will work with the World Bank to support the Group.

Plastic Bags

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had about introducing a tax on plastic bags. [43314]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Wimbledon on 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 93W.

Population Statistics

Mrs. Spelman: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the *(a)* Government and *(b)* Office for National Statistics has made of the proportion of the population aged 45 years or older in (i) England, (ii) the United Kingdom, (iii) outer London, (iv) inner London and (v) each Government Office Region in (A) 1997 and (B) the most recent year for which figures are available. [42844]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the estimated proportion of the population aged 45 years or older in *(a)* England, *(b)* the United Kingdom, *(c)* outer London, *(d)* inner London and *(e)* each Government Office Region, in 1997 and for the most recent year for which figures are available. (42844)

The table below shows the total population, the population of those aged 45 years or older and the percentage of those aged 45 years or older for the above mentioned areas in 1997 and 2004.

Mid-year population estimates for 1997 and 2004 and percentage of the population aged 45 and over

Thousand

Area	*Persons all ages*		*Persons age 45+*		*Percentage population age 45+*	
	1997	*2004*	*1997*	*2004*	*1997*	*2004*
United Kingdom	58,314.2	59,834.3	22,701.0	24,118.3	38.9	40.3
England	48,664.8	50,093.1	18,966.0	20,105.7	39.0	40.1
Government Office Region						
North East	2,568.1	2,545.1	1,016.7	1,070.9	39.6	42.1
North West	6,794.4	6,827.2	2,667.1	2,778.3	39.3	40.7
Yorkshire and the Humber	4,957.6	5,038.8	1,942.6	2,048.1	39.2	40.6
East Midlands	4,120.3	4,279.7	1,633.1	1,771.4	39.6	41.4
West Midlands	5,262.3	5,334.0	2,065.2	2,168.1	39.2	40.6
East	5,266.9	5,491.3	2,107.9	2,295.9	40.0	41.8
London	7,014.8	7,428.6	2,327.3	2,371.1	33.2	31.9
South East	7,853.1	8,110.2	3,140.0	3,355.5	40.0	41.4
South West	4,827.3	5,038.2	2,066.2	2,246.1	42.8	44.6
Wales	2,894.9	2,952.5	1,197.9	1,271.6	41.4	43.1
Inner-London	2,672.4	2,931.1	787.4	790.3	29.5	27.0
Outer-London	4,342.5	4,497.5	1,540.0	1,580.9	35.5	35.1

Note:
Figures may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the predicted net change in *(a)* population and *(b)* number of households, in (i) Merseyside, (ii) Newcastle-upon-Tyne, (iii) Stoke on Trent, (iv) Kingston upon Hull, (v) the North East government office region and (vi) the North West government office region, over the next 20 years. [42889]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the projected change in population and household numbers over the next 20 years. (42889)

The Office for National Statistics produces official subnational population projections for England. The most recent set of population projections are 2003-based and use local trends in births, deaths and migration over the reference period 1999 to 2003 to formulate assumptions on levels of fertility, mortality and migration for future years.

The attached table shows the projected population of the areas of Merseyside, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Stoke on Trent, Kingston upon Hull, the North East government office region and the North West government office region from the 2003-based subnational population projections.

Household projections are the responsibility of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Interim 2002 based household projections for the Government Regions are published on the ODPM web site at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/104/Table405Excel30KbIdll56104.xls.

Updated projections for districts are currently in production.

Table 1: Projected population and year-on-year net change for selected areas in England 2003-based subnational population projections

Thousand

Area		*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Merseyside (metropolitan county)	Projected popn	1,361.5	1,359.1	1,357.1	1,355.3	1,353.7	1,352.2	1,350.9
	Net change	—	-2.3	-2.0	-1.8	-1.7	-1.5	-1.3
Newcastle upon Tyne (metropolitan district)	Projected popn	265.5	264.6	263.9	263.4	262.9	262.5	262.1
	Net change	—	-0.9	-0.7	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4	-0.4
Stoke-on-Trent (unitary authority)	Projected popn	236.6	235.3	234.1	233.0	232.0	231.0	230.0
	Net change	—	-1.3	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1	-1.0	-0.9
Kingston upon Hull (unitary authority)	Projected popn	245.6	243.4	241.5	239.6	237.9	236.3	234.8
	Net change	—	-2.1	-2.0	-1.8	-1.7	-1.6	-1.5
North East (govt office region)	Projected popn	2,535.4	2,531.9	2,529.0	2,526.7	2,524.5	2,522.4	2,520.6
	Net change	—	-3.4	-3.0	-2.3	-2.2	-2.1	-1.8
North West (govt office region)	Projected popn	6,811.4	6,820.1	6,829.9	6,840.8	6,851.8	6,863.1	6,874.9
	Net change	—	8.8	9.7	10.9	11.0	11.3	11.9

Thousand

Area		*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
Merseyside (metropolitan county)	*Projected popn*	*1,349.7*	*1,348.8*	*1,348.0*	*1,347.4*	*1,346.9*	*1,346.6*	*1,346.4*
	Net change	-1.1	-1.0	-0.8	-0.7	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2
Newcastle upon Tyne (metropolitan district)	Projected popn	261.7	261.3	260.9	260.4	259.9	259.4	259.0
	Net change	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
Stoke-on-Trent (unitary authority)	Projected popn	229.1	228.3	227.5	226.7	226.0	225.3	224.7
	Net change	-0.9	-0.9	-0.8	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6
Kingston upon Hull (unitary authority)	Projected popn	233.4	232.1	230.8	229.6	228.5	227.4	226.3
	Net change	-1.4	-1.3	-1.3	-1.2	-1.2	-1.1	-1.0
North East (govt office region)	Projected popn	2,518.9	2,517.4	2,515.9	2,514.5	2,513.3	2,512.1	2,511.0
	Net change	-1.6	-1.6	-1.5	-1.4	-1.2	-1.2	-1.1
North West (govt office region)	Projected popn	6,887.4	6,900.4	6,914.0	6,928.0	6,942.5	6,957.3	6,972.3
	Net change	12.5	13.0	13.6	14.0	14.4	14.8	15.1

Thousand

Area		*2018*	*2019*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*
Merseyside (metropolitan county)	Projected popn	1,346.3	1,346.2	1,346.1	1,346.0	1,345.8	1,345.7	1,345.4
	Net change	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2
Newcastle upon Tyne (metropolitan district)	Projected popn	258.5	257.9	257.4	256.8	256.4	256.1	255.8
	Net change	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3
Stoke-on-Trent (unitary authority)	Projected popn	224.1	223.5	222.9	222.3	221.8	221.3	220.8
	Net change	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
Kingston upon Hull (unitary authority)	Projected popn	225.3	224.4	223.4	222.5	221.7	220.9	220.2
	Net change	-1.0	-1.0	-0.9	-0.9	-0.8	-0.8	-0.7

Thousand

Area		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
North East (govt office region)	Projected popn	2,509.8	2,508.4	2,506.9	2,505.4	2,503.7	2,502.0	2,500.0
	Net change	-1.2	-1.3	-1.5	-1.6	-1.7	-1.7	-1.9
North West (govt office region)	Projected popn	6,987.4	7,002.3	7,016.8	7,030.8	7,044.3	7,057.1	7,069.2
	Net change	15.0	14.9	14.5	14.0	13.6	12.8	12.1

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Pre-Budget Statement

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he spoke to journalists on 5 December 2005 before delivering his pre-Budget statement in the House. [36162]

John Healey: On 5 December 2005, before his pre-Budget report statement, the Chancellor visited a shared equity housing scheme in London with the Prime Minister, attended Cabinet and also attended a memorial service for Robin Cook, the former Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Commons. There was no briefing to journalists by the Chancellor.

Red Diesel

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will be seeking to renew the derogation of the Red Diesel Rules. [42807]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Stroud on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2465W.

Tax Credits/Fraud

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many fraudulent tax credit claims have been identified since April 2003; what the combined value is of fraudulent claims identified; and if he will make a statement. [35696]

Dawn Primarolo: The Home Secretary is today making a statement on the measures the Government are taking to address identity fraud.

But I want to inform the House of the detailed action HMRC is taking to identify and root out identity fraud and to work with banks to address a problem HMRC investigations have identified and about which they are in discussion with banks-that is, the use of stolen identities to set up bank accounts under false pretences.

As a result of investigations by HMRC and DWP, DWP was alerted to the false use of the names of a number of DWP staff in setting up bank accounts under false pretences and then making fraudulent claims. On 2 December 2005 DWP and HMRC announced that a criminal investigation had been launched. At the same time, HMRC suspended the internet service with immediate effect.

Over the past six weeks DWP investigators and HMRC compliance officers have undertaken detailed inquiries. While one initial estimate was that up to 13,000 staff might have been affected by the identity theft, it is now established that some 8,800 staff identities may have been stolen in 2003–04 and that of these 6,800 have been used in an attempt to defraud the tax credits system in autumn 2005. Of the 6,800 fraudulent claims, around 4,100 were fully intercepted by HMRC before any payment, so that no payment was made. Of the remaining 2,700 claims where tax credit payments were made into multiple bank accounts using the stolen identities payments were suspended immediately they were discovered, and all payments were suspended by 16 December 2005. Swift action addressed the risk of higher losses, limiting the loss from this fraud to an estimated £2.7 million.

In a statement issued alongside National Statistics published on 23 December 2005, HMRC stated that a number of criminal investigations were under way. As a result of these investigations, which are ongoing, HMRC have uncovered evidence that banks have been the victims of multiple bank accounts opened under false pretences-using the names of individuals whose identities were stolen. With HMRC informing the banks of this fraud, the banks concerned will be addressing the issues we are raising with them.

As previously announced on 23 December 2005 we are subjecting around 30,000 claims to detailed further investigation, although not all of these are likely to be fraudulent. This includes the use of staff information stolen from Network Rail and which then led to bank accounts created for Network Rail employees under false pretences. Our detailed investigations have so far resulted in at least 16,000 claims being stopped, with information being referred to the National Criminal Intelligence Service, which will form part of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) on 1 April 2006. I will keep the House informed in a manner consistent with the ongoing criminal investigation.

New measures already announced in the pre-Budget report will result in a doubling of the number of pre-payment checks carried out on new claims. In addition, I have offered the banking sector and other financial institutions the help and expertise of HMRC in detecting such identity fraud, and ensuring that sufficient checks are in place to prevent fraudsters from opening bank accounts using stolen identities. We will continue to work with them to help tackle the problem. HMRC will also, seek to contact companies or individuals where it finds evidence that they might have been targeted by such fraudsters and work with them to assist in the investigation.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the value of tax credit overpayments *(a)* made and *(b)* written off by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to people in Northern Ireland in 2004–05. [21622]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of numbers and values of overpayments or underpayments for 2004–05 awards at 5 April 2005 will be published in spring 2006, after all the awards are finalised.

HM Revenue and Customs wrote off around £85,000 for families in Northern Ireland following its disputed overpayments procedures during 2004–05.

Unemployment (London)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in each London borough had been unemployed for two years o; more in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [42946]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (42946)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles unemployment statistics for small areas from the Annual Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows the numbers of people aged 16 and over who have been unemployed for two years or more, who were resident in the London Boroughs for the 12 month period ending in March 2005. These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA). Table 2 shows the numbers of JSA claimants, resident in the London Boroughs who have been claiming for more than two years in November 2005.

Table 1: Number of people aged 16 and over resident in each London borough who have been unemployed for two years or more; 12 months ending March 2005.

London borough	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	800
Barnet	1,100
Bexley	[1]
Brent	1,700
Bromley	[1]
Camden	[1]
City of London	[1]
Croydon	1,100
Ealing	1,000
Enfield	1,300
Greenwich	700
Hackney	800
Hammersmith and Fulham	800
Haringey	1,200
Harrow	[1]
Havering	[1]
Hillingdon	[1]
Hounslow	[1]
Islington	800
Kensington and Chelsea	[1]
Kingston-upon-Thames	[1]
Lambeth	3,100
Lewisham	1,200
Merton	[1]
Newham	1,000
Redbridge	[1]
Richmond-upon-Thames	700
Southwark	2,200
Sutton	[1]
Tower Hamlets	900
Waltham Forest	1,500
Wandsworth	1,200
Westminster, City of	1,100
London	27,200

[1] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual Population Survey.

Table 2: Number of claimants of jobseeker's allowance, resident in each London borough, claiming for more than two years; November 2005.

London borough	*Number*[1]
Barking and Dagenham	155
Barnet	270
Bexley	135
Brent	710
Bromley	225
Camden	415
City of London	5
Croydon	210
Ealing	175
Enfield	315
Greenwich	220
Hackney	305
Hammersmith and Fulham	170
Haringey	740
Harrow	110
Havering	85
Hillingdon	135
Hounslow	65
Islington	345
Kensington and Chelsea	165
Kingston-upon-Thames	60
Lambeth	485
Lewisham	300
Merton	150
Newham	370
Redbridge	125
Richmond-upon-Thames	80
Southwark	1,160
Sutton	100
Tower Hamlets	805
Waltham Forest	405
Wandsworth	260
Westminster, City of	210
London	9,480

[1] Duration data rounded to nearest five.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions the Valuation Office Agency has had with the EU Permanent Committee on Cadastre; and if he will make a statement. [42833]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency was invited to participate in the Plenary Meeting of the EU Permanent Committee on Cadastre held on 26 October 2005 at the Southampton offices of Ordnance Survey.

The main objective of the EU Permanent Committee on Cadastre is to facilitate the exchange of information, expertise, and best practices among member states.

In England and Wales, the bodies that contribute to the cadastre are Land Registry, Ordnance Survey and the Valuation Office Agency. That is why these three bodies were represented at the Plenary Meeting of the EU Permanent Committee on Cadastre.

The Valuation Office Agency was invited to make a presentation to the Plenary Meeting of the EU Permanent Committee on Cadastre to explain how its valuation work contributed to the "cadastre" in England and Wales.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman has considered in relation to the Valuation Office Agency and council tax since May 1997; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the ruling in each case. [42834]

Dawn Primarolo: The Parliamentary Ombudsman, Ann Abraham, is an independent office-holder. She operates under the provisions of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967 (as amended). The Parliamentary Ombudsman publishes information about the number of investigable complaints she has received in her annual report to Parliament. Her 2004–05 Annual Report, HC 348, was published on 20 July. Copies of the Parliamentary Ombudsman's annual reports are available in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many appeals the Valuation Office Agency has processed to date in relation to the council tax revaluation in Wales; and how many appeals are outstanding. [42835]

Dawn Primarolo: As at 31 December 2005 the Valuation Office had received 12,406 formal appeals of which 5,386 have been processed and 7,020 are still outstanding.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases the Adjudicator's Office has considered in relation to the Valuation Office Agency and council tax since May 1997; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the ruling on each case. [42837]

Dawn Primarolo: The Adjudicator has considered 6[illegible] cases in relation to the Valuation Office Agency and council tax since 1 April 1997.

The rulings relate to an individual taxpayer's affairs and are, therefore, confidential.

Westmorland and Lonsdale

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector jobs broken down by (i) agricultural, (ii) manufacturing and (iii) service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each year since 1997. [43148]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about private and public sector employment. (43148)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organizations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorization of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the number of persons in private sector employment, by the specified splits, and for the public sector, for people resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency as shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1998 to February 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Persons in employment resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousand

	Private sector				*Public sector*	*Total*
Twelve months ending February	*Agriculture*	*Manufacturing*	*Services*[2]	*Other industries*[3]		
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	39
1999	1	5	24	3	7	41
2000	1	4	24	4	7	41
2001	2	2	22	4	7	37
2002	2	6	20	3	7	38
2003	2	4	25	6	6	44
2004	1	6	28	4	6	45

n/a = Not available.

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area labour force survey—generally overestimate public sector employment.

[2] Services are Standard Industrial Classification (1992) divisions G-O.

[3] Other industries are divisions B, C, E and F.

Source:

Annual local area labour force survey.

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* the North West and *(b)* the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency earn (i) £3.60 per hour, (ii) £3.61 to £3.80 per hour, (iii) £3.81 to £4 per hour and (iv) £4 to £4.50 per hour; and what percentage of total employees this constitutes in each case. [43149]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask how many people in *(a)* the North West and *(b)* the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency earn (i) £3.60 per hour (ii) £3.61 to £3.80 per hour, (iii) £3.81 to £4.00 per hour and (iv) £4.00 to £4.50 per hour; and what percentage of total employees this constitutes in each case. (43149)

We cannot provide data for Westmorland and Lonsdale as the sample count for this area was too small to carry out the required proportion analysis.

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Hourly pay—gross (£) for all employee jobs[a]

		Proportions earning between			
2005	*Number of jobs (thousand)*	*£3.60 and under*	*£3.60-£3.80*	*£3.81-£4.00*	*£4.00-£4.50*
North West	2,578	**0.4	X	**0.3	*1.2

[a] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.
* *Guide to quality:*
The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.
The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV eg for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.
Key:
CV < = 5 per cent.
* CV > 5 per cent. and < = 10 per cent.
** CV > 10 per cent. and < = 20 per cent.
X unreliable—CV > 20 per cent. or unavailable
Background notes:
(a) The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, (ASHE), carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees.
(b) Average gross hourly earnings for All Employees whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence.
(c) The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much council tax was paid as a proportion of gross income by households in each income quintile group in Westmorland and Lonsdale in the latest year for which data are available. [43151]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how much council tax was paid as a proportion of gross income for households in each income quintile group in Westmorland and Lonsdale in the latest year for which data is available. (43151)

Unfortunately, the information requested is not available.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the operation of the Child Support Agency's computer systems. [21107]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the state of the Child Support Agency's computer systems.

The new Child Support computer system (CS2) is now more stable technically and performance has improved to the point where service levels are generally being met. A number of defects do remain but EDS has agreed to resolve these as a part of an agreed forward programme of enhancement.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the annual *(a)* sickness and *(b)* absenteeism rate has been for staff at the Child Support Agency in each year since 1995–96; and if he will make a statement. [21445]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 18 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the annual *(a)* sickness and *(b)* absenteeism rate has been for staff at the Child Support Agency in each year since 1995–96 and if he will make a statement.

I am unable to provide the annual sickness absence rate for the years 1995 to 1998 as the Agency does not have records for this period.

The table below shows the available sickness absence rates.

Year ending	*Annual sickness rate (average working days lost per member of staff, expressed in full-time equivalent terms)*
December 1999	12.5
December 2000	11.9
December 2001	12.3
December 2002	12.9
March 2003	13.7
March 2004	15.6
March 2005	15.9
Current year to date (April to October 2005)	11.7

In response to your second question, 'absenteeism' is a term that is not used by the Department for Work and Pensions or the Child Support Agency. In line with Departmental Human Resources policy the Agency treats all sickness absence as genuine since it is self-certificated for periods of up to 7 days and certificated by a doctor beyond that period.

The reduction in days lost to sickness this year has been achieved by a combination of measures. Line managers have been given training in new procedures, introduced across the Department, which aim to promote an understanding that our employees are valued, that the Department wants them to be at work and if they are absent to understand why and to assist if it can. Increased support has been provided through the services of the Occupational Health Provider and Employee Assistance Programme. In return the department expects its employees to attend regularly and a warning is given when attendance falls below the level which can be sustained by the business.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many penalties the Child Support Agency has issued for *(a)* failure to provide information and *(b)* providing false information in each of the last eight years. [30064]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as he is currently on leave I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many penalties the Child Support Agency has issued for *(a)* failure to provide information and *(b)* providing false information in each of the last eight years.

Since the launch of the Agency in April 1993 it has been a criminal offence (section 15(9) of the Child Support Act 1991) to intentionally delay or obstruct an Inspector exercising his powers or to refuse or neglect to answer any question or furnish information or documents when required to do so. I can confirm there have been no prosecutions under this section of the Child Support Act.

Three new criminal sanctions were introduced from 31 January 2001 (under section 13 of the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000).

Failing to comply with a request for information without reasonable excuse (section 14A(3) of the Child Support Act 1991);

Pursuant to a request for information, making a statement or representation knowing it to be false (section 14A(2)*(a)*); and

Providing or knowingly causing or knowingly allowing to be provided a document or other information which is known to be false in a material particular (section 14A(2)*(b)*).

Figures for the section 14 information offences are provided from 2001 onwards as this piece of legislation was not introduced until 31 January 2001.

The table below provides the figures requested;

	Section 14A(2) offences (making false statements)		*Section 14A(3) offences (failing to provide information)*		*Total section 14A offences*	
	Prosecuted	*Convicted*	*Prosecuted*	*Convicted*	*Prosecuted*	*Convicted*
January to December 2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
January to December 2002	10	10	6	6	16	16
January to December 2003	6	6	227	225	233	231
January to December 2004	1	1	195	194	196	195
January to October 2005	4	4	309	302	313	306
Total to 31 October 20	21	21	737	727	758	748

You will note that the Agency has achieved an approximate 50 per cent. increase in prosecutions and convictions under the section 14A offences over the first ten months of the 2005 calendar year.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents who wish to migrate to the new calculation system for child support have been advised by the Child Support Agency to contact their Member of Parliament so that their concerns can be passed to Ministers; how many hon. Members have raised concerns on behalf of their constituents with Ministers about the new and old calculation systems running concurrently; and what assessment he has made of the effect of representations made by hon. Members on behalf of their constituents on Government policy on migrating existing child support cases to the new system. [30461]

Mr. Plaskitt: It is not Agency policy to advise clients whether they should contact their Member of Parliament with their concerns. Since March 2003, 777 letters have been received from hon. and right hon. Members about migration, conversion and/or transitional arrangements.

The Child Support Agency's chief executive, Stephen Geraghty, is currently undertaking a root and branch review of the Agency. He will report to Ministers and we will make announcements shortly.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the compliance rate was for Child Support Agency claims made by claimants resident in Scotland for each quarter since 2000–01. [31632]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 28 November 2006]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 18 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the compliance rate was for Child Support Agency claims made by claimants resident in Scotland for each quarter since 2000–01.

I am sorry I cannot provide precisely the information requested for Scotland. The available information is attached in an annex to this letter.

I hope you find this useful.

Case and cash compliance rates for Child Support Agency collection service cases in Scotland in each quarter from February 2000 to February 2003

	Case compliance rate	Percentage Cash compliance rate
February 2000	70	72
May 2000	71	73
August 2000	71	72
November 2000	72	72
February 2001	72	72
May 2001	72	72
August 2001	73	71
November 2001	73	70
February 2002	73	71
May 2002	75	73
August 2002	76	72
November 2002	76	76
February 2003	76	73

Notes:

1. Due to limitations with currently available management information, we are not able to disaggregate the information to the required geographical level following the introduction of the new child support IT system.
2. The table only includes old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment. Those with a punitive interim maintenance assessment are excluded from this analysis, in line with the Agency's target definition.
3. Case compliance is defined as all those cases which are open and have paid money via the collection service in Scotland over the preceding quarter, expressed as a percentage of all those (currently open) cases which are charged maintenance via the CSA collection service in Scotland (either regular maintenance and/or arrears) over the same quarter.
4. Cash compliance is defined as the total sum of maintenance received via the CSA collection service in the preceding quarter expressed as a percentage of the total amount of maintenance due over the same period.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what definition of net income is used by the Child Support Agency for assessing maintenance liabilities; and if he will make a statement; [37928]

(2) what assessment is made of income from capital in Child Support Agency maintenance calculations; and if he will make a statement. [37929]

Mr. Plaskitt: The rules in the old child support scheme for determining the net income of absent parents and parents with care are contained in Regulations 7 and 8 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Child Support (Maintenance Assessment and Special Cases) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/1815).

In the new scheme, when a maintenance calculation is first calculated, the net weekly income of a non-resident parent consists only of the types of income specified in the Schedule to the Child Support (Maintenance Calculations and Special Cases) Regulations 2000 (SI 2001/155). These are an employee's or self-employed person's earnings, tax credits and payments from occupational or personal pension schemes.

However, income from capital can be taken into account as a result of Regulations 18 and 19 of the Child Support (Variations) Regulations 2000 (SI 2001/156). Under Regulation 18, where a non-resident parent has significant assets, a parent with care can apply to have them taken into account. This applies where the assets are worth more than £65,000.

In addition, from April 2005, Regulation 19 has been amended, so that in certain circumstances a variation can be made where a non-resident parent receives income from a business or company in a form which is normally ignored in the maintenance calculation. This applies where the non-resident parent receives such income of more than £100 a week and has the ability to control their income, for example, as a company director receiving income in the form of dividends. So payments from such capital resources can be taken into account.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what procedures are in place for cases mishandled by the Child Support Agency to be independently reviewed and compensated. [40669]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Independent Case Examiner (ICE) provides a free and impartial complaints review and resolution service to customers of the Child Support Agency. The service provided is independent from the Child Support Agency and aims to make a positive difference to the service clients receive.

The ICE service is available to customers who have exhausted the Agency's own complaints procedure but remain dissatisfied with the response and/or redress provided. This excludes complaints:

- which have not been referred within six months of the Agency's final response;
- which have not received the Agency's final response;
- concerning matters of law or Government policy; or
- which have been or are being investigated by the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

The ICE may recommend to the Agency whether a compensation payment to the client should be considered.

Further information on the ICE can be found at:

http://www.ind-case-exam.org.uk/

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many software and management information system IT updates agreed with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) have been made to the CS2 computer system since March 2003; what future

planned IT software releases have been agreed between the Child Support Agency and EDS; and on what date each is expected to be released. [41715]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 18 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many software and management information system IT updates agreed with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) have been made to the CS2 computer system since March 2003; and if he will give the dates and details of any future planned IT software releases agreed between the Child Support Agency and EDS.

Since March 2003 there have been 13 system releases on the new CS2 Computer System, 10 system releases on the Management Information System and 11 Telephony related IT releases.

Under a general realignment of DWP contracts, which came into effect from 15 August 2005, EDS are contracted to undertake a number of releases agreed with the Child Support Agency between now and the end of 2007, designed to remove the large majority of existing defects.

Crisis Loans

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many crisis loans were made in each of the last 24 months. [41824]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is the table.

Initial crisis loan awards in Great Britain

Month	*Number*
January 2004	94,100
February 2004	86,900
March 2004	96,000
April 2004	81,700
May 2004	79,600
June 2004	87,300
July 2004	80,900
August 2004	83,800
September 2004	84,900
October 2004	79,800
November 2004	81,100
December 2004	75,500
January 2005	91,900
February 2005	85,700
March 2005	88,200
April 2005	85,100
May 2005	80,500
June 2005	86,300
July 2005	81,700
August 2005	84,400
September 2005	87,200
October 2005	81,800
November 2005	87,200
December 2005	76,300

Notes:

1. Initial awards do not include awards made after review.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Data Protection

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many of his Department's staff have had their personal details stolen for fraudulent tax credit applications; [39317]

(2) if he will make a statement on the recent theft of data relating to staff in his Department for use in fraudulent tax credit applications. [39318]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answers 9 January 2006]:* The joint DWP and HMRC investigation conducted into the identity theft of DWP staff details and the subsequent use of some of these details to fraudulently claim tax credit has completed its analysis of the numbers of staff affected. The initial estimate of those potentially affected was around 13,000. However, the investigation has now established that the number of stolen identities was around 8,800. All the 8,800 people concerned worked in Jobcentre Plus London region (including the linked benefit processing and contact centres) in 2003–04.

All the records have been analysed and the joint DWP and HMRC investigation has now confirmed that:

around 6,800 fraudulent tax credit claims were made using the stolen data, of which:

around 4,100 were intercepted by HMRC before any payment had been made.

around 2,700 were successful and went into payment but are now stopped

There is no evidence to suggest the security of DWP's IT systems has been breached. None of our customers appear to have been affected by this in any way.

Our internal records are completely separate from systems used to manage customer information.

The HMRC E-portal used to make fraudulent tax credit claims remains closed. A criminal investigation into the circumstances which led to this fraud was instituted as soon as the fraud was discovered and is still in progress.

DWP and HMRC are working urgently to ensure the records concerned are corrected. They will ensure that staff are not disadvantaged as a result of this incident and arrangements are in place to contact individually all those affected.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Technical Adaptation Committee on the minimum safety and health requirements for improved medical treatment on board vessels, *(b)* Technical Adaptation Committee on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents at work and *(c)* Committee on the European Communities statistics programme have taken place during the UK Presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38802]

Mr. Plaskitt: I understand from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency that the Technical Adaptation Committee on the minimum safety and health requirements for improved medical treatment on board vessels has not met during the UK Presidency. Similarly, there were no meetings of Technical Adaptation Committee on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to chemical physical and biological agents at work.

I understand from the Office for National Statistics that the Statistical Programme Committee (SPC) met on 29–30 November 2005. The meeting was presided over by the Commission (Eurostat) and the UK was represented by ONS officials who consulted devolved Administrations as appropriate.

Free Movement of Persons Directive

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the potential costs of social security provision for non-UK nationals resident in the UK as a result of Directive 2004/58/EC on free movement of persons. [40952]

Mr. Plaskitt: Directive 2004/38/EC[1] brings together into one Directive nine existing Directives on rights of residence and free movement, and part of Regulation 1612/68 on free movement of workers, as well as the relevant case law of the European Court of Justice. It is intended to reduce complexity and bureaucracy.

The Directive maintains the requirement that EU citizens need to exercise an economic activity or have sufficient resources in order to take up residence in another member state.

Member states must transpose the Directive into their national law before 30 April 2006.

The Government are bringing forward Regulations to ensure that the new Directive will not result in any significant additional costs for the UK social security system.

[1] The correct reference is to Directive 2004/38/EC

Sick Leave

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of his Department's employees who are within one year of the official retirement age are on extended sick leave. [32588]

Mrs. McGuire: There are currently 175 staff who are on long-term sick absence (28 days or more) and who are within one year of the official retirement age.

Winter Fuel Payment

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether receipt of pension guarantee credit affects the level of winter fuel payment. [41159]

Mr. Timms: Most people in receipt of pension credit receive the full winter fuel payment. However, people in receipt of pension credit who live in a care home and have done so for 13 weeks or more at the end of the September qualifying week do not receive a winter fuel payment. This is because the majority receive public funding for their care costs including heating.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what proportion of the House is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42877]

Nick Harvey: With the exception of both chambers and the immediate surrounding areas, all parts of the parliamentary estate are fitted with audible fire alarms. In the Palace of Westminster, Portcullis House, 1 Parliament Street, 1 Derby Gate, Norman Shaw South and 7 Millbank this is supplemented by a voice alarm system. The remaining buildings on the estate will be upgraded to voice alarm standard as each building is refurbished.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Aid

Mr. Baron: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) if she will list the 10 barristers who received the highest legal aid fees for clinical negligence work in the last 12 months, indicating in each case *(a)* the amount received, *(b)* the number of cases taken, *(c)* the number of cases taken which proceeded beyond investigation, *(d)* the number of cases taken which resulted in (i) an award of damages and (ii) a settlement involving an agreement to pay damages and *(e)* whether each barrister was Queen's counsel or junior counsel; [43087]

(2) if she will list the 10 firms of solicitors which received the highest legal aid fees for clinical negligence work in the last 12 months, indicating in each case *(a)* the amount received, *(b)* the number of cases taken, *(c)* the number of cases taken which proceeded beyond investigation and *(d)* the number cases taken which resulted in (i) an award of damages and (ii) a settlement involving an agreement to pay damages. [43088]

Bridget Prentice: The information requested is not readily available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRANSPORT

A1 Dualling Schemes

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects work to begin on the A1 dualling schemes proposed by the Highways Agency *(a)* between Morpeth and Felton and *(b)* South of Belford; and if he will make a statement. [42506]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government announced in December 2004 that it would seek the Regions' advice on their priorities for housing, regeneration and transport expenditure. Indicative allocations for the next 10 years were given to each region. In the North East a Regional Transport Board was set up to determine the Region's Transport priorities. These two A1 dualling schemes are being considered as part of that process.

We are expecting to receive the North East Region's advice on their priorities across the three funding streams at the end of January. Once these have been fully assessed there will be a further announcement of the Department's initial response to the Proposals.

Administration Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39826]

Ms Buck: Following the Treasury/ONS Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) methodology for country and regional analysis of spending by functions of Government Departments, administration costs are attributed to areas in the same proportions as the spending that they support. The allocation of benefits of the Department's identifiable expenditure is estimated for 2004–05 as *(a)* England 91 per cent., and within that *(b)* London 28 per cent., as reflected in table A7 of the Department's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527).

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39949]

Ms Buck: Following the Treasury/ONS Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) methodology for country and regional analysis of spending by functions of Government Departments, administration costs are attributed to areas in the same proportions as the spending that they support. The allocation of benefits of the Department's identifiable expenditure is estimated for 2004–05 as *(a)* Northern Ireland 0.2 per cent., and *(b)* Wales 1.8 per cent., as reflected in table A7 of the Department's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527).

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40053]

Ms Buck: For 2004–05 the Department's executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) comprised the Strategic Rail Authority and the British Transport Police. Detailed financial information is available in their Annual Report and Accounts, but the Treasury's administration budgets regime does not apply to these bodies. All of their expenditure is included, but not shown separately, in the tables of identifiable expenditure in chapter 8 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) published by the Treasury.

Airport Security

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what alternative options for the current system of designation will be considered during the independent review of policing at airports; and if he will make a statement. [42417]

Ms Buck: The independent review will consider the appropriateness of the current system of designation and in the light of that consideration, possible alternative options.

Bicycle Use

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent survey his Department has made of bicycle use. [41836]

Derek Twigg: The National Travel Survey is used to monitor bicycle use in Great Britain. In 2004, the average number of bicycle trips made was 15 per person per year.

Buses

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his plans to regulate bus services outside the London area. [34638]

Ms Buck: We have no such plans. However, if local authorities are prepared to propose a comprehensive system for managing traffic, which may well include road pricing, we are prepared in turn to consider allowing greater control of bus services. This follows the policy set out in the 2004 White Paper "The Future of Transport: A Network for2030"(Cm6234).

Departmental Estate

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales and (3) each of the English regions in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40126]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport and Executive Agencies comprise over 1,150 buildings, excluding those of our sponsored bodies. Information is not available in the requested format and can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40008]

Ms Buck: For 2005–06,employers' contributions are payable to the principal civil service pension scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 percent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee

contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. This applies to all of the employer contributions detailed in the following table except for Trinity House Lighthouse Service and Northern Lighthouse Board who operate pensions schemes other than the PCSPS.

(a) The pension contributions for the Department are as follows:

£000

2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	[1]*2005–06*
7,043	8,514	9,524	13,180

[1] Estimate

(b) (ii) The pension contributions for the Executive Agencies are as follows:

£000

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	[1]*2005–06*
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	3,254	3,860	3,958	5,563
Highways Agency	6,668	7,306	8,229	13,107
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	10,408	11,621	13,487	12,707
Driving Standards Agency	4,181	5,141	6,167	9,496
Vehicle Operator Services Agency	5,782	7,014	8,029	11,829
Vehicle Certification Agency	368	391	413	582
Government Car and Delivery Service	900	910	912	1,406

[1] Estimate

(b) (iii) The pension contributions for other sponsored bodies are as follows:

£000

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	[1]*2005–06*
Trinity House Lighthouse Service	5,100	8,519	6,616	5,702
Northern Lighthouse Board	16	20	20	107
Strategic Rail Authority	5,125	5,966	5,148	2,688
Rail Passenger Council	n/a	n/a	n/a	177

n/a = not available
[1] Estimate

Apart from those costs relating to the Northern Lighthouse Board which all relate to Scotland, the costs are not held in a way that they can be attributed to Scotland, Wales, the English regions or Northern Ireland.

DVLA

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what criteria the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency selects those customers who qualify to be sold the names and addresses of vehicle owners. [42177]

Dr. Ladyman: Regulations allow for information to be released from the Agency's vehicle register to the police, to local authorities for investigation of an offence or for decriminalised parking, and to anyone who can demonstrate 'reasonable cause' for having the particulars made available to him.

'Reasonable cause' is not defined in the legislation, but in the recent past circumstances that have been judged to meet reasonable cause include safety recalls by the motor industry, minor hit and run incidents not warranting a full police investigation, housing associations dealing with abandoned vehicles and private car parking companies enforcing landlords rights over private land.

DVLA do not sell the data. A charge is made to cover the cost of the service.

I have announced a review of the regulations governing the release of information which will take place shortly.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency began the practice of selling the names and addresses of vehicle owners. [42192]

Dr. Ladyman: Regulations governing the release of information from the vehicle register predate DVLA's existence, as similar powers were available to local authorities when they had responsibility for registering and licensing vehicles. Today, release is made under the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations of 2002. These regulations consolidate the 1971 regulations of the same name, and the 1994 amendments. DVLA does not sell the data for profit, but a charge is made to cover the administrative cost of the service.

European Aviation Safety Agency

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the governance arrangements for the European Aviation Safety Agency are; [42739]

(2) what arrangements are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the governance of the European Aviation Safety Agency. [42740]

Ms Buck: The structure of governance of the European Aviation Safety Agency is set out in Regulation (EC) No. 1592/2002 as subsequently amended by Regulation (EC) No. 1643/2003. In general, the structure reflects the governance of Community Agencies as a whole, in that various financial and administrative matters are subject to approval and review by the Community institutions.

The Regulation establishes a Management Board composed of one representative of each member state and one representative from the European Commission.

The Board is assigned various governance tasks, such as appointing the Agency's Directors and adopting its work programme.

The Community institutions monitor the governance of the Agency through consideration or audit of its annual general report, work programme, budget and accounts. In addition, the Regulation requires that by September 2006 the Board shall commission an independent evaluation of the implementation of the Regulation which established the Agency, including an evaluation of how effectively the Agency fulfils its mission. The UK representative on the Management Board will insist that the terms of this evaluation allow examination of all governance matters.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the administrative impact of the introduction of the European Aviation Safety Agency's Fees and Charges Regulation on *(a)* the work of the European Aviation Safety Agency and *(b)* UK industry; [42741]

(2) how many representations he has received from UK industry about the impact of the European Aviation Safety Agency's Fees and Charges Regulation; and how many of these claimed an adverse impact; [42742]

(3) whether he has been informed of delays to aviation projects resulting from the introduction of the European Aviation Safety Agency's Fees and Charges Regulation. [42743]

Ms Buck: The Fees and Charges Regulation, which came into force on 1 June 2005, requires that applications for a number of approvals and certificates can only be made to the European Civil Aviation Agency and that only the Agency can charge for the technical investigations needed to support the grant of such applications, even when a national authority carries out the work on its behalf. In such cases, the work is set up and paid for under the terms of agency/authority contracts. The manner of implementation of these processes has affected the Agency's ability to undertake their certification tasks in a timely and efficient way. There has also been some knock-on effect on other Agency activities as staff have been allocated to help deal with the demands of the fees and charges system.

The Secretary of State has not received any specific representations from UK industry on the impact of the Agency's Fees and Charges Regulation. But UK industry ahs alerted the Department for Transport to the adverse impact of this Regulation at regular consultation meetings. The Department has asked the Civil Aviation Authority to monitor and report on problems that industry has drawn to its attention.

UK companies have also reported difficulties in getting applications handled in a timely fashion and this has impacted adversely on their work including delays to several aviation projects. The Department, in conjunction with the Civil Aviation Authority, is working energetically on these problems with the Agency, the European Commission and other member states so as to ensure that the situation improves.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of whether income generated by the European Aviation Safety Agency's Fees and Charges Regulation will cover the cost of the European Aviation Safety Agency certification functions during 2006; [42744]

(2) what measures are in place to keep the budget of the European Aviation Safety Agency under review. [42745]

Ms Buck: The financial and budgetary requirements governing the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) follow general Community principles as applied to Community Agencies. EASA's requirements are set down in Regulation (EC) No. 1592/2002 as subsequently amended by Regulation (EC) No. 1643/2003.

The Regulation provides that Agency revenues will comprise a contribution from Community funds, fees paid by certificate applicants and holders and charges for publications, training and any other services provided by the Agency. In principle the fees revenue should cover the full costs of delivering EASA's certification functions. However, the Regulation provided that until 31 December 2006 the contribution from Community funds might be used to cover expenditure related to the initial running phase of the Agency, including some of the cost of the Agency's certification functions.

The Agency presented to its management board on 13 December 2006 its assessment of whether income generated by the Fees and Charges Regulation, together with the transitional use of some of the agreed contribution from Community funds, would cover the cost of delivering the Agency's certification functions during 2006. The Agency concluded that its estimated income would fail to cover costs unless remedial measures were put in place. The Agency proposed cutting back and prioritising its certification tasks in line with the estimated income. The UK Civil Aviation Authority prepared for the UK member of the management board a detailed analysis of the Agency's assessment and proposals which agreed that the estimated income would not cover all the certification tasks which the Agency should carry out in 2006. The Authority advised that cutting back the certification tasks would cause major problems for industry and be unacceptable.

The management board agreed that the Agency should not prioritise its certification tasks despite the anticipated shortfall in income. The consequences of this decision on the Agency's budget will be revisited at the next meeting of the board in March in the light of urgent work commissioned by the Board. Consultants have been contracted to analyse the financial situation of the Agency and to report in time for the March meeting. In the meantime the Agency is continuing its own review of options to improve the situation, including possible amendments to the Fees and Charges Regulation.

The management board's review of the 2006 budget reflects requirements placed on the Board in the Regulation (EC) 1592/2002 as amended. The budget is adopted by the Board following final adoption of the general budget of the European Union. This is a process which involves additional examination and review of the budget by the Community institutions.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the European Aviation Safety Agency *(a)* identifies and *(b)* distributes airworthiness directives to the aviation industry. [42747]

Ms Buck: The European Aviation Safety Agency (the Agency) publishes on its website a list of the titles and reference numbers of the airworthiness directives that it has approved since it came into being on 29 September 2003. To identify airworthiness directives for European products issued prior to that date industry must continue to refer to information published by the National Aviation Authorities of the EU member states, as the Agency has not yet gathered and collated that information.

The Agency does not yet have an airworthiness directive distribution service to make available the detailed content of its airworthiness directives. The full texts of a small minority of its airworthiness directives can be accessed through the Agency's website but, in general, the industry must rely upon the airworthiness directive publication services of the National Aviation Authorities of the EU member states to obtain such directives. The UK CAA is continuing to maintain and update its own publication services and will continue to do so until such time as the Agency has put in place a comprehensive and effective system.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the *(a)* resources and *(b)* data available to the European Aviation Safety Agency to carry out the full range of its responsibilities; [42748]

(2) what measures will be used to ensure that the European Aviation Safety Authority is qualified to carry out the certification of aircraft and aircraft components, [42750]

Ms Buck: The Regulation establishing the European Aviation Safety Agency came into force in September 2002 and the Agency assumed responsibility for its tasks 12 months thereafter. At that time the Agency relied almost entirely on the Commission and the aviation authorities of member states for the resources and data it needed to execute those responsibilities. Initially, the national aviation authorities carried out all the Agency's certification tasks on its behalf.

The Agency has been steadily recruiting the staff and building up the infrastructure it needs to perform its tasks in-house, however it is still reliant on national aviation authority support, delivered under contract. The Agency is recruiting staff mainly from the Commission, industry and national authorities; this pool of European technical experts must also serve the continuing needs of the national authorities and the aviation community more widely. It is a major challenge for everyone concerned to ensure that neither the Agency nor the national authorities run short of skilled manpower during this period of transition.

The Agency's manpower plans and their effect on national authorities is being monitored by the Management Board. The Board has established a small group of high-level technical experts from national administrations, plus representatives of the Agency and the Commission, to examine rigorously whether the Agency's strategies are successfully ensuring the necessary qualified staff and to monitor the associated risks. As a result the Agency has established a risk register which it is required to present at each meeting of the management Board.

The working group has stressed the importance of the Agency and the national aviation authorities working together to plan and manage technical resources, recommending that the Agency hold detailed discussions with each authority. Such discussions should be comprehensive and broader than the formal contractual arrangements under which the authorities currently carry out certification tasks for the Agency.

Fuel Duty Rebate

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list community transport services which were covered by the extension of the fuel duty rebate in the last five years. [40561]

Ms Buck: Eligibility to receive Bus Service Operators Grant (formerly called fuel duty rebate) was extended to a wide range of community transport services in May 2002. A total of about 800 community transport organisations now currently receive this grant; total expenditure was £4.5 million in 2004–05.

Glasgow Airport (Security)

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the last review took place of security arrangements at Glasgow airport. [42032]

Ms Buck: The Department carries out an extensive programme of aviation security compliance monitoring activity. This includes announced and unannounced inspections. We also provide appropriate advice and guidance to industry. The security arrangements at Glasgow airport are covered by this ongoing programme.

We do not, for obvious reasons, provide information about the frequency of visits to individual locations or details of our compliance monitoring regime.

Government Papers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many copies of Cm 6527 were produced; how many copies were supplied free; to whom they were so supplied; and if he will make a statement. [41006]

Ms Buck: The Department's annual report, Cm 6527, was published on 15 June 2005 and is freely available on the DfT website under corporate publications.

1000 copies of the report were printed. To date approximately 300 copies have been provided free of charge to the House Libraries, the Transport Select Committee, Department for Transport Ministers and officials, and to other Government Departments.

The stationery office (TSO) has taken 700 copies for sale.

Humber Bridge

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* cars and *(b)* public service vehicles used the Humber bridge in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and what the total tax revenue was from each category of vehicle. [43063]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not hold figures specifically for cars and public service vehicles. Both types of vehicle fall within toll classifications grouped with other vehicles:

		Number of vehicles		
Class	*Vehicle type*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
2	Motor Car Motor Caravan Goods Vehicle having a maximum weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes	5,310,783	5,391,743	5,476,259
3	Goods Vehicle having a maximum weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 7.5 tonnes Vehicle in class 2 above with trailer Small bus (up to 16 passengers excluding driver)	164,520	164,571	167,960
4	Goods Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes maximum weight with 2 axles Large bus	128,568	121,891	117,430

Based on current bus timetables, the bridge operator, the Humber Bridge Board, estimates that scheduled bus services made approximately 16,000 journeys across the bridge in each of the three years in question.

The taxation of vehicles is a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The total amount of revenue from different forms of motoring taxation is set out in the Chancellor's Budget report every year. Copies of these reports are available via HM Treasury's website.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the interest rate charged on the Humber bridge debt is; what the remaining debt is; and when it will be paid off. [43102]

Dr. Ladyman: Under the agreement between the Humber Bridge Board and the Secretary of State signed in July 1998 the interest rate is 7.75 per cent. with the debt to be paid off by 2038. Current total debt stands at £334,436,987.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions the Humber Bridge Board has had with the Treasury about its proposed increase in charges; and what freedom the Board has to vary the charges between categories of vehicle. [43103]

Dr. Ladyman: As far as I am aware there have been no discussions between the Humber Bridge Board and the Treasury with regard to the current proposal to revise toll charges.

The Board must apply to the Secretary of State for approval if it wishes to revise the maximum tolls chargeable of all or any category of vehicle or any classification of vehicle. Below the maximum toll levels, the Board is free to decide the tolls to be charged for each category of vehicle.

Light Rail Schemes

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* technical and *(b)* financial criteria he intends to use in the evaluation of future proposals for light rail schemes. [43866]

Derek Twigg: On 1 April 2005, the Department published, for consultation, draft guidance to local authorities seeking DFT funding for local transport major schemes. This set out the framework which the Department will use to assess all major scheme bids, including light rail schemes.

The draft guidance is available on the Department for Transport's website.

Local Transport Plan (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to decide on the acceptability of the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan. [41523]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport does assess the quality of local transport plans but does not decide on the acceptability of local transport plans. In December 2005 it published its assessments of the provisional second local transport plans, completed by local authorities in July 2005. The final second local transport plans are being completed by local authorities by March 2006. The Department intends to complete its assessments of these plans before the end of this year.

Luton Airport

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department plans to designate London Luton airport under section 25 of the Aviation Security Act 1982; what representations he has received on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [42413]

Ms Buck: Designation of airports for policing purposes is currently undergoing independent review. The Chief Constable of Bedfordshire has been asked to consider deferring any application for designation of Luton airport until after the review has reported.

Motorway Service Areas

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to examine the potential of motorway service areas for use as interchange points for inter-city coach travel. [42622]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no current plans to examine the potential of motorway service areas for use as interchange points for inter-city coach travel. Motorway service areas are intended to offer road users opportunities to stop and take a break in the course of their journey but should not become destinations in

their own right. It is considered that their use as inter-city coach interchanges could breach this long-standing principle and also affect their ability to fulfil their primary function.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales and (3) each of the English regions in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40125]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport and Executive Agencies comprise over 1,150 buildings, excluding those of our sponsored bodies. Information is not available in the requested format and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Parking Meters

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidelines his Department has issued to local authorities concerning parking in individual metered bays when the parking meter is temporarily inoperable. [42448]

Ms Buck: The Department's "Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Outside London"—a copy of which is available in the Libraries of the House—says that the duties of a parking attendant include inspecting parking meters and pay-and-display machines to ensure that they are working prior to penalty charge notice issue. It adds that where there is a minor fault, the attendant may be able to rectify it, otherwise an "out of order" notice must be put on the meter or machine and the fault must be reported. Similar guidance has been issued to the capital's local authorities by the Association of London Government.

Railways

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to ensure that railway ticket prices represent value for money for passengers. [41042]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport is investing around £87 million per week to improve the service that passengers receive when travelling by train. Improvements include improved reliability, new trains and faster journeys on many routes.

In addition, the Department regulates the price of certain fares, including commuter fares around London and other urban areas. In real terms these fares are now 3 percent. lower than in 1995, and the average annual increase in regulated fares is now limited to inflation + 1 percent. On other routes, train operators compete with cars, coach companies and airlines and train operators will set fares on a commercial basis to attract passengers onto their services.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the change in rail freight's share of domestic freight traffic was in each year since 2000–01. [40565]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is set out as follows.

	Billion tonne kilometres	*Percentage of all freight traffic*
2000	18.1	7
2001	19.4	8
2002	18.7	7
2003	18.9	8
2004	20.7	8

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he expects the peak in public investment in rail to be in 2005–06 as set out in Transport 2010—the Ten Year Plan. [40866]

Derek Twigg: The Government's spending plans for rail were originally set out in Transport Ten Year Plan document published in July 2000. These spending plans were updated in the Department for Transport Progress Report published December 2002.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's statement to the House of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 93–96WS, set out how the Department for Transport intends to allocate money on railways until April 2009.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many operational passenger rail carriages there were on the rail network in each of the past 10 years. [39281]

Derek Twigg: The information is not held in the form requested. The number of vehicles on lease at the sale of the Rolling Stock Leasing Companies recorded in the invitation to tender in March 1995, was 10,401 vehicles. The number of vehicles on lease now is approximately 11,000 vehicles.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions railway officials have been required to refuse passengers access to a train because of overcrowding in each of the past three years. [39279]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport does not hold this information.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which railway stations have had security measures fitted in each of the last five years. [40574]

Derek Twigg: The Government places a requirement on rail operators to implement a range of security measures across the UK rail network. Following the attacks on 7 July the security response level across the UK rail network increased to its highest level resulting in a tightening of the existing security requirements. For security reasons it would be inappropriate to go into detail. We continue to look at what further practical security measures can be taken to protect transport targets.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 895W, on railways, how

much was paid to each train operating company for each management only contract; and with which company each contract was made; [39378]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 895W, on railways, how many franchises he expects his Department to operate under management-only contracts in each year between 2005 and 2008. [39379]

Derek Twigg: Management only contracts are those where the DfT Rail Group takes the full risk for the operation and pays the train operating company a management fee.

The following table shows the companies and franchise values for each year requested.

£ million

	First North Western	*Anglia Railways*
2001	146.7	n/a
2002	173.3	[1]-2.3
2003	179.6	[1]-6.4
2004	185.5	[1]-1.5
2005	103.4	0.8
2006	n/a	n/a
2007	n/a	n/a
2008	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available.

[1] Net payment back to the SRA after management fee payment to Anglia positive.

Notes:

1. Positive numbers indicate a payment to the company.
2. Negative numbers indicate a receipt from the company.

Source:

All figures are sourced from the SRA 2005 annual report.

For the years 2006–08, no management only contracts are expected to be let.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the change in passenger numbers on the railways in each year between 2006 and 2014. [39280]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport's latest published central projections for rail usage can be found in the paper the "The Future of Transport: Modelling and Analysis" published on 21 March 2005, which is available on the Department's website. This shows rail passenger kilometres increasing by 33 percent. between 2000 and 2010, implying growth of around 3.5 percent. a year for the rest of the decade. From 2010 to 2025 the projection shows growth of 1.3 percent. a year.

Rapid Transport Lines

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list rapid transport lines built in the last five years. [40580]

Derek Twigg: There are six new rapid transport lines which have been built in the last five years. These are:

East Leeds—York Road—guided bus (2001)

Bradford—Manchester Road—guided bus (2002)

Metro Sunderland extension (2002)

Crawley 'Fastway' guided bus (2003)

Nottingham Express Transit Line 1 (2004)

Docklands Light Railway extension to London City Airport (2005)

Croydon Tramlink and the Manchester Metrolink Phase II extension to Eccles both opened in 2000.

Road User Pricing Schemes

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the implications of the EU requirement that from 2010 EU member states must vary charges for lorries using the trans-European road network according to their Euro emissions class for plans for road user pricing schemes in Britain. [42713]

Dr. Ladyman: The agreement on amending Directive 1999/62 on toll charges for goods vehicles will require that, where member states choose to apply tolls for heavy goods vehicles on the Trans-European Road Network, they must be differentiated according to their Euro emissions class.

The UK was able to accept this requirement as we consider that it can be readily assimilated into any road pricing arrangements that might be applied in the UK, and would have the benefit of providing an incentive for cleaner vehicles.

Rural Bus Subsidy Grant

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what schemes have been put in place under the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant; and if he will list the towns which have received funding. [40560]

Ms Buck: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is allocated to Local Transport Authorities in England on the basis of population numbers living in rural areas. The grant is used by authorities to provide new and enhanced rural bus services and other services to improve rural accessibility, for example demand responsive transport or taxibus services. Decisions on which services to support are a matter for each authority. The Department does not collect information on the particular towns served as a result of these decisions. However, monitoring returns for 2003–04 show that in that year RBSG was used to support a total of about 2,200 services on which over 29 million passenger journeys were made (data for 2004–05 is currently being collected).

Segregated Cycleways

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the *(a)* cost and *(b)* feasibility of providing a comprehensive network of segregated cycleways. [42659]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not undertaken any research into the cost or feasibility of providing a national comprehensive system of segregated cycleways.

The responsibility for the planning, design and construction of cycle facilities rest with individual local highway authorities and we encourage them to them develop a cycling strategy within their Local Transport Plans, the main mechanism of central government funding for local transport. Local cycling strategies will need to consider whether cycle networks need to be physically segregated from other traffic, depending on local conditions.

Transport Infrastructure

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on transport infrastructure in each year since 2000–01 from *(a)* public funds and *(b)* private investment. [40572]

Ms Buck: Investment in transport infrastructure in Great Britain since 2000–01 is as follows:

£ million (outturn prices)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Road infrastructure				
Public	3,344	3,643	4,108	4,191
Private	47	45	39	40
Total	3,391	3,688	4,147	4,231
Airports and air traffic control				
Public[1]	163	57	71	70
Private[1]	566	630	784	1,384
Total	729	687	854	1,454
Rail infrastructure	2,790	3,652	4,241	5,186
Ports infrastructure	205	233	236	307
All infrastructure	7,114	8,260	9,479	11,177

[1] Investment in NATS switched from public to private funding between 2000–01 and 2001–02

A split by public and private funding is not available for rail and ports infrastructure. The Government made direct grants to Railtrack plc./Network Rail and London and Continental Railways relating to investment on infrastructure undertaken by those companies as follows:

£ million (outturn prices)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Railtrack plc./Network Rail	0	499	792	1,448
London and Continental Railways	0	185	374	222

Investment in ports infrastructure is mainly from private investment. Further information on transport investment in infrastructure and rolling stock can be found in Tables 1.14 and 1.15 in Transport Statistics Great Britain on the DfT website.

Urban Bus Challenge Fund

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what schemes have been put in place under the Urban Bus Challenge Fund. [40582]

Ms Buck: The Department's Urban Bus Challenge competitions were held each year for three years between 2001 and 2003. A total of 106 projects were awarded funding as a result of these competitions. Lists of the particular projects involved in each year were placed in the Library of the House. They are also available on the Department's website.

Vehicle Licensing

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to offer individual motorists the right to opt out from having their details passed on to third parties by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. [41521]

Dr. Ladyman: The Data Protection Act exempts from its non-disclosure provisions the release of personal data where the law allows it. The provisions governing release of information from DVLA's vehicle register to persons who demonstrate reasonable cause have been in place and worked effectively for over 40 years. However, when these provisions were originally introduced they did not anticipate the introduction of electronic databases, the large number of vehicles on the roads, or the range of bodies now requesting access. Concerns have also recently been raised about the breadth of organisations that have access to the register.

Whilst it is not possible to allow motorists to opt out of having their details released, I have announced a review of the regulations governing the release of information. This review will take place shortly.

Vehicle Testing

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies he has made of the vehicle testing regimes in force in other EU countries. [41980]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Department for Transport is represented on the technical committee which has responsibility in the EU for vehicle roadworthiness testing, and we are therefore aware of the nature of the testing regimes which operate in other member states. We have not made any recent specific studies of them.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Paralympics

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to support the 2012 Paralympics; and if she will make a statement. [41473]

Tessa Jowell: Hosting the Paralympic Games is of great importance to the Government, particularly as the origins of the Paralympic movement lie in the competition held in 1948 at Stoke Mandeville.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as lead Government Department for the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, is determined that the 2012 Paralympic Games will be a showcase for Paralympic sport, strengthening the Paralympic movement and setting new standards for services, facilities and opportunities for disabled people.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) which is responsible for organising, publicising and staging the 2012 Games, has announced that for the first time planning for the Paralympic Games will be fully integrated with the Olympic Games.

LOCOG is committed to providing a compact and inclusive Paralympic Games, with high quality accessible venues and transport services and excellent village facilities for athletes, as well as team and technical officials.

Casinos

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what definition her Department uses of *(a)* B1, *(b)* B2, *(c)* B3 and *(d)* B4 gambling machines. [42517]

Mr. Caborn: Under section 236 of the Gambling Act 2005, the Secretary of State is required to make regulations defining four classes of gaming machine for the purposes of the Act (to be known as categories A, B, C and D), and to divide category B into sub-categories.

The Government set out their intentions in this respect in the regulatory impact assessment that accompanied the 2005 Act, published on 21 April 2005, and this remains Government policy. The information requested is set out in the table.

Category	*Maximum stake (£)*	*Maximum prize (£)*	*Location(s)*	*Maximum number (per premises)*
B1	2	4,000	All casinos	20 in existing casinos 80 in small casinos 150 in large casinos
B2	100 per game; 15 per chip	500	Premises licensed for betting	4
B3	1	500	Bingo clubs and adult gaming centres	4
B4	1	250	Clubs and miners' welfare institutes	3

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance *(a)* she and *(b)* the Gambling Commission have produced on whether a licensing authority may (i) object to a casino premises licence and (ii) introduce a policy not to issue casino licences on (A) moral grounds and (B) on the grounds that it considers gambling to be indesirable. [42518]

Mr. Caborn: It is the function of the Gambling Commission to issue guidance to licensing authorities, and draft guidance was published by the Commission on 10 December 2005. This includes guidance on the exercise of licensing authority functions with respect to casino premises licences.

Under section 166 of the 2005 Act, licensing authorities have the power to pass a resolution not to issue casino premises licences and, in passing such a resolution, they are allowed to have regard to any principle or matter. However, where a licensing authority has the power to issue casino premises licences, and it has not made a resolution under section 166, it must exercise its functions in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Section 153 sets out the principles to be applied by licensing authorities in considering premises licence applications. That section requires licensing authorities to aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as they think that accords with any relevant Commission code of practice or guidance and with their own policy statement, and in so far as they think that to do so would be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives of the Act.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance *(a)* she and *(b)* the Gambling Commission have produced on the (i) minimum and (ii) maximum floor size of a betting section of a (A) small, (B) large and (C) regional casino. [42519]

Mr. Caborn: Section 7(5) of the Gambling Act 2005 requires the Secretary of State to make regulations by reference to which any casino may be classified as a regional, large or small casino. Regulations under this subsection may make provision by reference to the floor area used or designated for a specified purpose. We set out our intentions in this respect in the Government's response to the first report of the Joint Committee on the draft Gambling Bill (Cm 6253). This information was also reproduced in my answer to the right hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs. May) of 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 711W.

The Government and the Gambling Commission do not intend to set maximum or minimum areas that must be dedicated specifically to betting within any category of casino.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the timetable for the Casino Advisory Panel to receive expressions of interest is from *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* other interested parties in relation to the allocation of casino licences to different parts of the country. [42520]

Mr. Caborn: The Casino Advisory Panel has published the broad timetable for its work on its website (www.culture.gov.uk/cap). The panel is still developing the detailed process it will follow in developing its recommendations. However, it expects that the closing date for proposals from local authorities will be by the end of March 2006. Other interested parties may write to the panel at any time.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the Casino Advisory Panel will be designating *(a)* regions, *(b)* sub-regions and *(c)* specific local authority areas as locations for the new gambling licences. [42521]

Mr. Caborn: It is the responsibility of the Secretary of State to specify which licensing authorities should be able to issue the one regional, eight large and eight small casino premises licences permitted by the Gambling Act 2005. The role of the Casino Advisory Panel is to make recommendations to the Secretary of State to assist her in this function, and it has been asked to recommend specific licensing authorities.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether *(a)* she and *(b)* the Gambling Commission are required to follow the advice of the Casino Advisory Panel in designating the locations for the new gambling licences. [42522]

Mr. Caborn: The Casino Advisory Panel is a non-statutory body, and the Secretary of State is not formally bound by its recommendations. However, the panel has been established by the Secretary of State to assist her with her order making power under section 175 (4) of the Gambling Act 2005 to determine the geographical distribution of the new casino premises licences.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the timetable is for the designation of locations for new gambling licences; and *(a)* how and *(b)* when Parliament will be consulted. [42523]

Mr. Caborn: The Casino Advisory Panel has been asked to make its recommendations by the end of 2006. The intention is that the Secretary of State will lay a draft order specifying the licensing authorities which are to have the power to issue casino premises licences before both Houses of Parliament during the spring of 2007. This order is subject to the affirmative resolution procedure, requiring the approval of both before it can be made.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) her Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which her Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by her Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40145]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport sold the freehold of the North East Corner of the Royal Garden Hotel, London in 2005 for the sum of £2.5 million.

In addition, in 2003 the Department sold the freehold of 33 Park Street, Windsor for £30,000; and in 2005 it sold the freeholds of 30, 31 and 32 Park Street for a total of £110,000.

The Department sold 10 Chantry Close, Windsor in 2003 for £232,000.

The Royal Parks sold 183 Kidbrooke Park Road, London in March 1999 for £120,000.

In each case the money was retained by the Department or The Royal Parks as an "appropriation in aid".

Information about the current value of property or land, or about sales of property or land, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39996]

Mr. Lammy: Details of the cost of pension contributions are published annually in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Resource Accounts and the Royal Parks Agency's Resource Accounts. Copies are placed in the Libraries of the House.

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

The information requested for non-departmental public bodies and other public bodies for which the Secretary of State is responsible is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent by her Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41254]

Mr. Lammy: All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

The following table shows expenditure on refreshments, including working breakfasts or lunches, refreshment at meetings and official entertainment by the Department since 1997–98. In 2002–03 changes were made in the way refreshment expenditure was captured to include associated staff costs following the contracting out of the hospitality service.

Financial year	*Expenditure (£)*
1997–98	15,269.81
1998–99	24,496.51
1999–2000	33,359.78
2000–01	51,666.75
2001–02	32,586.56
2002–03	87,150.29
2003–04	90,007.37
2004–05	97,803.39
2005–06 (to December 2005)	37,823.40

Digital Television (Wales)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what meetings the Department has held with representatives of the BBC

relating to Freeview coverage in *(a)* Monmouthshire and *(b)* Wales in the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement. [42452]

James Purnell: Officials meet regularly with Ofcom, spectrum planners and broadcasters about detailed plans for digital terrestrial coverage at digital switchover. These discussions often include the BBC and cover a wide range of issues including digital terrestrial coverage in Wales.

Energy Efficiency

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies came from renewable sources in each year from 1997. [42795]

James Purnell: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The proportion of electricity used by the Department that was from renewable sources was as follows:

	Percentage
2004–05	86
2003–04	83

The Department was not supplied with renewable energy prior to 2003, but is now supplied with 100 per cent. renewable energy.

(b) The proportion of electricity used by The Royal Parks that was from renewable sources was as follows:

	Percentage
2004–05	100
2003–04	100
2002–03	100

The Royal Parks do not hold data for periods prior to 2002.

Gaming Act

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications to the Gaming Board were *(a)* submitted and *(b)* approved for gambling licences under the Gaming Act 1968 in each year since 1996–97, including 2005–06 to date. [42590]

Mr. Caborn: The tables set out the number of applications by sector that the Gambling Commission (previously the Gaming Board for Great Britain) received and approved for gambling licences during the period requested.

	Bingo Consent	
	Applications received	*Applications issued*[1]
1996–97	86	90
1997–98	83	48
1998–99	43	43
1999–2000	56	48
2000–01	41	25
2001–02	56	46
2002–03	26	54
2003–04	30	30
2004–05	21	17
2005–06 (to January 2006)	13	13
Total	455	414

[1] Once a certificate of consent is issued, operators can then apply to the Licensing Justices for a Gambling Licence.

	Casino Consent	
	Applications received	*Applications issued*[1]
1996–97	15	11
1997–98	15	16
1998–99	14	11
1999–2000	16	15
2000–01	20	16
2001–02	12	9
2002–03	28	23
2003–04	17	19
2004–05	30	18
2005–06 (to January 2006)	49	35
Total	216	173

[1] Once a certificate of consent is issued, operators can then apply to the Licensing Justices for a Gaming Licence.

	Gaming machines new applications received	*Gaming machines new applications issued*	*Gaming machines renewal applications received*	*Gaming machines certificates renewed*
1996–97	28	23	110	105
1997–98	38	22	126	109
1998–99	31	22	100	102
1999–2000	20	22	118	98
2000–01	16	17	98	92
2001–02	26	19	115	105
2002–03	22	22	82	78
2003–04	22	29	85	96
2004–05	24	20	88	75
2005–06 (to January 2006)	22	24	111	124
Total	249	220	1,033	984

	Employees certificate of approval (Section 19)	
	Applications received	*Applications approved*
1996–97	5,518	5,051
1997–98	3,992	3,574
1998–99	5,509	5,056
1999–2000	4,637	4,106
2000–01	5,541	4,906
2001–02	5,220	4,777
2002–03	3,113	2,771
2003–04	4,206	3,671

	Employees certificate of approval (Section 19) Applications received	Applications approved
2004-05	4,276	3,736
2005-06 (to January 2006)	2,789	2,531
Total	44,801	40,179

	Lotteries registration Applications received	Applications approved
1996-97	85	89
1997-98	65	57
1998-99	24	44
1999-2000	55	52
2000-01	48	46
2001-02	37	40
2002-03	38	35
2003-04	39	38
2004-05	45	42
2005-06 (to January 2006)	21	20
Total	457	463

	Total gaming applications received	Total gaming applications approved
1996-97	6,985	6,421
1997-98	5,368	4,855
1998-99	6,739	6,224
1999-2000	5,866	5,260
2000-01	6,690	5,986
2001-02	6,398	5,887
2002-03	4,239	3,885
2003-04	5,337	4,803
2004-05	5,391	4,870
2005-06 (to January 2006)	3,879	3,643
Total	56,892	51,834

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if a date has been determined for when applications for a casino licence under the Gaming Act 1968 will cease to be considered or issued. [42591]

Mr. Caborn: A draft order was published on the DCMS website for consultation on 23 December 2005. This proposes setting a final date of 28 April 2006 for applications under the Gaming Act 1968 for certificates of consent in respect of new casinos.

Grand Prix Motor Racing

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what information her Department holds on the amounts of public funding made available to support Grand Prix motor racing in other EU member states. [42318]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not currently hold any current information on the amounts of public funding made available to support Grand Prix motor racing in other EU member states.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Mark Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Heritage Lottery Fund has spent on *(a)* works of art and *(b)* other artefacts in each year since the Fund was established; and what proportion of its expenditure this represented in each case in each year. [40375]

Mr. Lammy: The Heritage Lottery Fund only holds acquisitions data broken down by art and artefacts for those acquisitions made with its funds by museums and galleries. This information is summarised as follows:

Financial year	HLF total annual spend (£)	HLF spend on acquisition of works of art for museums and galleries (£)	Acquisition of artwork as percentage of total HLF spend	HLF spend on acquisition of artefacts/ other objects for museums and galleries (£)	Acquisition of other objects as percentage of total HLF spend
1994-95	24,607,922	0	0.0	0	0.0
1995-96	183,572,167	18,457,374	10.1	352,700	0.2
1996-97	466,249,414	12,025,982	2.6	809,855	0.2
1997-98	330,049,351	15,319,417	4.6	9,163,098	2.8
1998-99	336,230,755	5,257,975	1.6	979,900	0.3
1999-2000	248,624,510	11,884,537	4.8	569,779	0.2
2000-01	309,819,205	6,295,550	2.0	1,353,495	0.4
2001-02	308,784,067	11,157,050	3.6	2,777,607	0.9
2002-03	323,920,869	14,049,578	4.3	6,442,550	2.0
2003-04	300,712,251	16,147,240	5.4	2,459,605	0.8
2004-05	343,217,638	2,250,400	0.7	1,789,550	0.5
Grand total	3,175,788,149	112,845,103	3.6	26,698,139	0.8

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much is allocated to spending on Adult Apprenticeship pilots at *(a)* Level 2, *(b)* Level 3 and *(c)* graduate apprenticeships funded by the Learning and Skills Council; and whether these funds are included in the (i) work-based learning and (ii) NETP budget allocations. [43086]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council National Office have allocated £2 million to the Apprenticeships for Adult entry trials, from their Workforce Development budget. This is not part of either the work based learning or NETP funding lines. The trials include programmes at Level 2 and Level 3. It is not possible at this stage to identify the proportion of that funding allocated at each level. Graduate Apprenticeships are not part of this trial.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of *(a)* apprenticeships and *(b)* advanced apprenticeships supported by the Learning and Skills Council which commenced in 2002 have been successfully completed. [43127]

Phil Hope: The following table shows completion rates for apprenticeship programmes from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Programme type	Numbers completing frameworks	Framework completion rate (x percentage)
2002/03		
Advanced apprenticeships	18,624	32
Apprenticeships	24,336	24
All apprenticeships	42,960	27
2003/04		
Advanced apprenticeships	16,448	32
Apprenticeships	32,040	30
All apprenticeships	48,488	31
2004/05		
Advanced apprenticeships	19,068	38
Apprenticeships	47,677	40
All apprenticeships	66,745	40

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the Minister of State for Children will reply to the letter dated 30 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. Nazia Parvega. [41838]

Beverley Hughes: My right hon. Friend the Minister for Children, Young People and Families replied to my right hon. Friend's letter of 30 November on 11 January.

Departmental Estate

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by her Department in Castle Point. [42896]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not own any *(a)* land and *(b)* property in Castle Point.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which departmental targets for 2005 were not met. [43072]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills publishes progress against PSA targets through its Departmental Annual Report and Autumn Performance Report. Progress was reported most recently in the 2005 Autumn Performance Report (CM 6719), which was published in December 2005 and is available in the House of Commons Library.

Education Costs

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of the total average cost to public funds per student of attending higher education in England, including maintenance costs and student tuition; and if she will make a statement. [41439]

Bill Rammell: The planned level of public funding for higher education institutions in the financial year 2005–06 is £4,630[1] per full-time equivalent fundable student[2], excluding income from tuition fees. This represents the DfES grant per student for teaching and research.

The provisional average fee expenditure per English domiciled student support scheme student in academic year 2005/06 is £540[1] per student (based on fee support eligible students). The provisional average cost of maintenance expenditure (allowances and grants[3]) in AY 2005/06 is £280 per student (based on students eligible for support).

The provisional average amount[1] of student loan taken out by English domiciled student support scheme students taking out a loan in AY 2005/06 is estimated to be £3,490. This represents the average cash value of maintenance loans advanced. In resource cost terms this would be around £770 (based on a RAB[4] charge of 22 per cent. under a 2.2 per cent. discount rate).

The different components of the total average cost to public funds given cannot be sensibly aggregated to give an overall cost per student as they relate to different student populations.

[1] Figure rounded to the nearest £10.

[2] Includes full time and part time undergraduate and postgraduate students.

[3] These allowances and HE Grants are available to eligible students for extra help depending on their circumstances, (e.g. students with disabilities, students with dependents, single parent students, those incurring certain travel costs and those who have recently left care).

[4] The RAB (Resource Accounting and Budgeting) charge is an estimate of the cost to Government of the percentage of the face value of loans issued in a given year which reflects the resource cost over the expected life of the loan to the Government of making loans.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the total costs of higher education were paid by *(a)* tuition fees and *(b)* public subsidy in each year from 1992–93; what the estimate is for each year to 2007–08; and if she will make a statement. [41445]

Bill Rammell: The following table shows the proportion of total income to English HE institutions from tuition fees and public funding, for years for which data is available. Figures for years beyond 2003/04 are not available because we do not estimate future income to institutions.

Percentage

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Proportion of income from public funding[1]	71	70	68	67	63
Proportion of income from tuition fees[1]	21	21	22	22	23

Percentage

	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Proportion of income from public funding[1]	61	60	60	60	60
Proportion of income from tuition fees[1]	23	23	24	25	25

[1] Both proportions will include tuition fee income from public sources, which accounted for around 9 per cent. of total income in 2003/04. Total income to institutions will also include (non-tuition fee) income from private sources.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency Finance Record

Estimates of the fee income to higher education providers under the variable fees policy are contained in my written statement of 10 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 22WS.

Education Working Groups

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what EU working groups deal with education. [43083]

Bill Rammell: There is one formal working group of the Council of the EU dealing with education, the Education Committee, which prepares for the Education Council. DfES officials attend this committee along with an official from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

In addition to this there are a number of ad hoc expert groups set up by the European Commission as part of the Open Method of Co-ordination (a means of spreading best practice first set out in the Lisbon Council Conclusions of March 2002), principally under 'Education and Training 2010', the education strand of the Lisbon strategy. These groups are not formal Council working groups, are voluntary and assist the Commission to develop initiatives. Experts in this context may be expert officials from the particular government department or non-governmental experts appointed by Ministries or the Commission, depending on the remit of the group.

There is also an Advisory Committee on Vocational Training, attended by officials, which has a statutory basis: to advise the European Commission on any initiatives it takes in the field of vocational education and training. Directors General for both Vocational Training and Higher Education from the EU member states meet usually twice a year to discuss priorities in education and training.

Gershon Review

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on progress towards Gershon Review cost-cutting targets in her Department. [43085]

Bill Rammell: My Department reported progress towards our Gershon Review target in the Department's Autumn Performance Report. It will report further progress in the Departmental Annual Report which we expect to publish in April.

Graduation Statistics

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of those *(a)* enrolling in and *(b)* obtaining (i) post-graduate and (ii) doctoral degrees in (A) 1995 and (B) 2005 attended (1) fee-paying secondary schools and (2) state-funded secondary schools. [41915]

Bill Rammell: The available information on the previous school type of students is published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK[1]. However, these figures cover undergraduate entrants only and corresponding information for postgraduates is not available.

The latest available information on the school background of higher education students covers young (aged under 21) first degree entrants, and is shown in the following table.

Proportion of UK domiciled young full-time first degree entrants to English Institutions from state schools and colleges

Academic year	*Proportion from state schools and colleges*
1997/98	81.0
1998/99	84.4
1999/2000	84.1
2000/01	85.0
2001/02	85.2
2002/03	86.4
2003/04	86.1

Source:
"Performance Indicators in Higher Education" published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Higher Education

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of adults in England have completed higher education courses. [43078]

Bill Rammell: This data is not available precisely in the form requested.

In summer 2005 the Labour Force Survey estimates that 26.6 per cent. of working age people in England were qualified to level 4 or higher (higher education level). This equates to 8.2 million people of working age.

In the last academic year, 2004/05, 427,825 English domiciled students obtained higher education level qualifications at UK Higher Education institutions.

Respite Breaks

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what information she collects on the *(a)* availability and *(b)* demand for respite breaks for parents of disabled children; and if she will make a statement. [42775]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect this information directly. The Department uses the Shared Care Network National Survey.

(a) The 2006 Shared Care Network survey (to be published later this year) identifies 128 short break schemes in the UK, with over 6,500 children using these services.

(b) The 1999 Shared Care Network survey found that 89 per cent. of schemes had a waiting list, with 3,736 children waiting for a service.

Schools (Broadband Internet Access)

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools has broadband internet access (i) in England and (ii) local education authority. [39515]

Phil Hope: A list of broadband internet connections to (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools within each local authority in England is attached at annex 1.

As at November 2005, 85 per cent. of schools (99 per cent. of secondary schools and 83 per cent. of primary schools) had access to broadband.

Annex 1: Broadband connections by local authority as at 30 November 2005

Local Authority	*Number of secondary schools connected*	*Percentage of secondary schools connected*	*Number of primary schools connected*	*Percentage of primary schools connected*
Cumbria	43	100	230	81
Lancashire	88	100	406	83
Bedfordshire	47	82	83	56
Cambridgeshire	31	100	205	100
Essex	80	100	215	45
Hertfordshire	82	100	415	99
Luton	12	100	42	69
Milton Keynes	12	100	91	100
Norfolk	52	100	338	88
Peterborough	14	100	59	100
Southend on Sea	12	100	37	100
Suffolk	78	100	92	36
Thurrock	10	100	46	100
Derby City	13	100	81	100
Derbyshire	49	100	229	64
Leicester City	16	100	49	57
Leicestershire	55	100	131	58
Lincolnshire	67	100	149	52
Northamptonshire	44	100	189	70
Nottingham City	19	100	58	57
Nottinghamshire	48	100	200	65
Rutland	4	100	9	53
Darlington	7	100	34	100
Gateshead	10	100	76	100
Hartlepool	6	100	30	100
Middlesbrough	8	100	43	100
North Tyneside	16	100	56	100
Redcar and Cleveland	11	100	50	100
South Tyneside	11	100	50	100
Stockton	16	100	64	100
Barking	9	100	50	100
Barnet	21	100	91	100
Bexley	15	100	61	100
Brent	15	100	59	100
Bromley	17	100	78	100
Camden	9	100	41	100
City of London	0	—	1	100
Croydon	25	100	92	100
Ealing	11	92	65	100
Enfield	16	94	66	100
Greenwich	16	100	64	100
Hackney	8	100	55	98
Hammersmith	9	100	36	97
Haringey	11	100	60	92
Harrow	10	100	55	100
Havering	18	100	66	100
Hillingdon	17	100	46	72
Hounslow	14	100	61	100
Islington	9	100	43	98
Kensington and Chelsea	4	100	27	100
Kingston	10	100	11	30
Lambeth	12	100	61	100
Lewisham	12	100	68	100
Merton	8	100	42	100
Newham	15	100	65	100
Redbridge	17	100	51	100
Richmond on Thames	8	100	9	22
Southwark	12	100	69	96
Sutton	14	100	41	100
Tower Hamlets	16	100	71	100
Waltham Forest	19	100	60	100
Wandsworth	11	100	55	100

Annex 1: Broadband connections by local authority as at 30 November 2005

Local Authority	*Number of secondary schools connected*	*Percentage of secondary schools connected*	*Number of primary schools connected*	*Percentage of primary schools connected*
Westminster	8	100	40	100
Blackburn with Darwen	9	100	33	56
Blackpool	8	100	32	100
Bolton	16	100	8	8
Bury	14	100	22	35
Cheshire	46	100	214	75
Halton	8	100	38	73
Knowsley	11	100	59	100
Liverpool	33	100	148	100
Manchester	23	100	139	100
Oldham	15	100	51	64
Rochdale	14	100	75	100
Salford	14	100	82	99
Sefton	22	100	90	100
St. Helens	11	100	57	98
Stockport	14	100	100	99
Trafford	16	89	71	97
Warrington	12	100	74	100
Wirral	21	95	98	97
Bracknell Forest	6	100	30	100
Brighton and Hove	9	100	55	98
Buckinghamshire	34	100	104	56
East Sussex	27	100	152	97
Hampshire	69	97	428	97
Isle of Wight	21	100	46	100
Kent	104	100	298	63
Medway	19	100	90	100
Portsmouth	10	100	54	100
Reading	7	100	37	100
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	13	100	46	100
Slough	11	100	27	100
Southampton	14	100	63	100
Surrey	53	100	320	100
West Berkshire	10	100	45	66
West Sussex	39	98	182	75
Wokingham	9	100	52	100
Banes	13	100	51	75
Bournemouth	10	100	27	100
Bristol	17	100	77	65
Cornwall	31	100	200	83
Devon	37	100	243	78
Dorset	34	100	96	70
Gloucestershire	42	100	226	90
North Somerset	10	100	42	65
Plymouth	17	100	79	100
Poole	9	100	29	100
Somerset	39	100	186	83
South Gloucestershire	14	100	96	100
Swindon	10	100	67	100
Torbay	8	100	31	94
Wiltshire	29	91	207	96
Birmingham	76	100	311	100
Coventry	19	100	86	100
Dudley	22	100	82	100
Sandwell	18	100	101	100
Solihull	13	100	56	82
Walsall	20	100	94	100
Wolverhampton	19	100	82	100
Staffordshire	73	100	214	69
Stoke	17	100	74	100
Herefordshire	14	100	83	99
Worcestershire	49	84	91	47
Shropshire	22	100	143	100
Telford and Wrekin	14	100	66	100
Warwickshire	37	100	146	73
Calderdale	14	93	63	74
Doncaster	17	100	55	53
East Riding of Yorkshire	18	100	132	98
Kingston-upon-Hull	15	100	77	100
Kirklees MBC	34	100	79	52
North East Lincolnshire	12	100	56	95

Annex 1: Broadband connections by local authority as at 30 November 2005

Local Authority	*Number of secondary schools connected*	*Percentage of secondary schools connected*	*Number of primary schools connected*	*Percentage of primary schools connected*
North Lincolnshire	14	100	47	72
North Yorkshire	47	100	235	71
Rotherham	16	100	105	97
Sheffield	27	100	122	87
Wakefield	18	100	125	100
Northumberland	59	100	72	51
Oxfordshire	34	100	233	100
Leeds	41	100	221	98
Newcastle	18	100	72	100
Wigan	21	100	108	100
Bradford	28	100	159	100
York	11	100	54	100
Durham	36	100	221	92
Sunderland	18	100	84	100
Tameside	18	100	76	100
Barnsley	14	100	84	99

Special Education Needs

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* proportion of the Budget and *(b)* amount per pupil was spent by each local education authority in the Yorkshire and Humber region on special education needs. [43089]

Maria Eagle: The information requested for each local education authority in the Yorkshire and Humber region can be found in the following table and is for the financial year 2005–06:

Local authority name	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN1,2 (£)* *(a)*	*Total planned expenditure on SEN transport1 (£)* *(b)*	*Total planned education revenue expenditure (£)* *(c)*	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (excluding SEN transport) as a percentage of total education spending* *(a/c)*
Yorkshire and the Humber	382,531,000	42,858,000	3,173,505,000	12.1
Barnsley	14,700,000	1,315,000	131,550,000	11.2
Bradford	43,949,000	4,836,000	351,110,000	12.5
Calderdale	15,728,000	1,667,000	137,501,000	11.4
City of Kingston-upon-Hull	22,823,000	2,661,000	166,771,000	13.7
Doncaster	18,491,000	2,789,000	194,361,000	9.5
East Riding of Yorkshire	20,982,000	3,736,000	189,343,000	11.1
Kirklees	25,619,000	3,278,000	247,896,000	10.3
Leeds	53,623,000	5,934,000	440,686,000	12.2
North East Lincolnshire	13,955,000	939,000	105,811,000	13.2
North Lincolnshire	14,645,000	1,531,000	95,511,000	15.3
North Yorkshire	44,326,000	3,911,000	348,999,000	12.7
Rotherham	23,492,000	1,912,000	177,677,000	13.2
Sheffield	35,692,000	4,382,000	298,942,000	11.9
Wakefield	22,217,000	2,924,000	195,547,000	11.4
York	12,288,000	1,045,000	91,799,000	13.4

Local authority name	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (including SEN transport) as a percentage of total education spending* *((a + b)/c)*	*Total number of pupils with special educational needs as at January 2005*[3] *(d)*	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (excluding SEN transport) per SEN pupil*[4,5,6] *(a/d)*	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (including SEN transport) per SEN pupil*[4,5,6] *((a + b)/d)*
Yorkshire and the Humber	13.4	143,870	2,660	2,960
Barnsley	12.2	6,170	2,380	2,600
Bradford	13.9	17,070	2,570	2,860
Calderdale	12.7	5,670	2,770	3,070
City of Kingston-upon-Hull	15.3	8,060	2,830	3,160
Doncaster	10.9	7,830	2,360	2,720
East Riding of Yorkshire	13.1	7,560	2,780	3,270
Kirklees	11.7	11,330	2,260	2,550
Leeds	13.5	16,790	3,190	3,550
North East Lincolnshire	14.1	6,670	2,090	2,230
North Lincolnshire	16.9	5,800	2,530	2,790
North Yorkshire	13.8	13,100	3,380	3,680
Rotherham	14.3	9,460	2,480	2,690
Sheffield	13.4	15,500	2,300	2,590
Wakefield	12.9	8,510	2,610	2,950
York	14.5	4,360	2,820	3,060

[1] Figures are reported using cash terms as submitted by the LEA on 13 January 2006.

[2] Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, LA functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to local authority maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget for special schools. The figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might by spent by schools on SEN. Not included is any budgeted SEN transport expenditure.

[3] The total number of pupils with SEN as at January 2005 is calculated as the combination of all pupils in special schools (maintained and non-maintained), all pupils in maintained schools with statements, SEN pupils without statements in maintained schools and pupils in independent schools and academies with statements. These figures are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census and Form 8B and are rounded to the nearest 10 pupils.

[4] The latest financial data available are Budget data for financial year 2005–06 while the pupil numbers are as at January 2005. Consequently there is a mismatch between academic and financial year pupils with the denominator for the unit cost being the number of pupils with SEN on the census date in January of the 2005–06 financial year.

[5] The unit cost calculated by dividing planned expenditure on SEN by the number of pupils with SEN obscures a much larger range of costs and is a mixture of all the education costs for children in maintained special schools and just the SEN part of the education of children in other settings.

[6] Figures are rounded to the nearest £10 and may not sum due to rounding.

Note:

Financial data are taken from local authorities' 2005–06 Section 52 Budget Statements submitted to the DfES while pupil numbers are drawn from the January 2005 DfES Annual Schools Census and Form 8b.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to local authorities in 2005 on *(a)* the issuing of statements of educational need and *(b)* statemented provision. [40724]

Maria Eagle: The statutory guidance on these matters, to which local authorities and others must have regard, is contained in the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice which was published in 2001. On 15 November 2005 the Department wrote to all chief education officers/directors of children's services in England giving advice on SEN procedures. The letter included advice on the Department's understanding of the law in respect of local authorities adopting blanket policies on carrying out statutory assessments and on specifying and quantifying provision in statements. The full text of the letter is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen

Staying-on Rates (Westmorland and Lonsdale)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average staying-on rate in post-16 education was in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency in each year since 1997. [43152]

Bill Rammell: The percentage of 16-year-olds in full-time education in England at the end of 2004 was estimated to be 74.2 per cent.—the highest ever rate. Percentage figures on participation in education by young people are not available for parliamentary constituencies, but are available for local authorities—including Cumbria LEA. These were published in the Statistical First Release "Participation in education and training by 16 and 17-year-olds in each local area in England"—SFR11/2005 on 31 March 2005.

The publication is accessible on the DfES website via the link, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/index.shtml.

The specific figures are available through the following link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/SFR11-2005tables_lea.xls.

Train to Gain Programme

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the level of spending on adult Level 3 training within the NETP Train to Gain programme in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08. [42654]

Phil Hope: The National Employer Training Programme is due to be rolled out from April 2006 under the title "Train to Gain". Within the programme we shall be trialling, initially in two regions North West and West Midlands, a subsidy to support those undertaking a Level 3 qualification. We have allocated £20 million in each of 2006–07 and 2007–08 for the trials.

In addition, employers in all regions will be able to obtain support through Train to Gain for employees without a first Level 2 qualification and who wish to go straight onto a Level 3 qualification. The support provided to these employees will be equivalent to what they would have received, had the learner been undertaking a Level 2 qualification in the same area. The cost of supporting those doing Level 3 rather than Level 2 will come out of the overall Train to Gain budget, rather than from a separate budget.

HEALTH

Cancer Treatment (GP Referrals)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress the national health service has made towards meeting its target of a maximum two-month wait from urgent GP referral to first treatment for all cancers. [41170]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The standard of a maximum wait of two months from urgent general practitioner referral to first treatment was introduced at the end of December 2005. The latest data on progress towards achievement of the standard are for quarter two, 2005–06 (July to September 2005) where 80.5 per cent. of patients received their first treatment for cancer within two months of urgent referral by their general practitioner. Progress data towards the one month (31 day) and two month (62 day) targets are available on the Department's website since quarter four, 2004–5, at:

www.performance.doh.gov.uk/cancerwaits/index.htm.

Consultants

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the consultants which are being used by the commercial directorate in her Department; what the value is of those contracts; and whether payments are based on identified cost savings. [33610]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 1 December 2005]:* The commercial directorate functions as the central point in securing best value as well as achieving greater levels of effectiveness for the Department and the national health service through the use of best commercial practices and better commercial relationships. It is also responsible for the procurement of independent sector treatment centres and the implementation of the NHS supply chain excellence programme.

The independent sector treatment centre programme has involved procuring circa £2 billion of activity across a range of projects including treatment centres, mobile magnetic resonance imaging scan units, and commuter walk-in centres. The next phase of procurements are currently planned to involve over £3.5 billion of activity. In addition, the implementation of the NHS supply chain excellence programme will deliver potential annualised savings of £500 million by 2007–08.

In the financial year 2004–05, the directorate used the following consultancy and legal firms at a cost of £38.4 million, including £12.8 million on legal advice, from the department's programmes' budget. These were: Accenture Plc., Addelshaw Goddard, Ashurst and Co., Atos Origin IT, Augmentis, Avail/Yale/Tribal Consulting, Currie and Brown, Deloitte, AT Kearney, Eversheds, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Gardiner and Theobald, HOK International, KPMG, Marsh UK Ltd., Morgan Cole, National Economic Research, NDY Consulting, NHS Professionals, OVE Arup and Partners, Precept, PriceWaterhouse Coopers, Translucency Ltd., Willis Ltd., Wragge and Co.. Individual contracts vary, but payments are made for work completed against a set of contractual deliverables.

In addition, in the financial year 2004–05 the directorate had 125 contracts with independent contractors and agencies at a cost of £28.6 million from the Department's programmes' budget.

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has recently received on the effectiveness of personal dental services contracts; and what assessment she has made of *(a)* treatment incentives for dentists and *(b)* the cost-effectiveness of contracts. [26003]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not received any formal representations on the effectiveness of personal dental services (PDS) agreements. The evidence of pilot PDS agreements, now covering 35 per cent. of dentists, is that when a dentist's national health service earnings are no longer directly related to individual treatments, he or she are able to plan simpler and more appropriate courses of treatment. This frees up time and capacity that can be used to spend more time with patients, adopt a more preventive approach to dentistry, and improve management of workload.

Assessing cost-effectiveness depends on what criteria are used to measure outputs or outcomes. Any assessment based on measuring individual items of treatment would not take into account the benefits for patients of simpler and more appropriate courses of treatment and a greater focus on oral health promotion. In the future, the cost effectiveness of contracts could be assessed by comparing expenditure with courses of treatment, numbers of patients accessing services and improvements in oral health.

IVF Treatment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the basis is for the policy that it is *(a)* clinically effective and *(b)* cost effective to restrict NHS funding for IVF treatment to women aged 30 years and over. [42257]

Caroline Flint: We do not have such a policy. At our request, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence issued a guideline, in 2004, on the most appropriate clinical treatment for people with fertility problems. That guideline did not refer to restricting in vitro fertilisation treatment to women aged 30 and over. The primary responsibility for the provision of infertility services rests with the national health service at local level. We are discussing with Infertility Network UK, the leading voluntary organisation representing the interests of fertility patients, ways in which they can work with primary care trusts to help ensure that the patient's voice is heard when decisions about the provision of services are made at local level.

Medical Student Debts

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial assistance her Department makes available for medical student debts. [39738]

Mr. Byrne: The Department makes student support available from the fifth year of undergraduate medical education and for postgraduate students on four-year courses in years two to four.

Details are available in the documents, "A guide to financial support for higher education students in 2005/2006" and "Financial Help for Health Care Students (eighth edition)", copies of which are available in the Library. We make no special provision for financial assistance for medical student debts.

Mental Health

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the relationship between different childcare environments and mental health outcomes in *(a)* infancy and *(b)* adulthood; and if she will make a statement. [40898]

Beverley Hughes: I have been asked to reply.

DfES has commissioned a specific study investigating the effects of different types of childcare and early education settings (the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) study). This and other evidence suggests high quality integrated childcare and education settings are the most effective environments in improving outcomes for children. Childcare can also reduce stress among parents with young children.

No studies have yet investigated the relationship between different childcare environments and adult mental health.

NHS Finance Data

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much financial support has been committed to each NHS organisation from *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* the NHS Bank in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06. [35368]

Mr. Byrne: The latest year for which audited data is available on the financial support given to national health service organisations by strategic health authorities (SHAs), and the NHS Bank is 2004–05.

Tables have been placed in the Library, which set out the financial support reported by primary care trusts and NHS trusts. Some of this support is internally generated by other organisations within the SHA, and some of the support is provided by the NHS Bank.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the capital cost was of each private finance initiative scheme over £25 million for which her Department is responsible *(a)* at the outline business case stage, *(b)* as reported in the 2004–05 financial year and *(c)* in the 2005–06 financial year; and what the percentage change in capital costs (i) has been since the outline business case stage and (ii) is in the last 12 months. [35147]

Mr. Byrne: This information is collected from national health service trusts and is included in the tables to the Health Select Committee as part of the Department's evidence for the annual public expenditure inquiry. This shows the requested information for all schemes over £10 million. A copy of this year's table 5.3.4 has been placed in the Library.

Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1472W, on smoking, how weighted data differs from unweighted data; and if she will provide the unweighted data for the percentage of adults over 16 years who were smokers, broken down by sex in each year since 1998. [41953]

Caroline Flint: Data on smoking for those aged 16 and over are available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) general household surveys (GHS). Questions on smoking have been included in the GHS biannually since 1974 and annually since 2000 in order to monitor trends in patterns of consumption.

The weighting of data was introduced on the GHS in 2000. The general household survey 2000 specifies that the introduction of weighted data uses a two-step approach: "The data is weighted to compensate for non-response in the survey (sample-based weighting). The second step weights the sample distribution so that it matches the population in terms of region, age group and sex (population-based weighting)".

The general household survey 2000 report presents weighted and unweighted data for 1998 to give an indication of the effect of weighting. Consequently, from 1998 there is discontinuity in the time trend with previous years.

The ONS general household survey 2004 specifies that "the effect of weighting on the smoking data is slight, increasing the overall prevalence of cigarette smoking by one percentage point each year".

Unweighted data for the percentage of adults over 16 years who were smokers since 1998 is unavailable. From 1998, date is only available on a weighted basis.

A further explanation regarding the introduction of weighting into the GHS can be found electronically at: http:///www.statistics.gov.uk/lib2000/.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely effect of increasing the rate of tax on tobacco on the levels of smoking in the population. [42934]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The rate of tax on tobacco is just one of many factors that influence the levels of smoking in the population. HM Revenue and Customs and LSE academics have developed an economic model of the tobacco market, designed to evaluate the impact of tax and prices on the consumption of tobacco in the UK. The model is published in GES Working Paper No 150 "The Demand for Tobacco Products in the UK" December 2004 and is available on HMRC's website.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are taking part in smoking cessation programmes in each primary care trust area in England and Wales. [39662]

Caroline Flint: Data on the number of people who set a quit date through the national health service stop smoking services and of those, how many had successfully quit, based on self report, by primary care trust in England, is published in table 18 in the statistical bulletin, "Statistics on NHS Stop Smoking Services in England, April 2004 to March 2005". A copy is available in the Library.

Thrombosis

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes to undergraduate medical training have been put in place since the Government response to the Health Committee's report on prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients. [41493]

Caroline Flint: At the same time that the Government published its response on 21 July 2005 to the Health Committee's report, "Guidelines on the Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism in Hospitalised Patients", the chief medical officer (CMO) issued a letter drawing the Committee's report to the attention of the General Medical Council, the Specialist Training Authority of the Medical Royal Colleges and the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board.

The venous thromboembolism (VTE) independent expert working group, established by Government to make recommendations on the prevention and treatment of VTE in hospitalised patients to the CMO

by summer 2006, is looking at the issue of including the appropriate use of thromboprophylaxis in both undergraduate and postgraduate medical training.

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals *(a)* have thrombosis committees and *(b)* undertake risk assessment on new patients for thrombosis. [41494]

Caroline Flint: We are aware that there are a number of hospitals that have thrombosis committees and undertake risk assessments on new patients for thrombosis. As part of its work, the venous thromboembolism independent expert working group is currently identifying where this good practice exists around the country.

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on implementing the Health Select Committee's recommendations on the prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients; and if she will make a statement. [41495]

Caroline Flint: The Government responded to the Health Committee's report on 21 July 2005. In our response, we announced that we would establish an independent expert working group on the prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients. We have asked the VTE expert group to submit its report and recommendations to the chief medical officer by summer 2006. The first meeting of the group took place on 7 November 2005.

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* remit and *(b)* composition is of the expert panel on venous thromboembolism (VTE) she has established to review the Health Select Committee's recommendations on the prevention of VTEs in hospitalised patients; and when she expects it to report. [41496]

Caroline Flint: The venous thromboembolism (VTE) independent expert working group has been asked to:

Consider how current best practice and guidance can be promoted and implemented and what resources might be needed to support delivery of any strategy through existing structures. This includes consideration of the need to promote or clarify existing guidance on the use of:

mechanical devices (foot-pumps)

aspirin

other pharmacological preparations (heparin or other anti - Xa agent);

Recommend action for implementation pending publication of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence venous thromboembolism clinical guidelines in summer 2007; and

Report to the chief medical officer by summer 2006.

The VTE independent expert working group comprises 22 members. The expert group is chaired by Dr. Anita Thomas and includes representatives from all areas of expertise in venous thromboembolism including primary and secondary care, patient legal representation, education, nurses and victims. The group also has representatives from professional bodies representing the Academy of Medical and Royal Colleges and Faculties, British Cardiac Society, British Orthopaedic Society, British Thoracic Society, Citizens Advice Bureau, Healthcare Commission, National Patient Safety Agency, NHS Confederation and NICE.

Details of the work of the VTE independent expert working group including its terms and reference and membership can be found on the Department's website at:
www.dh.gov.uk/vte.

CABINET OFFICE

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42888]

Mr. Jim Murphy: All premises occupied by the Cabinet Office are fitted with audible fire alarms.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42902]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office does not own any land or property in Castle Point.

Public Appointments (Pensions)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many and what percentage of the total public appointments for which he is responsible carry entitlement to a pension. [41936]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is responsible for making appointments to five advisory non-departmental public bodies. None of the appointments carry entitlement to a pension.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Aerial Photographs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many aerial photographs Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland *(a)* took and *(b)* purchased from external suppliers in each of the last five years. [42910]

Mr. Hanson: The information is as follows:

(a) In each of the last five years Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) has taken the following numbers of aerial photographs.

	Number
2001	1,315
2002	1,950
2003	2,720
2004	2,368
2005	2,825
Total	11,178

(b) In each of the last five years Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland has not purchased any photographs from external suppliers to support its mapping programmes.

However, between 2003 and 2005 OSNI has procured, via Government Purchasing Agency, the following numbers of aerial photographs as part of a project to create Orthophotography[1] coverage of Northern Ireland.

[1] Digital imagery in which distortion from the camera angle, perspective and ground slope has been removed, thus equalizing the scale across the entire image.

	Number
2001	0
2002	0
2003	4,539
2004	1,798
2005	2,263
Total	8,600

Brooklands Primary School

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when a decision will be made on the future provision of *(a)* a school crossing person at Brooklands Primary School at Dundonald in Strangford and *(b)* the retention of the toy and book library at the school. [42261]

Angela E. Smith: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board has confirmed that the employment of a temporary school crossing patrol at Brooklands Primary School will continue until such time as a review of the policy on school crossing patrols has been completed. This review is ongoing. A paper was recently submitted to the General Purposes Committee, which has requested additional information. This will be provided for the next meeting of the Committee in February.

With regard to the retention of a toy and book library, the board has advised that this is a matter of the board of governors of Brooklands Primary School. While the board previously provided funding it has now determined that it can no longer provide such assistance in any of its schools.

Eastern Health Board

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the funding deficit of the Eastern Health Board; what steps he will take to address the funding deficit; and if he will make a statement. [42392]

Mr. Woodward: The Eastern Health and Social Services Board is reporting a £511,000 surplus for the financial year to November 2005 and is forecasting a breakeven position for the year to March 2006.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of adults aged over 25 years were seeking paid work in each region in the last year for which figures are available ranked in descending order by region. [21172]

Angela E. Smith: The following table provides relevant estimates from the 2004 NI Annual Labour Force Survey database.

Adults aged over 25 who were seeking paid work by NUTS3 region

NUTS3 region	*Number of adults aged over25 seeking paid work*	*Total number of adults aged over 25*	*Number of over 25s seeking paid work as a percentage of all over 25s*
North of NI	7,000	166,000	4
West and South of NI	7,000	229,000	3
Belfast	[1]5,000	163,000	[1]3
East of NI	[1]4,000	250,000	[1]1
Outer Belfast	[1]3,000	252,000	[1]1
Northern Ireland	25,000	1,060,000	2

[1] These estimates are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a higher than usual degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Source:
2004 NI Annual Labour Force Survey Database

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of young adults aged 16 to 18 years in each region were not in education, training or work in the most recent year in which figures are available, ranked in descending order. [21185]

Angela E. Smith: The following table provides relevant estimates from the 2004 Annual Labour Force Survey database.

Persons aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, training or work by NUTS3 region

NUTS3 region	*Number of 16 to 18-year-olds not in education, training or work*	*Total number of 16 to 18-year-olds*	*Number of 16 to 18-year-olds not in education, training or work as a percentage of all those aged 16–18*
Belfast	[1]3,000	13,000	[1]21
Outer Belfast	[1]3,000	16,000	[1]16
North of NI	[1]2,000	15,000	[1]12
East of NI	[1]1,000	18,000	[1]6
West and South of NI	[2]	18,000	[2]
Northern Ireland	8,000	80,000	10

[1] These estimates are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a higher than usual degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.
[2] Estimates are not shown as they are potentially disclosive.
Source:
2004 NI Annual Labour Force Survey Database.

High School (Saintfield)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when a decision will be made on whether the proposed integrated high school in Saintfield will be approved; and if he will make a statement. [42262]

Angela E. Smith: A decision will be made on this proposal within the next few weeks.

IT Projects

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many of the IT projects costing over £1 million in use in his Department and introduced since 1997 have been scrutinised by the Public Accounts Committee; and if he will list them. [26604]

Mr. Woodward: There have been five IT projects developed for the NIO since 1997, none of these were subject to scrutiny by the Public Accounts Committee.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many IT projects which cost over £1 million and were introduced since 1997 are in use in his Department. [26605]

Mr. Woodward: The following table refers to the Northern Ireland Office. It does not include figures for the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration.

	Project	*Purpose*
1997	—	
1998	—	
1999	OASIS Y2K Refresh	To upgrade NIO Departmental infrastructure and make it Y2K compliant.
1999	COMPASS (to 2002)	To provide an e-human resources system for the Northern Ireland Prison Service.
1998	Bloody Sunday Inquiry—Londonderry (to 2000)	Implementation of IT systems to support the work of the Inquiry.
2000	TARIFF (to 2004)	To provide office automation and an electronic claim process in system for criminal injuries compensation in Northern Ireland
2001	PRISM (to spring 2006)	To provide a prisoner record system for the Northern Ireland Prison Service
2002	Causeway (PPP project to 2013)	A joint enterprise by criminal justice organisations in Northern Ireland to share information electronically.
2002	Bloody Sunday Inquiry—London	Implementation of IT systems to support the work of the Inquiry.
2003	DPP INFRASTRUCTURE	To implement a modern ICT infrastructure for the DPP NI.
2003	FLAX (to 2004)	Replace NIO IT infrastructure, provide Internet and intranet an meet electronic document and records management targets.

Laptop computers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many laptop computers have been used by *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* special advisers and *(c)* officials in his Department in each year since 1995; how many have been (i) lost and (ii) stolen in that period; what the cost was of the use of laptops in that period; and if he will make a statement. [4118]

Mr. Woodward: The following table gives information on laptops purchased by the Northern Ireland Office.

	Number
1996–97	25
1997–98	28
1998–99	34
1999–00	55
2000–01	30
2001–02	22
2002–03	34
2003–04	37
2004–05	34

Neither the current Secretary of State nor Ministers have laptops.

In the period from 1999 to date private offices were provided with a total of seven laptops. Detailed information prior to 1999 is not available. There are two laptops currently with Ministers' special advisers.

No laptops have been reported lost. Three laptops have been reported as stolen. Each cost in the region of £1,500.

MRSA

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients in each hospital in Northern Ireland *(a)* contracted MRSA and *(b)* died of MRSA in the last two years; how many of each were senior citizens; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the guidelines for greater hygiene practice have had on the number of incidents. [42263]

Mr. Woodward: Except in the case of the mandatory returns on patient episodes of MRSA bacteraemias, hospital Trusts are not required to record or collate the numbers of patients who are colonised or infected with MRSA, or their age. MRSA bacteraemia tables derived from data supplied by acute hospital Trusts are published annually by the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (CDSC) Northern Ireland. The

fourth and latest annual report on this indicator for MRSA infection in hospitals is available on the CDSC website at www.cdscni.org.uk.

Causes of death are classified by International Classification of Diseases (ICD), but the current version does not have a specific code for MRSA. Statistics on deaths where MRSA was a contributing factor can be obtained by identifying deaths registered with specific conditions likely to be linked with MRSA and then manually checking the death certificate to identify whether MRSA was recorded. The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the two-year period 2003–04, where MRSA was mentioned on the death certificate, by place of death and pensionable age. The figures relate to all deaths where MRSA was mentioned on the certificate, regardless of whether it was the primary cause of death or not.

	MRSA mentions on death certificates in the period 2003 to 2004	
Place of death (HSS Trust)	*All ages*	*Pensionable age*[2]
Hospital		
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	5	4
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	11	10
Causeway HSS Trust	1	1
Craigavon area Hospital Group HSS Trust	7	4
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	4	4
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	4	4
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	1	0
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	6	6
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	7	7
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	3	3
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	8	8
Other[1]	17	16
Total	74	67

[1] Other' place of death includes deaths in nursing homes or in the home.

[2] 'Pensionable age' is defined as males aged 65 and over and females aged 60 and over.

Individual hospitals are working to effect improved hygiene among staff, patients and visitors through guidelines, controls assurance standards and other means. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety ran an extensive TV advertising campaign last year on hand hygiene and antibiotic resistance. There was a 4.25 per cent. reduction in GP prescriptions of antibiotics in 2004–05 over the previous year (from 1.81m to 1.74m), at a time when overall numbers of prescriptions continue to rise.

Planning Applications

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide the necessary financial resources to Planning Service in order that they can *(a)* process area plans and *(b)* accelerate the processing of outstanding planning applications. [42388]

Angela E. Smith: My right hon. Friend the Minister of the Environment is content that the Planning Service has the necessary resources to enable it to deliver its programme of up-to-date area plan coverage for Northern Ireland and to improve the performance in processing planning applications.

In relation to both area plans and the processing of planning applications, there are many other parties involved such as, consultees, developers, agents and others, all of whom have a key role to play in ensuring a timely and efficient planning system.

The Planning Service is now in the third year of a three-year modernisation programme to deliver fundamental reforms to the planning system. Indeed as part of the Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget 2005–08, Planning Service secured an additional £5.5 million of funding to deliver the programme. Key elements involve the streamlining, strengthening and comprehensive reform of development control, development planning and planning policy processes.

Rates Revaluation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland is providing to the Valuation and Lands Agency to assist the rates revaluation in Northern Ireland. [42913]

Mr. Hanson: The Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) provides the following information to the Valuation and Lands Agency, as part of an ongoing service agreement. This information is provided for use within VLA's own office, for its own internal business use.

Large Scale 1:1250 and 1:2500 Vector Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage

POINTER Address Data

1:10,000 Raster Colour Digital Data 44 per cent. coverage in ECW format

1:10,000 Raster Monochrome Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage in TIFF format

1:12,000 Belfast Street Map Colour Digital Data in TIFF format

Discoverer Series 1:50,000 Raster Colour Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage

1:50,000 Vector Digital Data (Ward Townland LGD) in Mapinfo format

1:210,000 Raster Colour Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage in TIFF format

Coverage Diagram in DXF format

34.47 per cent. Orthophotography coverage of Northern Ireland (101 IG Sheets)—ECW format

Of the aforementioned products, the following are used by VLA to assist the rates revaluation in Northern Ireland.

Large Scale 1:1250 and 1:2500 Vector Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage

POINTER Address Data

Discoverer Series 1:50,000 Raster Colour Digital Data full Northern Ireland coverage

Restorative Justice

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his policy is on the participation of people known to be associated with a paramilitary organisation in community-based restorative justice schemes. [41383]

Mr. Hanson: The draft guidelines for community based restorative justice, which are currently the subject of public consultation, make clear that it is unacceptable for anyone involved in paramilitary activity or criminality to work in schemes.

The consultation paper specifically seeks the views of respondents on the impact which the existence of past convictions should have on the assessment of an individual's suitability. Government will carefully consider the views of all respondents before coming to a final decision on the way forward.

Telecare Scheme

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will bring funding for the Telecare Scheme in Northern Ireland into line with provision in other parts of the country. [42390]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Gentleman to my answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1077W.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will appoint a lead provider for the Telecare Scheme. [42408]

Mr. Woodward: I do not intend to appoint a lead provider for the Telecare Scheme in Northern Ireland. That is a matter for local service commissioners subject to value for money and procurement guidelines.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers are resident in *(a)* Sandwell, *(b)* Dudley, *(c)* Wolverhampton, *(d)* Walsall, *(e)* Birmingham, *(f)* Solihull and *(g)* Coventry borough. [42456]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority. The most recent publication covering the third quarter of 2005, and further historical publications are available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1 .html.

Data on asylum seekers supported by NASS broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library of the House.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2006, to Question 38216, how long each of the 11 people who had their National Asylum Support Service support stopped in Leeds, North West following a final negative decision on their claim for asylum waited before they were deported. [42729]

Mr. McNulty: Of the 11 people referred to in my earlier reply one has been removed from the United Kingdom. The removal took place four months 27 days after their most recent asylum claim was fully determined.

Cash-in-transit Crime

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Serious Organised Crime Agency will be involved in the combating of cash-in-transit crime. [42645]

Paul Goggins: The Serious Organised Crime (SOCA), as the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) did before it, will continue to gather and analyse intelligence at a strategic level. SOCA will be targeting criminals based on an assessment of the harm they cause and the impact that can be achieved. This may result in SOCA taking action; or action may be taken by local police forces who will be able to seek assistance from SOCA if they judge they require it.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is Government policy that the IT company who designed and maintains the Child Support Agency (CSA) Case Management System is responsible for determining whether an individual's case is eligible for a manual calculation if their case cannot be logged onto the CSA computer system. [23174]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 30 December 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for the Home Office, whether it is Government policy that the IT company who designed and maintains the Child Support Agency (CSA) Case Management system is responsible for determining whether an individual's case if eligible for a manual calculation if their case cannot be logged onto the CSA computer system.

It is not Government policy to allow the IT company who designed and maintains the Agency's Case Management system to determine whether an individual's case is managed 'clerically'. Technical expertise from the supplier will be used to inform a decision, but the decision itself is made by the Agency.

I hope you find this helpful.

Closure Orders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many closure orders have been issued in each of the past two years. [42152]

Paul Goggins: From January 2004, when the powers to close premises under Section two of the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 commenced, until September 2004, 176 premises were closed.

From October 2004 to September 2005, 338 premises were closed.

Correspondence

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when his Department will reply to the letter of 5 July 2005 from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding Mr. and Mrs. Ergonul of Siwell Road, Smethwick; [42416]

(2) when his Department will reply to the letter of 5 October from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding Ms Beckford of Queens Close, Smethwick. [42455]

Mr. McNulty: I replied to my right hon. Friend for Warley, on 17 January 2006.

Departmental Data

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methods his Department employs to ensure that its data is up-to-date, with particular reference to information on people who have *(a)* moved house and *(b)* died. [37794]

Andy Burnham: A variety of means are used to ensure that the Home Office keeps the personal data it holds up to date including:

Internal cross checking across business units;

Customer helpdesk;

Proactive communications with clients;

Website facilities; and

Where it is appropriate and lawful, sharing personal data between Government Departments and other parts of the public sector.

Disorder Offences

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been imprisoned for defaulting on the payment of a fixed penalty notice given for a disorder offence in each of the last two years. [42229]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not available.

DNA Database

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were investigated in each year since 1995 for improperly adding samples to the National DNA Database. [41700]

Andy Burnham: Neither the Home Office nor the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) are aware of any police officers having been investigated for improperly taking DNA samples for adding to the National DNA Database. The IPCC has not investigated any such incidents to date. Nor are we aware of any police force in England and Wales having carried out an internal investigation into such a case.

Forensic Science Service

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking to increase the capacity of the Forensic Science Service. [31516]

Andy Burnham: The recent establishment of the Forensic Science Service (FSS) as a Government owned company, undertaken at the direction of the Secretary of State, was designed to provide the FSS with the freedoms, flexibility, structures and resources to better respond to customer needs in terms of balancing capacity and demand and in addressing timeliness of service requirements in support of the Criminal Justice System.

Haroon Rashid Aswat

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reach a decision on whether to extradite Haroon Rashid Aswat to the US; what the considerations are on which his decision will be based; and whether Mr. Aswat has been questioned regarding any information he might have about the London bombings of 7 and 21 July 2005. [43197]

Andy Burnham: Under the terms of the Extradition Act 2003 ("The 2003 Act"), this case was sent by a District Judge to the Secretary of State, on 5 January 2006, for the latter's decision as to whether Mr. Aswat is to be extradited. Under section 93 of the 2003 Act, Mr. Aswat has six weeks, starting with 5 January 2006, within which to make representations against his extradition. The Secretary of State will make his decision as soon as possible after that time has passed. The exact date is likely to depend upon the time needed for due consideration of any representations that may be received.

While the case remains before the Secretary of State for decision, I cannot comment upon it. In all cases heard under part two of the 2003 Act the law requires the Secretary of State to decide whether he is prohibited from ordering a person's extradition under any of the following sections of the 2003 Act: *(a)* section 94 (death penalty); *(b)* section 95 (speciality); or *(c)* s.96 (earlier extradition to the UK from another territory). The full text of the 2003 Act may be obtained from HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationary Office) or found at:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2003/20030041.htm

As to whether Mr. Aswat has been questioned, regarding any information he might have about the London bombings of 7 July 2005 and the failed bombings of 21 July 2005, it is not appropriate to comment on ongoing investigations.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1915W, on identity cards, whether mechanisms are planned to be put in place to ensure that radio frequency identification tags will not be used in the identity card scheme at some future date without this matter being decided by primary legislation; and if he will make a statement. [39119]

Andy Burnham: There are no plans to use radio frequency identification tags, as they would serve no purpose which is relevant to the identity cards scheme. The Identity Cards Bill which is currently before Parliament provides a power for Parliament to approve regulations prescribing the form in which information is to be recorded in or on an ID card. The Government believes that this is the appropriate level of Parliamentary scrutiny which is consistent with the report on the Bill of the House of Lords Delegated Powers Committee.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the planned identity card database will use council tax information held by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency. [41238]

Andy Burnham: Currently, the identity cards programme does not anticipate that any council tax information held by either local authorities or the Valuation Office Agency will be used as part of the identity cards scheme.

Clause 11 of the Identity Cards Bill does provide for the ability of the Identity Cards scheme to check information provided by an individual for the purpose of being recorded on the National Identity Register against records held on other public sector databases. However, use of such information would require the specific approval of Parliament by affirmative order.

Identity Databases

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what international standards the Government will be expected to meet by 2010 as part of its treaty obligations to ensure that it is compliant with controls of passports and data exchange. [42805]

Andy Burnham: International standards for passports including more recent specifications for the protection of data held on e-passports are laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). United Kingdom passports are compliant with those standards.

Khat Report

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to publish the Home Office report commissioned by his Department on 'Khat (Qat): Assessment of Risk to the Individual and Communities in the UK' by Dr. T. M. Williams of the University of Bristol. [42979]

Paul Goggins: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs was asked by the Home Office to undertake a comprehensive review of Khat and report back to the Home Secretary by the end of 2005. The Advisory Council's report, is currently with the Home Secretary and will be published in due course, together with the Home Secretary's response.

Dr. T. M. Williams was commissioned by the Advisory Council, not the Home Office, to contribute to the Advisory Council's report and his contribution has been subsumed into its report.

Parenting Programmes

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much investment is earmarked for parenting programmes in 2006; and if he will make a statement. [41937]

Beverley Hughes: I have been asked to reply.

The recently launched Respect action plan outlines our commitment to invest up to £52 million over the next two years to enable a change in the way public services offer support to parents and families. This investment will facilitate delivery of evidence based good quality parenting programmes in main stream settings such as children's centres and extended schools. As part of the action plan over the next three years a further £45 million will be made available to the Youth Justice Board to fund early intervention preventative programmes including new resources for parenting interventions.

In addition over £28 million will be available in 2006 for the support of parents, carers and their families. This money which will be allocated to the voluntary and community sector through five grant programmes. These will contribute to our continued investment in the direct delivery of parenting programmes, research, evaluation, consultation and training of parenting support practitioners.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money seized as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 was allocated to *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* Staffordshire in each year of the Act's operation; and if he will make a statement. [42100]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available in the form requested. Receipts from recovered criminal assets are allocated to a range of initiatives. The Recovered Assets Incentive Fund was set up in 2003–04 with £15.5 million a year for three years to incentivise asset recovery agencies. From the Fund, the West Midlands Regional Asset Recovery Team, which covers Staffordshire, was allocated £4.4 million over three years to disrupt criminal groups, confiscate more criminal assets and to tackle money laundering.

A new police incentivisation scheme introduced in 2004–05 has enabled police forces in England and Wales, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to receive a share of the criminal assets they recover locally. Under the scheme Staffordshire police received £39,690 this financial year based on its performance in 2004–05.

From 2006–07 a new incentive scheme will operate under which all agencies involved in asset recovery will get back 50 per cent. of the assets they recover.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been successfully claimed back under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in each of the past two years. [42153]

Paul Goggins: The total value of assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was £54.5 million in 2003–04 and £84.4 million in 2004–05.

Terrorism (UK Airports)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the potential terrorist threat to *(a)* London Luton Airport and *(b)* civil airports in the UK generally; and if he will make a statement. [42412]

Ms Buck: I have been asked to reply

The Department for Transport communicates the potential terrorist threat to aviation in the UK, and any changes to it to all UK airports within the National Aviation Security Programme. At a local level airports

and their stakeholders undertake a multi agency threat and risk assessment process. It would not be appropriate to publicise details.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted for and (ii) convicted of ignoring a no entry sign in (A) Southend, (B) the Metropolitan police area of London and (C) England and Wales in each of the last five years for which information is available. [39716]

Paul Goggins: The Research Development and Statistics—Office for Criminal Justice Reform (RDS-OCJR) Court Proceedings Database does not separately identify offences of ignoring 'no entry' signs within the categories of offences grouped together as neglect of traffic directions.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were convicted of motoring offences in (i) Tamworth, (ii) Staffordshire and (iii) England and Wales in 2004, broken down by offence. [42097]

Paul Goggins: The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the table and gives the number of males and females found guilty of motoring offences by offence class in Staffordshire police force area, and England and Wales 2004. It is not possible to identify those found guilty in Tamworth, as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Number of offenders found guilty of motoring offences by gender and offence class at all courts in Staffordshire, and England and Wales, 2004 [1]

	Staffordshire		*England and Wales*	
Offence class	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
Dangerous driving	61	4	5169	191
Driving etc. after consuming alcohol or taking drugs	1,323	210	76,428	10,169
Careless driving	580	151	17,845	3,201
Accident offences	168	24	5,246	911
Driving Licence related offences	954	68	52,550	4,087
Vehicle Insurance Offences	3,827	411	195,155	22,932
Vehicle Registration and Excise Licence offences	66	14	17,708	4,495
Work record or employment offences	15	0	2,267	37
Operator's Licence offences	1	0	510	21
Vehicle Test offences	95	6	12,986	1,495
Fraud, forgery, etc. associated with vehicle or driver records	19	0	2,406	232
Vehicle, or part, in dangerous or defective condition	109	13	7,061	573
Speed limit offences	3,379	950	118,920	27,212
Motorway offence (other than speeding)	26	0	1,253	171
Neglect of traffic directions	66	7	18,838	3,964
Neglect of pedestrian rights	19	0	1,916	369
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	22	8	7,638	2,144
Lighting offences	32	0	2,178	215
Noise offences	4	0	379	24
Load offences	146	2	4,686	132
Offences peculiar to motorcycles	6	0	297	9
Miscellaneous offences (including trailer offences)	2,218	431	61,295	13,063
Total	13,136	2,299	612,731	95,647

[1] These data are based on the principal offence basis

Worker Registration Scheme

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from the accession states had registered under the Worker Registration Scheme by 1 October. [40359]

Mr. McNulty: The Accession Monitoring report for May 2004 to September 2005 sets out the number of citizens from the eight Accession Countries of the EU (Accession State nationals) who have applied to register with the Worker Registration Scheme during this period. This report is available on the Home Office website via:

http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/0/reports/accession_monitoring.html

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a report from the Children's Commissioner on the condition of children detained in Yarl's Wood; and if he will make a statement. [41484]

Mr. McNulty: We have received the report of the Children Commissioner's visit to Yarl's Wood. We are currently giving this report careful consideration and will respond to the Commissioner's recommendations in due course.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the proposal to promote the licensing of Afghan poppy farmers to produce the raw materials for the manufacture of diamorphine and codeine. [42321]

Dr. Howells: The proposal to promote the licensing of Afghan poppy farmers to produce the raw materials for the manufacture of diamorphine and codeine was put forward in the Senlis Council's "Feasibility Study on Opium Licensing in Afghanistan for the Production of Morphine and Other Essential Medicines". We are

following the work of the Senlis Council and have considered the findings from their study. However, we do not believe that such licensing is a realistic solution to the problems of opium cultivation in Afghanistan, not least because it risks a high level of diversion of licit opium into illegal channels. It is clear from the feasibility study, as well as expert opinion, that Afghanistan currently does not meet the prerequisites necessary to control licit cultivation. There is also a risk that prices would rise, attracting new entrants into the illicit market.

The production of opium is also contrary to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Afghan Government has expressed its opposition to licit cultivation in Afghanistan. When the Senlis Council presented its study in Afghanistan in September 2005, the Afghan Minister for Counter Narcotics, Habibullah Qaderi, said,

> "The poor security situation in the country means there can simply be no guarantee that opium will not be smuggled out of the country for the illicit narcotics trade abroad. Without an effective control mechanism, a lot of opium will still be refined into heroin for illicit markets in the West and elsewhere. We could not accept this."

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the percentage change has been in opium production in Afghanistan in the last six months; and if he will make a statement. [42998]

Dr. Howells: The figures for opium production in the last six months in Afghanistan are not yet available. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will provide an early indication of this season's (2005–06) production figures in their Rapid Assessment Survey, which is due to be published in the next couple of weeks. In November 2005, the UNODC confirmed the poppy cultivation and production figures for the 2004–05 season from their annual survey. They estimated that opium production was around 4,100 metric tonnes, a decrease of only 100 tonnes (2.4 per cent.) compared to 2004, despite a significant 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 to 104,000 ha in 2004–05. Good weather and an absence of crop disease were responsible for a significant increase in yield in 2004–05.

Airspace (Extraordinary Rendition)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has asked the United States Administration to provide documented evidence to support the assurances provided by Dr. Rice on the condition under which rendition of detainees has taken place in instances when United States aircraft have used United Kingdom airports for re-fuelling. [41486]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's answer to the right hon. Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1652–53W. As noted in that answer, in the two cases where the Government gave permission for the rendition of a detainee via UK territory and airspace, the detainees were en route to criminal trial in the United States.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2840–1W on airspace (extraordinary rendition), whether there must be 'substantial grounds' or 'grounds' to suspect that a person would face a real risk of torture, for the transfer of an individual from or through the UK to another state not to be permitted. [42529]

Dr. Howells: The European Convention on Human Rights prohibits the United Kingdom from removing someone where there are substantial grounds for believing that they face a real risk of torture.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42880]

Mr. Straw: Approximately 91 per cent. of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's UK Estate is covered by Audible Fire Alarms.

Cherie Booth

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether assistance was offered by the Government to facilitate a meeting in Turkey between Cherie Booth QC, Mr. and Mrs. Orams and Mr. Hassan Vahib; whether accommodation within the Department's premises was made available to Cherie Booth during this visit; and if he will make a statement. [42799]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Cherie Booth QC visited Turkey last year in her professional capacity as a barrister. The Government did not facilitate any of the meetings held, nor did it offer to do so. Nor was she offered or provided with accommodation by the Government. Her representation of David and Linda Orams is entirely independent of Government.

Cherie Booth is subject to security considerations at all times, even when she is travelling—as in this instance—as a private citizen. Consequently, she was accompanied to Turkey by her close protection team and given no more consular assistance than was commensurate with her security requirements.

Cuba

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Cuba. [42441]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We continue to be concerned about the political situation in Cuba. Cuba is a one-party state with considerable restrictions on fundamental human rights. The situation has deteriorated in recent months, notably through further crackdowns on dissidents and curtailment of political and economic liberties. The UK and EU policy in Cuba is to encourage a process of peaceful transition to pluralist democracy. We continue to press the Cuban authorities to respect human rights and political freedoms and issued several statements under our EU presidency expressing our concern at the Cuban authorities' harsh treatment of the peaceful opposition. These views were put to the outgoing Cuban ambassador and, to the incoming ambassador, at a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group Cuba on 8 November 2005.

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42816]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold staff records in a form that would enable this information to be provided without incurring disproportionate costs.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41356]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) vehicle fleet is split between the home fleet, operated by FCO Services, and the overseas fleet operated by overseas posts. The overseas fleet comprises 1400 vehicles, most of which are owned by the FCO. Approximately 15 are leased locally. The fleet comprises a mixture of protected and soft skin vehicles. 225 vehicles in the overseas fleet are designated as 'flag' cars for use by heads of posts.

Forty percent. of the overseas fleet vehicles are manufactured by Land Rover, Jaguar or Ford. The remaining vehicles, which were purchased on the basis of being best suited to local climatic conditions, were obtained from a variety of manufacturers.

The type of fuel used overseas is based upon local availability and local conditions in the region concerned. However, this is primarily unleaded petrol, unless diesel is easily available and cheaper.

Each overseas post is responsible for monitoring fuel consumption and efficiency.

Since the acquisition and running of vehicles in the overseas fleet is the responsibility of individual posts and detailed records are not held centrally, to obtain the detailed information requested would incur disproportionate costs.

The FCO's home fleet comprises 12 vehicles, which are based in King Charles Street, London, and at Hanslope Park, near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. These vehicles were purchased by the FCO outright. The Hanslope Park fleet of four Ford Galaxies are all diesel (1.9cc) and achieve 42mpg. The Central London fleet comprises two Ford Galaxies of which one is a petrol vehicle (2.3cc) achieving 28mpg, and one diesel (1.9cc) achieving 42mpg;

Four Vauxhall Omegas—of which two are petrol/dual fuel (2.2cc) vehicles achieving 29mpg, and two petrol (2.0cc) achieving 31 mpg; and two Rover 75 V6 petrol (2.0cc) achieving 29mpg.

Dr. Vanunu

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of Israel regarding *(a)* nuclear weapons and *(b)* Dr. Vanunu.[41927]

Dr. Howells: The Government take appropriate opportunities to discuss all aspects of non-proliferation with representatives of the Israeli Government. We have, on a number of occasions, called on Israel to accede to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, and to conclude a full scope safeguards agreement and Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the establishment of a zone free from all Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East, including through the EU Barcelona Process. The Barcelona Declaration of 1995 includes a call on all states in the region to pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Our Ambassador in Tel Aviv last raised the restrictions on Mr. Vanunu on 6 September 2005 to note our concern that the restrictions imposed on Mr. Vanunu had been extended. My noble Friend the then Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East, Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, initially raised our concerns about the restrictions imposed upon Mr. Vanunu with the Israeli Charge following his release in April 2004. We recognise that Israel has a right to protect its national security but we are concerned that the restrictions may be excessive. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv have since been in contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs following the decision to extend the length of time these restrictions will apply for Mr. Vanunu.

Embassies and Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the potential savings which would result from combining UK embassies and consulates with those of other English speaking countries. [41408]

Mr. Straw: None. Nor could any such estimate be produced without incurring disproportionate costs.

Eritrea

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place to ensure that part of the UN peacekeeping force is allowed to remain in Eritrea. [43066]

Dr. Howells: The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) provides a vital stabilising factor in the border dispute between the two countries. The restrictions placed on UNMEE by Eritrea are wholly unacceptable. We have worked with United Nations Security Council partners to press Eritrea to reverse these restrictions. In particular, we supported the adoption of Security Council resolution 1640 (2005) demanding that all restrictions be lifted and that both Eritrea and Ethiopia take action to reduce tension by returning troops to previous positions. The resolution repeated the Security Council's call on both parties to ensure the implementation of the decision of the Ethiopia/Eritrea Boundary Commission. Most recently, the Security Council met on 9 January to review compliance with UNSCR 1640 and UNMEE's

continued ability to operate. The Council has agreed that UNMEE should retain its present functions and configuration while concerted efforts are made to address the wider border dispute. We are working closely with the United States and other interested parties to engage Eritrea and Ethiopia in these efforts. We continue to keep the situation under close review.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Joint Committee (EEC-Vietnam), *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-Central America), *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-Mexico) and *(d)* EEC-Mercosur Joint Advisory Committee have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38795]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EC-Vietnam Joint Commission met on 5 October 2005. The presidency was represented by officials from the British Embassy in Hanoi. There have been no meetings of the EC Joint Committees on Central America, Mexico and Mercosur during the UK presidency.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government. A copy of which is available at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf. Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* formal and *(b)* informal EU Council of Minister meetings attended by UK Government delegations there have been since 1 July 1999; how many were led by Scottish Government Ministers; and what the (i) date and (ii) subjects of each meeting was. [39219]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: To find the date and subject of every formal or informal EU Council of Ministers meeting held since 1 July 1999 which a UK delegation attended would incur disproportionate costs. I refer the hon. Member to the website of the Council of Ministers at http://ue.eu.int where he should find much of the information he seeks.

Scottish interests are represented at all EU Council meetings by the UK delegation. On certain occasions Scottish Executive Ministers also attend EU Council meetings, as part of the UK delegation, at the discretion of the lead UK Minister. This happened most recently at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in December, which Scottish Executive Minister Ross Finnie attended. The Scottish Executive is also consulted on any matters of devolved interest likely to be raised at Council meetings.

Scottish Executive Ministers have attended EU Council meetings on 74 occasions since 1999. Detailed attendance can be found at:
http://www.Scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/International-Relations/Europe/Page6.

During this time Scottish Executive Ministers have led the UK delegation on three occasions:

Date	*Council*	*Minister*
8 June 2000	Education	Nicol Stephen
12 February 2001	Education	Nicol Stephen
4 June 2001	Health	Susan Deacon

EU Staff

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time staff are employed by the (i) European Commission, (ii) Council of Ministers, (iii) European Parliament and (iv) agencies of the EU. [40954]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I am placing in the Library of the House a table from the Bulletin Statistique, Le Personnel de la Commission, Commission Européenne, Direction Générale du Personnel et de l'Administration, Direction Personnel et Carrière, January 2006, p. 4 giving the number of full-time employees of the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and agencies of the European Union as at January 2006. The figures for part-time employees of these institutions were not available at the time of answering this question. They have been requested and will be sent to the hon. Member separately, and placed in the Library of the House.

EU-Morocco Fishing Agreement

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made in relation to the EU-Morocco fishing agreement; and what discussions he has had with representatives of the Saharawi people on the agreement. [41425]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made no representations about the EU/Morocco fishing agreement. Nor has he met with representatives of the Saharawi people. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have, however, met representatives of the Frente Polisario and discussed this issue with them.

Global Opportunities Fund

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2064–66W, on the Global Opportunities Fund, if he will list the countries where his Department has supported democracy building projects under the Global Opportunities Fund in each of the last three years; and how much financial support was provided to each country. [41809]

Dr. Howells: We support a broad range of projects that underpin the development of democracy, including addressing issues such as freedom of expression and the development of civil society. Details of projects under the Global Opportunities Fund (GOF) programmes in 2003–04 and 2004–05 are set out in the GOF Annual Reports (Command Papers 6413 and 6665 published in December 2004 and October 2005 respectively).

In 2005–06, GOF projects relating to these areas are being undertaken in the following countries: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Belarus, China, Colombia, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, Vietnam and Yemen. Financial out-turns for the projects in these countries are not yet available.

In addition, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office makes a grant-in-aid through the GOF to the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) to support work on these issues. Details of the countries in which they undertook projects in 2003–04 and 2004–05 are set out in WFD's Annual Reviews, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. In 2005–06, WFD is supporting projects in the following countries: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burma, Balkans, Belarus, Caucasus, Central Eastern Europe, Congo, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Cyprus, Egypt, Georgia, Ghana, Israel, Kenya, Kosovo, Lesotho, Lithuania, Morocco, Moldova, Middle East and North Africa, Macedonia, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Peru, Palestine, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Turkey, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Financial out-turns for projects in these countries are also not yet available.

International Whaling Commission

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps have been taken by the Government since the 2005 International Whaling Commission (IWC) to secure a debt amnesty in the IWC which would permit the participation of Costa Rica, Kenya and Uruguay. [41812]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The UK initiated the recommendation adopted at last years International Whaling Commission (IWC) annual meeting (IWC57), which asked the IWC Secretariat to explore the financial implications for the IWC of a debt amnesty and to produce proposals. Any document which the Secretariat produces in respect of this Recommendation will have to be considered by the next meeting of the IWC. Proposals for changes to the IWC's Financial Regulation would (if made) not come into effect until after they had been agreed by IWC58 and cannot therefore affect the position of those countries who, but for outstanding debt, might attend IWC58 and seek to exercise voting rights at that meeting.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the United Kingdom Government are taking to check Japan's progress towards obtaining a majority bloc at the International Whaling Commission; and if he will make a statement. [41813]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The UK Government continues to urge other conservation minded countries to join the International Whaling Commission (IWC). I have recently written to seven conservation minded countries urging them to join the IWC in time for this years annual IWC meeting. I and my fellow Ministers also raise the issue of the IWC with our international counterparts at every suitable opportunity.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the release of *(a)* Dr. Huda Ammash, *(b)* Mrs. Rihab Taha and *(c)* other high-ranking Iraqi detainees in Iraq in December 2005; whether each remains free; and for what reasons each was initially detained. [42950]

Dr. Howells: Certain individuals detained as a threat to security under UN Security Council Resolution 1546, including Dr. Huda Ammash and Mrs. Rihab Taha, were released from custody in December 2005. Any further action against them is a matter for the Iraqi authorities.

Jordan

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much funding his Department has provided for projects in Jordan in each of the last five years; and how much such funding is planned for the 2005–06 financial year. [41179]

Dr. Howells: The funding below was for projects funded by the Global Opportunities Fund, the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and the Directorate Programme Budget. In addition we contributed towards EU funding for Jordan of which €243 million was provided between 2003–04. Under the EU's National Indicative Programme for the period 2005–06, €110 million of new commitments is foreseen for Jordan. €60 million have been already committed in 2005. The priorities include assisting Jordan to take forward its political, social and economic commitments in its European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan.

The Department for International Development have also contributed funding for Jordan in the time period requested in the question.

	Amount (£)
2001–02	53,000
2002–03	167,716
2003–04	564,830
2004–05	555,688
2005–06	804,153

Kazakhstan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights in Kazakhstan. [42718]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We welcome the progress that the Government of Kazakhstan has made on human rights and democratic reform since independence. This includes a moratorium on the death penalty, progress on prison reform including reduction of the number of persons in detention and the introduction of public monitoring of places of detention, and, most recently in December 2005, ratification of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

But there is still some way to go. Political pluralism has been affected negatively by legislation, which restricts freedom of expression, association and assembly. The powers of the Parliament and Government and the independence of the judiciary could be further enhanced to introduce checks and balances into the system of administration. In December 2005, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights International Observation Mission noted that despite some administrative improvements, the presidential elections did not meet international standards.

Wherever possible we look to work with the Kazakh authorities to improve the human rights situation. We have funded projects aimed at improving the conditions in prisons, preventing torture in places of detention and encouraging the abolition of the death penalty. We have an on-going dialogue with the Government of Kazakhstan on transparency issues and are working closely with non-governmental organisations on this too. We also stand ready to work with President Nazarbayev on his programme of democratic reforms.

When he met Foreign Minister Tokayev following the presentation of his credentials on 9 January, our newly accredited ambassador to Kazakhstan, Paul Brummell, assured the Foreign Minister of the readiness of the British Government to work with Kazakhstan across this agenda.

We will continue to raise, both bilaterally and with our EU partners, the importance of respect for human rights and good governance in Kazakhstan and look for opportunities to provide suitable assistance.

Middle East

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department provided for good governance and democracy within the Arab world in each of the last five years, broken down by country; and what support is planned for each country for the 2005–06 financial year. [41180]

Dr. Howells: As part of the Global Opportunities Fund (GOF) launched by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary in May 2003, the engaging with the Islamic World programme is designed to promote the rule of law, increased participation of women, economic reform and good governance initiatives in the Islamic World. The following table shows funding allocated in support of good governance and democracy projects within the Arab world in 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06. Examples of projects supported can be found in the Global Opportunities Fund annual report which is available in the Library of the House.

Prior to the launching of GOF, a significant proportion of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Middle East and North Africa directorate (MENAD) programme budget was used to support good governance and democracy in the region. MENAD's directorate programme budget was £1,017,176 in 2001–02, £1,304,100 in 2002–03, £1,147,505 in 2003–04, £1,363,505 in £2004–05, and £1,099,884 in 2005–06.

More widely, through our membership of the EU we contribute towards the EU Mediterranean Partnership which since 1995 has provided southern Mediterranean countries with financial support—around £1 billion Euros a year in grants and another £2 billion Euros a year in loans. Details of EU assistance per country and per project can be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/bilateral_en.htm

The Euromed summit in Barcelona in November, which the UK chaired as EU presidency, agreed to establish a substantial governance facility to help Southern Mediterranean countries which make progress on good governance.

Global opportunities fund—engaging the Islamic World programme—Funding allocated in support of democracy and good governance in the Arab World (£)

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Bahrain	—	53,489	177,016
Egypt	—	17,423	30o,144
Jordan	—	218,788	658,352.76
Kuwait	—	—	15,759
Lebanon	—	43,902.50	237,116
Libya	—	83,098	283,601
Morocco	54,108	115,855	474,980
Oman	47,289	4946.76	188,465
Palestine	—	10,000	232,266.09
Qatar	—	—	11,443.10
Saudi Arabia	35,017.12	145,258.66	275,092
Syria	53,113	74,000	7500
UAE	—	—	116,042
Yemen	26,783.18	118,150.18	503,102
Multiple Countries	894,774	2,022,364.20	3,136,611.30
Totals	1,111,084.30	2,912,275.30	6,623,490.25
Grand Total	10,646,849.85		

Moldova

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is towards Moldova joining the European Union. [41810]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Moldova has not applied for membership of the European Union. We continue to encourage Moldova to implement the reforms set out in the jointly agreed European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, which was launched in February 2005. In this context, the Government welcome Moldova's European aspirations and strongly supports efforts to promote economic and political reforms, aimed at bringing Moldova closer to EU standards.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 19 January 2006

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Cutlery Thefts

Mr. Evans: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how much cutlery went missing from the House of Commons Refreshment Department in 2005. [43284]

Nick Harvey: No separate record is kept of cutlery missing from the restaurants and bars of the House of Commons. In 2005, the Refreshment Department spent £10,630 to replace cutlery lost or damaged through general wear and tear, or to meet changes in the demand for catering services.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many disciplinary actions against employees of the House of Commons *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43502]

Nick Harvey: The information requested is as follows:

	Disciplinary actions commenced	*Number of actions resulting in sanction*
2002	9	8
2003	15	15
2004	6	6
2005	15	15

Note:
Figures for earlier years were not centrally collated.

Public Gallery (Security Screen)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what assessment the Commission has made of the impact of the new security screen on visitor numbers to the Public Gallery in the Chamber. [43520]

Nick Harvey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1-2W.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth Control

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much EU aid was given to *(a)* the United Nations Population Fund, *(b)* the International Planned Parenthood Federation and *(c)* Marie Stopes International in each year since 1999. [41760]

Mr. Thomas: EU aid, provided by the European Commission, to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF) and Marie Stopes International (MSI) since 1999 is as follows:

(a) The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

	Thousand ($) [1]
1999	9,314
2000	7,090
2001	4,924
2002	4,917
2003	16,962
2004	8,124
2005	13,915

(b) The International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF)

	Thousand (£)
1999	950
2000	453
2001	241
2002	222
2003	2,162
2004	1,397
2005	[1]

[1] Figure not yet available

(c) Marie Stopes International (MSI)

	Thousand (£)
1999	1,132
2000	1,570
2001	1,095
2002	2,027
2003	1,233
2004	741
2005	[1]

[1] Figure not yet available

Cape Verde Islands

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what representations he has received from the government of the Cape Verde islands about illegal drugs; [43639]

(2) what measures the UK Government are taking to combat drug running in the Cape Verde islands. [43640]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

UK law enforcement agencies have reported a recent growth in the trafficking of illicit drugs through West Africa, including Cape Verde. We welcome the Cape Verdian Government's strong commitment to enforcing the rule of law and taking action against international organised crime. As a result of a short-term assessment of the increased use of Cape Verde as a drugs transit route, we are engaged with the Cape Verdian Government and other international partners in the region to identify both the nature of this development and how shared resources might be deployed to the region to best effect.

Our Ambassador to Senegal, who has responsibility for the Islands of Cape Verde, met with Cape Verdian Ministers and officials in December 2005 to discuss a range of issues affecting the islands. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the

Department for International Development (Hilary Benn) is writing to the Cape Verdian Minister of Foreign Affairs about our work, with EU partners, to help the Cape Verde authorities tackle the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking through the region.

Climate Change

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial contribution the UK has made to the *(a)* UN framework convention on climate change least developed countries fund, *(b)* special climate change fund and *(c)* adaptation fund under the Kyoto protocol. [41303]

Mr. Thomas: The UN framework convention on climate change least developed countries fund will support national adaptation programmes in the poorest developing countries. Operational guidance for the fund was recently adopted by parties at the climate change conference in Montreal, December 2005. When the programming document for the fund is agreed by the Council of the Global Environment Facility, who will oversee the operation of the fund, the UK will consider providing finance. We recognise the fund's importance in helping Governments of the poorest developing countries manage the effects of climate change.

As of April 2005, nine donors, including the UK, pledged approximately £19 million to the special climate change fund. The UK contribution amounts to over half of this;—£10 million over three years: 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08. This will be available to support any developing country in managing the effects of climate change.

Parties to the UN convention on climate change deferred a decision on activating the adaptation fund until management arrangements have been agreed, which should take place this year. The principle revenue stream to the fund will come from a 2 per cent. levy on emissions trading under the clean development mechanism.

Democracy Projects

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the projects being supported by his Department for the promotion of democracy in *(a)* China, *(b)* the Balkans region, *(c)* Kenya, *(d)* Uganda, *(e)* Eritrea, *(f)* the Russian Federation, *(g)* Pakistan and *(h)* Burma; what the nature of the support is in each case; and how much funding has been allocated to each project. [41950]

Mr. Thomas: In China, DFID supports the promotion of grassroots democracy across its projects, through promoting the participation of poor people in decision making. Such participation is institutionalised in some projects through the creation of community based organisations such as water user associations.

In the Balkans, DFID currently has a £900,000 programme of support to 'Standards for Kosovo'. About £150,000 is earmarked for support to functioning democratic institutions.

In Kenya, DFID has provided £5,140,000 over five years for the Political Empowerment Programme. The programme is meant to build demand to ensure a fair, inclusive, consultative and sustainable democratic process in the country. The support consists of: £900,000 to civic education, £150,000 to the Electoral Commission of Kenya, £250,000 to support a resource centre for Parliament, £300,000 for political parties to monitor the recent constitutional referendum, £450,000 spent on domestic observation of the 2002 elections and £500,000 reserved for the same in the 2007 elections. DFID has also provided £5,377,918 over six years to support participatory local governance and democratisation at the grassroots level.

In Uganda, DFID has provided £600,000 to the donor funded Election Support Programme, which is designed to improve the prospects for free and fair elections. It includes support for the Uganda Electoral Commission, domestic election observers, increasing women's participation in the political process and strengthening independent media coverage of the elections. DFID has also committed £400,000 to the national civic education programme, which aims to empower Ugandans to participate effectively in promoting accountability and transparency in national and local politics. A further £50,000 has been contributed to a donor basket fund supporting the Parliament of Uganda with the aim of improving democratic governance.

In Eritrea, DFID does not have any projects to support the promotion of democracy.

In Pakistan, DFID has provided £525,000 to build the capacity of parliamentarians at the federal and provincial levels; £326,000 to strengthen the capacity of local political party branches and £208,531 for election monitoring to develop an understanding of the processes and outcomes of the 2005 local elections. DFID is also supporting the promotion of grassroots democracy across its projects by providing: £2.8 million for a Gender Equality Project through the British Council to strengthen the capacity of local organisations to achieve access for women to political and economic decision making, protection from violence, and equal treatment in law; £18 million through the Asian Development Bank to strengthen the ability of civil society to demand improved delivery of services and access to justice and approximately £5 million for a Citizen Empowerment Initiative to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to engage government on issues of social exclusion, human rights and poverty reduction.

In Russia, DFID has promoted democracy by addressing issues of community participation, voice and accountability across the technical cooperation programmes. The ongoing projects include: a £3,800,000 Public Administration and Civil Service Reform Project to ensure greater transparency of the civil service, to promote freedom of information and to encourage civilian participation in the public administration reform process; £4,980,000 Support to Poverty Reduction in Leningrad Region (Oblast) Programme to strengthen the capacity of the region and municipal authorities to develop community-based alternatives to service delivery and alternative approaches to income earning for young people of mixed abilities.

In Burma, DFID does not fund any projects solely focused on promoting democracy. DFID works with a range of partners including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the UN and international

NGOs across health, education and livelihoods issues in a way that empowers civil society and communities. For example, DFID is providing £4 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) over four years to help improve livelihoods for poor rural people through participatory local-level decision making.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his (i) Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40096]

Hilary Benn: DFID spent the amounts detailed in the UK as per the following table:

£

Financial year	*Fixtures and fittings*	*Office equipment*	*General office expenses*
2002–03	23,798	44,216	2,370,312
2003–04	30,744	109,568	2,784,152
2004–05	64,123	92,832	3,033,851
2005–06 (Forecast)	25,000	100,000	3,107,000

Information on these items of expenditure in overseas offices is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID is responsible for CDC (formerly Commonwealth Development Corporation), a self-financing public corporation, based in London. The relevant figures for CDC are:

£

	Fixtures and fittings	*Office equipment*	*General office expenses*
2003	219,400	5,400	301,900
2004	123,100	2,400	164,300
2005 (Forecast)	99,000	7,000	58,000
2006 (Budget)	100,000	8,000	69,000

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41360]

Mr. Thomas: DFID leases two ministerial cars from the Government Car Service. For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA), my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport, has asked the chief executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

The permanent secretary's car is leased, details as follows:

Model: Volvo S80

Fuel: LPG (liquified petroleum gas)

Fuel efficiency: Approx. 18 mpg on average.

Information on vehicles held in overseas offices is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Zimbabwe

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions his Department has had with UN Habitat about temporary housing schemes for people whose homes were destroyed in land clearance in Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement; [41942]

(2) what progress is being made in providing emergency shelter for people whose homes were lost in land clearance in Zimbabwe. [41943]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is in constant dialogue with the United Nations Country Team on the response to the land clearance (Operation Murambatsvina). DFID stands ready to support the efforts of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat) to provide shelter for those affected by land clearance (Operation Murambatsvina) in Zimbabwe, should that organisation be able to implement transparent, equitable and cost-effective ways of doing so.

The Government of Zimbabwe has declared that the transitional shelter prototype designed by UN Habitat is sub-standard and has ordered that these shelters be demolished. UN Habitat is now involved in discussions with the Government of Zimbabwe over an acceptable form of shelter.

Meanwhile, there are serious concerns over the allocation of shelter. It is feared that the Government of Zimbabwe will prioritise civil servants, government supporters or those who can afford to pay for shelter over those who are in greatest need.

DFID has provided more than £1 million to the humanitarian response to Operation Murambatsvina. Further funds are being channelled through non-governmental organisations that are seeking creative ways to respond to the resulting problems of homelessness and overcrowding.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of the premises occupied by her Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42885]

Mr. Lammy: All buildings occupied by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are fitted with audible fire alarms.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by her Department in Castle Point. [42903]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not own *(a)* land or *(b)* property in Castle Point.

Departmental IT Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones her Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41275]

Mr. Lammy: My Department does not record this information on a year-by-year basis.

(a) Since 1999, my Department has purchased 178 laptops.

(b) Since 1999, my Department has purchased 113 mobile phones.

The cost of each category in each year could be collated only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the out-turn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41316]

Mr. Lammy: My Department does not hold the information in the format requested. The question could be answered only at disproportionate costs.

Departmental Targets

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance her Department has given to Executive agencies that fall under the remit of her Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if she will make a statement. [41645]

Mr. Lammy: None, since the eight parks managed by the Department's only agency, the Royal Parks, are all in London.

Digital Television (Wales)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what percentage of television viewers in *(a)* Monmouthshire and *(b)* Wales have access to freeview signals; and what steps her Department is taking to ensure that freeview access will be available in each area immediately following analogue switch-off; [42451]

(2) what steps are being taken to widen access to freeview in *(a)* Monmouth and *(b)* Monmouthshire. [42453]

James Purnell: Digital Switchover will enable digital terrestrial coverage to match the current 98.5 per cent. analogue level. Switchover for the HTV Wales region will happen in the second half of 2009.

Freeview signals are currently available to an estimated 35.7 per cent. of households in the Monmouth constituency. No equivalent figures are available for counties, although for Wales as a whole, 57 per cent. of households are predicted to be in areas served by the full range of digital terrestrial services.

The Government have confirmed the regional timetable for the switchover to digital television and announced details of a support scheme to help the most vulnerable households to make the switch.

Digital UK, an independent, not-for-profit company set up by the broadcasters, commercial multiplex operators and involving the supply chain digital switchover will co-ordinate the implementation of digital switchover and ensure that consumers have timely and accurate information about the switch.

Gambling

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to ensure that problem gambling is addressed by proposed gambling reforms. [43256]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Act 2005 includes important new safeguards to protect children and vulnerable adults from the harmful effects of gambling.

We plan to bring the Act fully into force with effect from September 2007.

Olympic Games

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 783–84W, on the 2012 Olympics, for what reason UK Sport has not set an aspirational target for Olympic medals at the 2012 Olympic Games. [43638]

Mr. Caborn: It would not be appropriate for UK Sport, the Government's lead agency on elite sport, to set a target for Olympic medals at the 2012 Olympic Games in advance of agreeing a funding package for elite sport.

The Government are not in a position at this stage to indicate when a decision will be taken on a funding package for elite sport. Funding is currently in place for the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic cycle, which concludes in 2009.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of the premises occupied by her Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42886]

Ms Harman: The proportion of premises that have an audible fire alarm fitted in my Department is 99.09 percent. This answer is based upon the number of buildings in the Department of Constitutional Affairs Headquarters estate and Her Majesty's Courts Service. It does not include related agencies and NDPBs, as to gather this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Constitutional Reform Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she expects each section of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 to come into force; and if she will make a statement. [41743]

Ms Harman: Some provisions of the Constitutional Reform Act have already been implemented. The majority of the remaining provisions—including those related to the rule of law, the role of the Lord Chancellor, the Judicial Appointments Commission and its oversight body, a judicial disciplinary system and general judiciary-related provisions—are expected to be brought into force on 3 April 2006.

Part 3 of the Act, which relates to the establishment of a Supreme Court is expected to be implemented in 2008. Certain provisions in the Act relating to Northern Ireland will not be commenced until after the restoration of devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Departmental Jobs (Regional Distribution)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which her Department is responsible are located in (A) each of the English regions, (B) Wales and (C) Northern Ireland. [39870]

Ms Harman: The figures are published in Civil Service Statistics. Departments should refer to Table D which covers permanent staff numbers (FTE basis) in each department and agency. This information is available at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

Information for non-departmental public bodies is not collected centrally on a regional basis. (Departments will have to supply their own figures based on the groupings in Table D of Civil Service Statistics bearing in mind the disproportionate cost threshold).

Departmental Objectives

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions she has had with stakeholders about the progress of each target in her Department's Objective *(a)* I, *(b)* II and *(c)* IV. [41740]

Ms Harman: I have held discussions with a number of key stakeholders including the judiciary, legal professions, court users, consumers and private sector organisations, about the progress of the PSA targets falling under the Strategic Objectives in SR 2004.

Departmental Staff (Chronic Back Pain)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what initiatives are being taken in her Department to help civil servants with chronic back pain. [34971]

Ms Harman: DCA offices and equipment are set out to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other general health and safety legislation such as Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations1999. Where an assessment of ergonomic risk is necessary, in such cases all assessments are conducted in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.

Health and Safety audits and Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments are conducted on work stations as a matter of course, but should a member of staff feel that their 'work station' is not comfortable or their chair, desk or position of their computer terminal is causing discomfort to their back, they can request a DSE risk assessment. These assessments are conducted by trained assessors, who look to aid or prevent chronic back pain by ensuring that:

- the chair allows easy freedom of movement and a comfortable work position
- The chair has a definite lumbar curve, well padded seat. A seat which supports most of the thighs but turns downwards before it reaches the back of the knees
- If the individual has neck or shoulder tension, a long chair back is recommended—if the small of the back does not have sufficient support a lumbar roll will be obtained. Gliders or braked castors are needed on smooth floors.
- The armrests are height adjustable so they can support the elbows.
- the workstation provides sufficient space to find a comfortable position and allow for changes in position
- They advise the user to avoid awkward reaches, twisting to use the phoné etc. Ensure there is enough legroom (at least 600 mm deep) and that the work surface should be at least 69 cm high and a maximum of 3 cm thick
- They advise the user on the guidelines of body posture, the most comfortable/correct height of the PC terminal and the recommended frequency of work breaks.

Apart from office based staff, Court based staff (such as Solicitors, Barristers and Ushers) are cared for in the same way as set out above . . . as are the independent Judiciary. In addition to our Office and Court personnel, the DCA also employs people who deal with the more physical aspects of the Departments remit, such as Bailiffs, Security personnel and Enforcement/ Fines Officers.

Staff who have roles that may potentially have a detrimental effect on their back are given training on Manual Handling (including lifting, bending, twisting) and, for Bailiffs and Enforcement teams who go out into the community, training on Driving Skills (including posture), Control and Restraint, Arrest Techniques, Conflict Handling and any other training that will aid them in their role and reduce the risk of injury to their back is provided.

In addition to explaining the Health and Safety requirements at Induction, delivering training to minimise the risk of causing or aggravating back pain and providing a robust Occupational Health provision (including a telephone Helpline) that can identify, reduce and then deal with 'back conditions', the DCA also proactively looks to reduce incidents and accidents that may cause chronic back pain by having:

- A dedicated Health and Safety unit that aims to ensure the DCA meets all of it's legal requirements
- Union (PCS) appointed Health and Safety Representatives that raise any possible issues that could have detrimental consequences on staff health
- Clearly visible posters, in offices, on the correct lifting and handling techniques' and the 'correct sitting posture'

Notice Boards containing information and general tips on keeping the workplace clear of obstructions that can cause trip and slip accidents . . . which in turn can result in back pain.

Work-Life Balance Policies that help staff deal with any back problems they may have by acknowledging that individuals, at all stages of their lives, work best when they are able to achieve a appropriate balance between work and all other aspects of their lives

The option of joining the Beneden Healthcare Society, for the sum of £1.10 per week per person, staff can seek assistance in organising or paying for any medical treatment, including chronic back pain.

The ability to access the Civil Service Benevolent Fund to help with any financial costs arising from any back condition

The option of joining the CSSC Sports & Leisure Limited at a low monthly Subscription (£2.75 per month for 'Membership' and £5.50 per month for 'Membership Plus'), in order to get and stay fit and in turn reduce the risk of developing chronic back pain and/or alleviate some of the symptoms

A dedicated DCA Welfare Service that supports and advises staff both during any absence from work and following their return.

My Department aims to ensure that all staff are aware of their own personal responsibilities in taking care of their back, but should a member staff develop chronic back pain, as a Department, we aim to make sure the individual(s) concerned are supported and cared for.

Domestic Violence

Mike Penning: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many defendants to allegations of domestic violence in the criminal courts were allowed personally to cross-examine the complainant in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Hemel Hempstead magistrates court, *(c)* Watford magistrates court and *(d)* St. Albans Crown court in 2005. [40970]

Ms Harman: This information is not collected so cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Electoral Administration

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the right hon. Member for Makerfield made comments on pre-publication drafts of the Electoral Administration Bill; and if she will make a statement. [39577]

Ms Harman: I can confirm that the right hon. Member for Makerfield was not shown pre-publication drafts of the Electoral Administration Bill. I refer the hon. Gentleman to my answer to his previous question on this issue for further detail.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the potential role on the internet and email in the process of *(a)* registering to vote and *(b)* voting in general elections. [39596]

Ms Harman: The electoral process needs to fit with modern lifestyles and allow better access for those who find the voting process difficult. To this end, the Government are exploring options to improve the process of electoral registration and voting process. Any improvements to the system would however need to take into account security considerations; being at least as secure, if not more secure, than arrangements currently in place.

When the Co-ordinated Online Record of Electors (CORE) project is fully implemented we are proposing that electors may be able to access their information securely online and notify an ERO of any changes via the CORE system. Some EROs already use email and the internet to improve efficiency in parts of the registration process. However the law does not permit the use of email or internet for all electoral registration functions. In additional to this, we will also look at how email and the internet might play a role in increasing access to and participation in voting.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she will take to encourage people to complete and return electoral registration forms. [43095]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, introduced on 11 October, includes a new duty on electoral registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers including sending the canvass form more than once to any address and making house to house inquires on more than one occasion. The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), as part of its ongoing programme of democratic engagement, is actively working with committed organisations to promote awareness of voter registration at the national and local levels and in particular to deliver a pan-London campaign ("Get London Registered") directed at London's 'urban youth'. DCA is also working with the Department for Education and Skills, student unions, universities and colleges and local authorities to encourage London's eligible student population to register to vote.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to change the electoral registration system. [43096]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, currently before Parliament, includes a number of provisions that make changes to the electoral registration system. These include provisions to allow people to register to vote nearer the date of election; a new system of anonymous registration for vulnerable people; provisions allowing the piloting of the use of personal identifiers; the creation of a new duty on electoral registration officers to take certain steps in maintaining their registers; and the creation of a framework for the development of a consolidated central record of electors.

The Bill was introduced into Parliament on 11 October 2005. The Bill has completed its House of Commons stages and was introduced into the House of Lords on 11 January 2006.

Separate to the Bill, draft Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 were laid in Parliament on 19 December 2005. This set of regulations includes changes to the rules governing access to, and the supply and sale of, electoral registers.

Fine Defaulting

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress of Operation Payback Two. [41741]

Ms Harman: Operation Payback Two, the second in a series of nationally co-ordinated fine enforcement exercises, was undertaken by Magistrates' courts across England and Wales in November 2004. The initiative resulted in an increase in the payment of over £1.7 million.

In October 2005 Operation Payback Three took place resulting in an increase in the payment of over £2 million.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many freedom of information applications her Department has received; how many have taken more than 20 days to process; and how many of these gave rise to complaints about the time taken. [31228]

Ms Harman: My Department has received 394 freedom of information requests in the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005. Of these, 99 took longer than 20 days to process. In the same period the Department received eight requests for internal review which included complaints about the time taken.

My Department is committed to publishing quarterly updates in relation to departmental performance under FOI, including information on both the volume and outcomes of requests. The bulletin for the second quarter was published on 30 September 2005 and can be found on the DCA website at http:/www.foi.gov.uk/statsapr-jun05.htm and in the Libraries of the both Houses. The next bulletin will be published before Christmas, whilst an annual report will be published in early 2006.

House of Lords Appellate Committees

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on what occasions the Government have *(a)* sought and *(b)* obtained an alteration in the composition of an Appellate Committee of the House of Lords; and what the reason for each was. [42728]

Ms Harman: On 4 March 2004 the Treasury Solicitor, acting for the Secretary of State for the Home Department in an appeal to the House of Lords in A and others *v.* Secretary of State for the Home Department, wrote to the Senior Law Lord drawing attention to a view expressed by a Law Lord in a published lecture in November 2001. She suggested that this view related to a central issue in the appeal and that it would not in the circumstances be appropriate for that Law Lord to sit on the enlarged Committee which would hear the appeal. The Senior Law Lord replied on 25 March 2004 stating that he had been informed by the Law Lord concerned (to whom the Treasury Solicitor had copied her letter) that in view of the position taken by the Secretary of State he would not wish to take part in the hearing of the appeal. He did not do so.

As far as can be ascertained, this is the only occasion in recent times on which such a representation has been made on behalf of the Government.

Mental Health

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) when she expects to produce a revised edition of the code of practice issued under section 42 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005; and if she will make a statement; [41738]

(2) if she will make a statement on the operation of sections *(a)* 57 and *(b)* 58 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005; [41739]

(3) if she will make a statement on the operation of Part 1 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005; [41744]

(4) if she will make a statement on the operation of sections 15 to 21 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. [41745]

Ms Harman: The Mental Capacity Act gained Royal Assent on 7 April 2005.

All sections of the Act are due to be implemented by 1 April 2007.

A revised draft code of practice (under section 42) will be published for consultation in March 2006.

Sections 57 and 58 create the office of Public Guardian. Richard Brook was appointed as the Public Guardian designate and CEO of the Public Guardianship Office. He will take up his post from early February 2006. Work is underway on the design of the structure and detailed processes of the Office of the Public Guardian. This is the office that will support the Public Guardian in the discharge of his functions.

Part 1 of the Mental Capacity Act covers 44 sections (including sections 15 to 21) and two schedules and deals with, amongst other things, Lasting Powers of Attorney, the Court of Protection and the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate Service.

The Lord Chancellor appointed Sir Mark Potter as president designate and Sir Andrew Morritt as vice-president designate of the Court of Protection, with effect from 1 October 2005. A public consultation on the Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy Service was held by the Department of Health. This closed on 30 September 2005 and responses are currently being analysed. There will be further consultations on Lasting Powers of Attorney this month and Court of Protection rules and fees in the summer.

Small Claims Court (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current waiting time is from allocation to hearing for small claims at Tamworth county court. [42074]

Ms Harman: The latest figures available are those at the end of November 2005 the average waiting time for small claims is 14.8 weeks against a target of 15 weeks

Spoilt Ballot Papers

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many spoilt ballot papers there were in each electoral ward in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire in the most recent local elections in each of those wards. [42679]

Ms Harman: This information is not held centrally. The Returning officer at a local election, has a duty to publish the results of that election, including the names of the candidate(s) elected, the number of votes each candidate received and the number of rejected ballot papers under each head shown in the statement of rejected ballot papers (Rule 44(1)*(c)* of the Local Elections (Principle Areas) Rules 1983). There is no duty, however, to inform the Government of the result of a local election. The local authority in question should hold this information.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Administration Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total administrative costs for her core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39833]

Jim Knight: DEFRA's provisional administration costs outturn for the core Department for 2004–05 is shown in table 4 in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639). All the administration costs, with the exception of administrative costs associated with departmental pay costs, are identifiable for the purposes of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses.

Animal Health and Welfare

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce a regime whereby single farm payments can be made to farmers who develop an animal health and welfare strategy in conjunction with a veterinary surgeon. [42254]

Jim Knight: From 1 January 2007, farmers receiving payments under the single payment scheme will have to fulfil the requirements of three animal welfare directives under the cross compliance regime. We do not intend to make payments to farmers through the money available through the Rural Development Programme for farm health planning, but we do intend to pump prime with £6 million of money from elsewhere.

Animal Movement Licences

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discretion is allowed to applicants on complying with time limits when applying to the British Cattle Movement Service for animal movement licences. [43043]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) may issue a movement licence to allow a bovine animal without a passport, aged under two years, to be moved to a hunt kennel or knacker's yard. This licence may be applied for at any time but is valid for only two weeks from the date of issue. It must accompany the animal when it is moved. There is no discretion as to the time limit.

This is the only type of movement licence issued by BCMS.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 892W, on Avian influenza, on what date the testing of the 3,179 wild birds for avian influenza commenced; and on what dates the mallard and shelduck were *(a)* found or captured and *(b)* tested. [43615]

Mr. Bradshaw: Testing of the 3,179 wild birds, referred to in the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 892W, commenced on 7 October 2005.

Samples from the mallard were taken on 14 November 2005 and first tested on 25 November 2005. Samples from the shelduck were also taken on 14 November 2005 and first tested on 6 December 2005.

Biofuels

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what incentives the Government are making available for the development of refining and processing capacity for *(a)* biomass and *(b)* other biofuels. [41511]

Mr. Morley: The Government are keen to promote the production of biomass heat and electricity, and transport biofuels. Electricity suppliers are required to source 15 per cent. of their electricity from renewables, including biomass, by 2015–16. The co-firing of biomass with coal in conventional power stations is permitted. £66 million of funding has been allocated to develop dedicated biomass power stations, combined heat and power schemes, and heating boilers. £12.5 million is available for household and community renewable energy projects, including biomass heating.

Support is available to process biomass into a form suitable for use by energy end-users. A cross-departmental team is looking at the recommendations from the Biomass Task Force on ways to overcome the barriers to developing biomass energy. The Government will publish a full response by April. Support for the production of transport biofuels is through the 20 pence per litre cut in the duty rate for biodiesel and bioethanol. Last November, the Government announced that a Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation will be introduced to require 5 per cent. of road fuel to come from a renewable source by 2010. Other measures being considered include duty incentives to encourage the mixing of biomass with hydrocarbons in the conventional refinery process, and an enhanced capital allowance scheme for the cleanest biofuels processing plants. The latter scheme would allow the cost of capital assets to be written off against taxable profits. Regional support grants for capital investment in production plants are already available.

Cattle Passports

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cattle passport applications were refused because the application was received late over the last 12 month period for which figures are available. [42193]

Jim Knight: In the calendar year 2005, the Rural Payments Agency refused to issue passports for 13,298 animals born in or imported into Great Britain, because their passport applications were received outside the

legal time limit. This amounts to 0.49 per cent. of all applications. All these animals have been registered on the Cattle Tracing System database and issued with a notice of registration.

4,443 passports initially refused have subsequently been issued following successful appeals.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter dated 14 November from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Alexander Scott-Marlow. [41847]

Jim Knight: I apologise for the delay in responding to this letter, a reply will be sent out shortly.

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many letters longer than one sheet of A4 paper were sent by her Department in 2005 in answer to inquiries from *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* the public. [42731]

Jim Knight: That information is not held by this Department.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) her Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which her Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by her Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40138]

Jim Knight: The information on sales of freehold land and buildings since June 2001 when DEFRA was created is set out in the following table. The Department does not hold information on current values and these could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The sales proceeds have been retained within the departmental limits agreed by the Treasury and therefore no excess funds have been claimed by the Treasury.

Department/NDPB/ Agency/ISB	*Year*	*Building*	*Land*	*Sale price (£)*
DEFRA	2001–02[1, 2]	Torry Laboratory Aberdeenshire	—	750,000
		Crown House Maidstone Kent	—	1,200,000
		—	Brynsiencyn Oyster Station Gwynedd	2,000
		Stockbridge House Cawood North Yorkshire	—	880,000
		Littlehampton Dwellings West Sus[illegible]	—	2,788,000
		Brooklands Avenue Cambridge Cambridgeshire[3]	—	5,250,000
		Long Benton Newcastle Tyne and Wear	—	300,000
		Hoddesdon Buffer Depot Hertfordshire	—	6,830,000
	2002–03	Gunthorpe Buffer Depot Nottinghamshire	—	160,000
		Bridgets Farm Martyr Worthy Hampshire (main part of site)	—	4,000,000
		Harlescott Buffer Depot Shropshire	—	1,802,000
		Castle House Stafford Staffordshire	—	1,300,000
		Stockbridge House Dwellings Cawood North Yorkshire	—	623,000

Department/NDPB/ Agency/ISB	Year	Building	Land	Sale price (£)
	2003–04	—	Barnhall Wickford Essex	160,000
		Bridgets Farm Martyr Worthy Hampshire dwellings	—	1,338,000
		Brooklands Avenue Cambridge Cambridgeshire[3]	—	8,724,000
	2004–05	Tattenhall Buffer Depot Cheshire	—	361,000
		Bridgets Farm Martyr Worthy Hampshire (small part of site)	—	10,000
		Worplesdon Surrey[4]	—	329,000
		Kirton Lincolnshire dwelling	—	68,500
		Boxworth Cambridgeshire dwelling	—	165,500
	2005–06	Efford Hampshire Lots 1 and 1A (part of site)	—	1,402,750
		—	Efford Hampshire Lot 4 (part of site)	150,999
		—	Efford Hampshire Lot 5 (part of site)	65,000
		Throckmorton Worcestershire dwelling	—	245,000
		Efford Hampshire dwelling	—	152,000
		Boxworth Cambridgeshire dwelling	—	400,000
		Bridgets Farm Martyr Worthy Hampshire (small part of site)	—	760
NDPBs		None	—	—
Agencies		None	—	—
ISBs		None	—	—

[1] From 8 June 2001.
[2] The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001.
[3] Part payment in respect of PFI deal.
[4] Payment under clawback clause from original sale in 1999–2000.

Departmental Expenditure

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Department and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33217]

Jim Knight: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was formed in June 2001 and all costs provided are from this organisation from that date.

(a) The costs of design and production of new logos since 2001:

The cost of producing the DEFRA departmental logo was £24,000 (2002)

Four other logos have been produced:

State Veterinary Service—new agency logo cost £14,387 (2005)

Marine Fisheries Agency—new agency logo cost £4,000 (2005)

Rural Development Service—new logo cost £1,000 (2004)

Government Decontamination Service—new agency logo cost £1,000 (2005)

(b) Since 2001 DEFRA's Communications Directorate has commissioned the following external media relations services:

Agency	*Project*	*Date*	*Cost (£)*
Good Relations	Sustainable Food and Farming	2002	5,900
Biss Lancaster	Your countryside your welcome	2002	189,366.67
Red	Illegal Imports	2002	121,848.93
Country Porter Novelli	Sustainable Development	2002	16,243
Forster Company	Darwin Initiative	2003	11,170
Media Moguls	Illegal Food Imports Campaign Phase 1	July 2004 to March 2005	261,558.70
Media Moguls	Illegal Food Imports Campaign Phase 2	August 2005 to present	22,362.31
Amazon Public Relations	Launch of the Sustainable Development Strategy	January 2005 to May 2005	55,904.84
Amazon Public Relations	Sustainable Development case studies	August 2005 to date	18,750
Weber Shandwick	Climate Change	October 2005 to March 2006	60,000

All agencies provided specialist skills and services not currently available within DEFRA's Communications Directorate.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39967]

Jim Knight: Details of annual expenditure on vehicles are not held centrally for DEFRA and the bodies for which it is responsible, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40336]

Jim Knight: For the financial year 2004–05 my Department spent a total of £20,400 on bottled water at its HQ offices in London, Guildford and York. Costs for the remainder of the estate would be very difficult to separately identify and are therefore not included. Similarly, the figure does not include the provision of bottled water for hospitality that is paid for from decentralised budgets.

Energy Efficiency

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the percentage change was in energy efficiency in *(a)* domestic buildings, *(b)* commercial buildings and *(c)* Government buildings between 2000 and 2005 (i) in total and (ii) in each year. [39914]

Mr. Morley: The tables give our best estimates of energy efficiency changes at the present time.

However, only those for households represent proper energy efficiency improvements, based on summing the contributions made by individual technical measures such as insulation and high efficiency boilers and lights. The Government are extending this approach to the industrial and services sectors, but will require much more detailed data to produce reliable indicators.

Historically, they have used change in energy intensity (i.e. energy per unit output—usually gross value added (GVA)) as a proxy for change in efficiency, while recognising that intensity change also includes structural change in business as well as change in demand for the underlying services provided by energy such as thermal comfort and illumination. Accordingly, comparisons at the moment between indicators for housing and for larger buildings are not meaningful.

No data are available yet for 2005, nor GVA figures separately for the commercial and government subsectors for 2004.

Percentage improvement in energy efficiency

	Domestic
2000–04	7.6
2000–01	2.3
2001–02	1.8
2002–03	1.8
2003–04	1.9

Percentage improvement in energy intensity

	Commercial	*Government*
2000–03	11	20
2000–01	2	2
2001–02	9	12
2002–03	0	6

Entry Level Scheme Criteria

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will amend the Entry Level Scheme criteria to give greater reward for activities in upland areas, with particular reference to *(a)* maintenance of stone walls and *(b)* mixed stocking options. [41917]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* We will be considering all Entry Level Scheme options available for upland farmers, including stone wall maintenance, as part of our current evaluation of Environmental Stewardship. The initial results from this will be available in the spring. Decisions on the inclusion of mixed stocking options will depend on the outcome of the Hill Farming Allowance review.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee on the Community action programme in the field of civil protection, *(b)* Committee on the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso II) and *(c)* Committee for the implementation of the Community framework for cooperation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who was presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38785]

Mr. Morley: During the UK presidency the Committee of the Community action programme in the field of civil protection met on 20–21 October. The Committee was chaired by the European Commission and the UK was represented by a Cabinet Office official.

The Committee on the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso II) met on 13 October. The Committee was chaired by a representative from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which, together with the Environment Agency (EA) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, comprises the UK Competent Authority for the Seveso directive. Officials from the HSE and the EA attended and represented the UK.

There was also one meeting of the Committee for the implementation of the Community framework for co-operation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission. The UK representative was from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, which is the competent authority for dealing with marine pollution.

The devolved Administrations are routinely asked to represent their views.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the adaptation to scientific and technical progress of the directive on protection of water against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, *(b)* Management Committee on application of the directive on the standardisation and rationalisation of reports on the implementation of certain directives relating to the environment and *(c)* Committee for adaptation to technical and scientific progress of the directive on conservation of wild birds have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38823]

Mr. Morley: During the UK presidency there was one meeting of the committee for the adaptation to scientific and technical progress of the directive on protection of water against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, which was held on 12 December and was chaired by the European Commission. Officials from DEFRA, SEERAD and DOENI represented the UK.

On 3 November, the Management Committee on the application of the directive on the standardisation and rationalisation of reports on the implementation of certain directives relating to the environment, discussed, on this occasion, a questionnaire on the implementation of the integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) directive, and was chaired by the European Commission. There was no representative from the UK at this particular meeting.

No committees were held during this period for the adaptation to technical and scientific progress of the directive on conservation of wild birds.

The devolved Administrations are routinely asked to represent their views.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for poultrymeat and eggs, *(b)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for fresh fruit and vegetables and *(c)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for products processed from fruit and vegetables have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39002]

Jim Knight: The Eggs and Poultrymeat Management Committee met during the UK presidency on 13 July, 20 September, 19 October, 16 November and 7 December 2005. Meetings were chaired by European Commission officials. The UK was represented by one official from DEFRA. The devolved authorities were consulted on agenda items prior to each meeting, and receive reports and papers shortly after each meeting.

Meetings of the Management Committee for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables were held on 12 July, 13 September, 18 October, 22 November and 13 December. The Management Committee for Processed Fruit and Vegetables also met on all of these dates with the exception of 13 December. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Management Committee also met in the margins of the Wine Management Committee on 7 July and in the margins of the Cereals Management Committee on 25 August. All meetings were held in Brussels, chaired by officials of the European Commission and attended by DEFRA officials.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government).

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* management committees of the common organisation of agricultural markets for wines, *(b)* management committees of the common

organisation of agricultural markets for raw tobacco and *(c)* management committees of the common organisation for agricultural markets for hops have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39010]

Jim Knight: The Wine Management Committee met seven times during the UK presidency of the European Union with the UK being represented by DEFRA. All of these meetings were presided over by European Commission officials.

The Tobacco Management Committee met twice during the UK presidency, on 19 September and 22 November. Both meetings were held in Brussels, chaired by officials of the European Commission and attended by DEFRA officials.

There were no management committees held for hops under the UK presidency.

The UK Government take into account the views and interests of the devolved Administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved Administrations is set out in paragraphs B4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government, available on the internet at www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_ 600629.pdf).

Ministers from the devolved Administrations have attended and do attend Councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Standing Forestry Committee and *(b)* Committee on the conservations, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39020]

Jim Knight: The Standing Forestry Committee met three times during the UK presidency of the EU. All three meetings were presided over by officials from the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, and DG Environment) and were attended by officials from the Forestry Commission. Provision for representation of the devolved Governments is made through the EU Forestry Group, which is an informal group created by the Forestry Commission to consult with the devolved Administrations and other Government Departments to agree a UK line to take to the EU negotiations.

The Committee on the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture did not meet during the UK presidency of the EU. However the Committee's Management Committee (ManCom) did meet once to consider the details of a Community programme established under Council Regulation (EC) 870/2004 to encourage the achievement of these aims. The meeting was chaired by EC officials (DG Agriculture) and was attended by DEFRA officials. DEFRA officials take account of views expressed by experts of the devolved governments who sit on the advisory bodies of the National Steering Committee for Farm Animal Genetic Resources and the United Kingdom Plant Genetic Resources Group.

Projects for funding under the first call for proposals under EC 870/2004 are currently being considered. A call for a second round of proposals is expected to be issued shortly.

Hill Farm Allowances

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will extend the current hill farm allowance scheme for a further 12 months. [41919]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* In autumn 2004 DEFRA officials began reviewing how best to protect the upland landscape from 2007. Decisions on rural funding for the next programme period (2007–13) will be taken following consultation in early 2006.

Kyoto Protocol

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by how much carbon dioxide emissions have changed in each of the EU member states which were signatories to the Kyoto protocol since 1990. [41413]

Mr. Morley: The table shows carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions in million tonnes of CO_2 ($MtCO_2$) for the 25 EU member states which are all signatories to the Kyoto Protocol and the percentage change in CO_2 emissions between 1990 to 2003. The emissions figures are those reported by parties in 2005 to the United Nations framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which is the parent treaty for the Kyoto Protocol. Cyprus and Malta are non-Annex I Parties to the Convention, and as such are not required to submit emissions inventories annually.

These figures include emissions and removals from land-use, land-use change and forestry which provides the most complete coverage of carbon dioxide. The figures are not an indicator of progress with commitments under the Kyoto Protocol because the latter take account of emissions of methane, nitrous oxide and the fluorinated gases as well as carbon dioxide, and include only some activities in the land-use, land use change and forestry sector.

	CO_2 emissions ($MtCO_2$)		
Country	*1990*	*2003*	*Percentage change 1990 to 2003*
Austria	52.25	63.44	+21.4
Belgium	115.91	122.84	+6.0
Cyprus	n/a	n/a	n/a
Czech Republic	161.86	123.28	-23.8
Denmark	54.38	59.55	+9.5
Estonia	31.79	10.39	-67.3

Country	CO_2 emissions ($MtCO_2$) 1990	2003	Percentage change 1990 to 2003
Finland	33.50	55.38	+65.3
France	364.26	355.08	-2.5
Germany	986.09	829.68	-15.9
Greece	80.77	104.44	+29.3
Hungary	83.43	56.50	-32.3
Ireland	31.39	43.67	+38.5
Italy	369.75	405.38	+9.6
Latvia	0.20	-0.76	-480.0
Lithuania	33.44	5.30	-84.2
Luxembourg	12.46	10.40	-16.5
Malta	1.90	n/a	n/a
Netherlands	160.89	179.62	+11.6
Poland	441.88	293.18	-33.7
Portugal	49.18	94.51	+92.2
Slovak Republic	57.04	38.22	-33.0
Slovenia	13.04	10.54	-19.2
Spain	219.37	291.64	+32.9
Sweden	35.99	34.50	-4.1
United Kingdom	591.42	555.93	-6.0

n/a = not available.

Leisure Boating

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what actions the Government have taken to help promote leisure boating on Britain's canals. [42808]

Jim Knight: The Department provides financial support for the three major navigation authorities to enable them to maintain their waterways in a suitable condition for recreational use such as boating. The Government's policy document on the inland waterways, "Waterways for Tomorrow" makes it clear that the Government wants to encourage people to use the waterways for leisure and that it will encourage their use for this purpose.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Department and its predecessors spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35629]

Jim Knight: The Department's Press Office spent the following on media monitoring:

Media monitoring costs DEFRA Press Office

Financial year	Total (£)
2001–02	183,266
2002–03	283,085
2003–04	298,695
2004–05	340,471
April to November 2005–06 (YTD)	312,498

These figures include the Department's subscription to the Cabinet Office's Media Monitoring Unit and the cost of DEFRA's press cuttings service.

DEFRA was created following the General Election in June 2001, retrospective information before this date of the detail requested, incurred by the merged government bodies brought together to create DEFRA, could not be made available without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Official Overseas Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list all official overseas visits undertaken by officials in her Department, broken down by directorate, in each year since May 2001; what the cost in cash and real terms was; how many official engagements and meetings were undertaken on each visit; how many officials took part in each visit, broken down by grades; and if she will make a statement. [34750]

Jim Knight: The costs (cash) incurred in relation to overseas travel is as follows:

Financial year	Costs incurred (£)
2001–02	1,328,461
2002–03	1,642,238
2003–04	1,558,319
2004–05	1,551,340

Unfortunately we are unable to provide the additional information requested as this information is not maintained centrally nor is it collated within business areas of DEFRA and it would not be economically viable to attempt to collate it.

Pheasant Shooting

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints her Department has received in the last 12 months on the effects on *(a)* residential amenities and *(b)* the environment of the rearing and release of pheasants for shooting. [44215]

Jim Knight: We have not received any complaints on these issues.

Rural Development Funding

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact on UK environmental schemes of the recent reduction in pillar II rural development funding. [41864]

Jim Knight: Programmes within pillar II of the CAP are designed, in part, to encourage farmers to adopt environmentally beneficial land management practices, and progress is being made. The UK's position is that such targeted programmes need to be continued, and perhaps strengthened with reform. The overall budget for the Rural Development Regulation was agreed as part of the financial perspective (2007–13) negotiations and has been set at €69.75 billion for the whole EU. This is in line with existing expenditure, although the precise allocation of funding is still to be proposed by the Commission. We will continue to argue that this should be based on the need for rural development and not on historical expenditure.

In addition, as part of the 2003 reforms it was agreed to move some funds from pillar I to pillar II, a process called 'compulsory modulation'. This will increase pillar II funding from the original budget allocation by around €1 billion a year by 2008.

The UK has also chosen to undertake significant voluntary modulation from pillar I to ensure that sufficient funds are available for domestic rural development. It is possible to transfer up to 20 per cent. of pillar I funds in this way to agreements made after 2006. It is vital to the UK and in England will fund our new Environmental Stewardship Scheme. However, Ministers are still to decide what level may be needed and on the likely size of the new rural development programme to operate from 1 January 2007. In England, we are currently planning to launch a public consultation concerning the content of the new England Rural Development Programme for 2007–13 in February 2006.

Snares

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will meet *(a)* Professor Stephen Harris and *(b)* Les Stocker MBE to discuss the findings of her Department's working group on snares. [42001]

Jim Knight: I have asked my officials to contact Professor Harris and Les Stocker to discuss the working group's report.

Sustainable Development

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been conducted by her Department of the *(a)* energy, *(b)* economic and *(c)* environmental effects of the production of biofuels from (i) energy crops and (ii) waste straw. [41533]

Mr. Morley: The effects of biofuels have been assessed under studies commissioned by DEFRA and DTI from Sheffield Hallam University and the Central Science Laboratory. These found that:

(a) Biodiesel and bioethanol from energy crops can deliver greenhouse gas savings of at least 55 per cent. compared to fossil fuels. This can be increased to 80 per cent. if the energy used in production is from renewable sources. The technology to convert straw into bioethanol is at an early development stage but offers the potential for greenhouse gas savings of around 85 per cent. compared to conventional diesel.

(b) The production of biofuels from UK biomass has a net beneficial impact on the UK economy due to the incomes that are generated in the agricultural, manufacturing, engineering construction, retail distribution and transport haulage sectors. There is additional employment where energy crops are grown on set-aside land as more labour is invested in crop production than in maintenance of set-aside. For oilseed rape, about two farming jobs are created (or sustained where crops substitute for other cultivation) for each 1,000 tonnes of biodiesel produced. Bioethanol production from wheat and sugar beet would generate around 5.5 jobs/1,000 tonnes of bioethanol production. For both energy crops and straw feedstocks, additional jobs would be created in biofuel processing. A 100,000 tonne biodiesel plant would employ around 62 staff in processing and blending industries. A similar sized bioethanol plant would employ 50–55 staff, plus a further 16–28 in fuel blending and transport. Cambridge University is currently carrying out a review of the farm level economic impacts of energy crop production, including the use of oilseed rape, sugar beet, wheat and straw for biofuel production.

(c) The crop management of energy crops for biofuel use is broadly the same as that for food crops. Biofuels production from a mix of feedstocks and replacing crops for food would have a neutral effect on biodiversity.

Any replacement of spring sown break crops with winter oilseed rape would have negative effect on crop diversity and farmland birds. If arable crops replaced natural-regeneration set-aside, this would reduce habitat diversity. The use of straw as a biofuel feedstock would not affect the environment significantly.

WTO (Hong Kong)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will *(a)* place in the Library and *(b)* post on her Department's website documents prepared by her Department for the trade negotiations meeting in Hong Kong; which departmental officials accompanied her to the meeting; and what carbon offset measures were established to cover the Department's delegation. [41568]

Jim Knight: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's briefing for the WTO ministerial conference in December contains a number of items of personal information which it would not be appropriate to reveal. It also contains sensitive information which it would not be in UK interests to divulge more widely. The Secretary of State therefore does not plan to make it publicly available.

Six DEFRA officials were included in the UK Government's delegation to the WTO Ministerial conference in Hong Kong.

Defra is offsetting carbon emissions that arise from department official and Ministerial air travel in 2005–06 including emissions associated with DEFRA's WTO delegation. Carbon offsets will be purchased through the Government Carbon Offsetting Fund, which is being set up to meet the Government commitment to offset all departmental air travel emissions from April 2006

TRANSPORT

A21

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Highways Agency has spent on renovating properties purchased under compulsory purchase order along the A21 in East Sussex. [43107]

Dr. Ladyman: Draft Orders for the A21 schemes have not yet been published, so no properties are currently subject to compulsory purchase. Three properties in East Sussex were acquired by discretionary purchase under sections 246/248 of the Highways Act 1980, and

two were acquired under the statutory blight provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A total of £90,542.00 plus vat has been spent on refurbishing these properties.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to hold further public consultations on the proposed A21 Upgrade in East Sussex; and whether he has received a report on previous public consultations. [43110]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency will continue to meet and have discussions with those individuals or groups, as requested. The details of the meeting held in December 2005 will be reported back to me shortly and I will write to the hon. Member with further information.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received following the public consultation held in Hurst Green, East Sussex, in 2005 on the proposed A21 upgrade. [43059]

Dr. Ladyman: The details of the meeting held in December 2005 will be reported back to me shortly and I will write to the hon. Member with further information.

Aircraft (Contaminated Air)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if his Department will work with the United States' Federal Aviation Administration on its research into *(a)* possible contaminants present in aircraft cabin air and *(b)* the medical effects on passengers and cabin crew of exposure to contaminated air. [41982]

Ms Buck: We are in touch with the research team and will monitor their progress. We have requested an evidence review of documentation submitted by BALPA on this matter by the independent Committee on Toxicity; and this is in hand. The Committee's conclusions should help us to identify future research needs.

Aviation Policy/Safety

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment the Government have made of the effect of its aviation policy; and if he will make a statement. [42652]

Ms Buck: The Government are committed to the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the policies of the White Paper. We will report by the end of 2006 on progress.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment the Government have made of the effect of its aviation policy on the welfare of people who live *(a)* under and *(b)* close to flight paths; and if he will make a statement. [42653]

Ms Buck: The main impact on people living under or close to flight paths around airports relates to aircraft noise. There can also be impacts on local air quality around major airports as a result of air traffic and associated activities, such as road traffic travelling to and from the airport.

A noise level of 57 dBA Leq (equivalent continuous noise level) over a 16 hour period is regarded as the threshold for the approximate onset of significant community annoyance. This figure was derived from government sponsored research in the 1980s, in particular "The United Kingdom Aircraft Noise Index Study" published by the Civil Aviation Authority in 1985.

The Department publishes annual daytime noise contours covering 57 to 72 dBA Leq for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. These show the geographical area and estimated population numbers affected by this range of noise levels. Elsewhere it is the responsibility of individual airports to produce aircraft noise contours and a number of major airports do so.

The Government have also sponsored research into the impact of aircraft noise on sleep. The former Department of Transport published in 1992, the "Report of a Field Study of Aircraft Noise and Sleep Disturbance". This study was and remains to date the largest survey of its kind in the United Kingdom. It was found that noise events below 90 dBA SEL (equivalent to about 80 dBA Lmax) were unlikely to affect average sleep disturbance rates, while events noisier than this gave a mean probability of disturbance of about 1 in 75, with a range of individual sensitivities around this average.

Subsequent government sponsored research resulted in three reports concerning aircraft noise and sleep:

"Adverse Effects of Night-Time Aircraft Noise", CAA, March 2000;

"Aircraft Noise and Sleep 1999 UK Trial Methodology Study", Ian Flindell *et al*, November 2000;

"Perceptions of Aircraft Noise, Sleep and Health", Ian Diamond *et al*, December 2000.

Having considered these reports the Government decided—in 2001—to commission a major new study that would concentrate on subjective responses to annoyance to aircraft noise. This study is reassessing attitudes to aircraft noise—including re-assessment of the association between the Leq index and reported annoyance—as well as attempting to examine subjective valuation of the nuisance from aircraft noise. It is due to report later this year.

The "Future of Air Transport" also sets out the impact of the Government's policies on air quality standards around airports, with further information contained in one of the supporting documents, "Air Quality Assessments Supporting the Government's White Paper". Although on a national scale the contribution of air transport and associated activities to local air quality problems are small, locally their effect can be significant. This is especially so at Heathrow and the reason why the Department has set up technical panels to review air quality issues at the airport as part of the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow.

Copies of reports referred to are available in the House Library and many can be accessed electronically on the Department's website at www.dft.gov.uk.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the progress of standardisation of aviation safety standards across the EU; [42753]

(2) when he expects that the European Aviation Safety Agency Standardisation Regulation will be implemented. [42754]

Ms Buck: Regulation (EC) No. 1592/2002 provides for the Agency to assist the Commission in monitoring the application of the Regulation by conducting standardisation inspections of member states national aviation authorities. This provides for a more effective standardisation of aviation safety standards across Europe than was possible under the mechanisms put in place by the Joint Aviation Authorities which had no legal force.

However, the Agency cannot put in place its standardisation processes until the European Commission has adopted the necessary implementing measures. The draft text of the Standardisation Regulation was agreed in December 2005 by the committee of member states representatives which assists the Commission in drawing up the various implementing regulations it is required to develop. The draft has to complete formal Commission processes before its adoption which we expect within the next month.

We consider the effective monitoring and standardisation of standards in member states to be one of the most important aspects of the new EASA system. We hope that the Standardisation Regulation can be adopted soon, so that the Agency can devote the necessary resources yet to this work.

Bus Services (Lincolnshire)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much Government financial assistance has been provided to *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire for the provision of bus services in each of the five most recent years for which figures are available. [42587]

Ms Buck: Local transport authorities make their own decisions on the level of support for bus services in their area. The Government's Revenue Support Grant is a major element in the resources available to them for this purpose. The following tables show expenditure by the two local authorities concerned on bus support and concessionary fares on local bus services:

North East Lincolnshire

£000

	Bus support	*Concessionary fare reimbursement*
2000–01	128	452
2001–02	75	497
2002–03	76	710
2003–04	334	786
2004–05	350	647

North Lincolnshire

£000

	Bus support	*Concessionary fare reimbursement*
2000–01	705	403
2001–02	789	556
2002–03	725	579
2003–04	783	478
2004–05	616	588

Included in the figures for bus support is funding provided by this Department's bus grant schemes. The following table shows the total bus grant scheme funding allocated to both authorities since the introduction of the schemes in 1998:

£000

	North Lincolnshire	*North East Lincolnshire*
Rural Bus Subsidy Grant	2,669	459
Rural Bus Challenge	686	345
Urban Bus Challenge	—	376
Kickstart	—	523

In addition, all bus operators receive Bus Service Operators Grant, reimbursing the major part (currently 80 per cent.) of the fuel duty paid in operating local services.

Child Seats

Ms Barlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what conclusions have been drawn from his Department's consultation on child seats in cars; and when the European Directive 2003/20/EC3 on child seats will be implemented. [43125]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department expects to be able to announce the conclusions of the consultation soon. The directive requires implementation by 8 May 2006, and regulations are in preparation.

Cycling England

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding Cycling England plans to allocate to improving the cycling network in *(a)* the Tees Valley and *(b)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency area; and what measures will be funded in each case. [43295]

Derek Twigg: Cycling England has allocated £2.5 million to Darlington borough council in the Tees Valley as one of the six successful bidders in the Cycle Demonstration Towns project. £2 million is for capital investment to improve cycle facilities, including new and improved cycle routes. A further £35,000 and £40,000 has been allocated respectively to Darlington BC and Stockton-on-Tees BC as part of the 'Links to Schools' programme which Cycling England fund through Sustrans, the promoters of the National Cycle Network.

Cycling England have made no specific allocation of funding to Middlesbrough, South or East Cleveland, though they will be able to bid for a share of the £1 million Cycling England investment in cycle training. Authorities in those areas can also receive free expert advice on cycling from the advisory services funded by Cycling England.

Drink Driving

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious road accidents there were in each of the past five years for which figures are available; and how many in each year involved drivers with blood alcohol levels (i) above the legal limit, (ii) below the legal limit but above 50mg per 100ml and (iii) below 50mg per 100ml. [42980]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatal and serious personal injury road accidents between 2000 and 2004 (the last five years for which figures are available) are shown in table A.

Table A: Fatal and serious personal injury road accidents: 2000 to 2004

	Fatal accidents	*Serious accidents*
2000	3,108	32,499
2001	3,176	31,588
2002	3,124	30,521
2003	3,247	28,913
2004	2,978	26,748

Information on the blood alcohol level of drivers involved in personal injury road accidents is not collected.

The estimated number of fatal and serious personal injury road accidents involving illegal alcohol levels between 2000 and 2004 are shown in table B.

Table B: Fatal and serious personal injury road accidents involving illegal alcohol levels: 2000 to 2004

	Fatal accidents	*Serious accidents*
2000	450	1,950
2001	470	2,020
2002	480	2,050
2003	500	1,970
2004[1]	530	1,790

[1] Provisional estimate

European Aviation Safety Agency

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how the quality and consistency of advice provided by the European Aviation Safety Agency is monitored; [42738]

(2) how he plans to keep under review the effectiveness of the European Aviation Safety Agency's methods of regulation. [42746]

Ms Buck: The European Aviation Safety Agency provides a range of advice to various parties. It issues opinions to the Commission, which will be concerned with the quality and consistency of the advice it receives from the Agency.

The Agency also issues specifications and guidance material to be used in the certification process. There is no specific process for monitoring the quality and consistency of this advice. However there is an appeal process against the decisions of the Agency and it is possible that appellants could refer to any weaknesses in the advice. In addition an advisory body of interested parties has been set up which may monitor matters of this kind.

The Management Board has a key role. It is empowered to advise the executive director at any time on any matter related to the strategic development of aviation safety, such as the quality and consistency of advice provided by the Agency or the effectiveness of its methods of regulation. The board may consult the advisory body of interested parties before raising such concerns with the director.

Also, by September 2006 the board must commission an independent evaluation of the implementation of the regulation which established the Agency. The evaluation will include an examination of how effectively the Agency fulfils its mission, and will thus need to examine both the quality and consistency of its advice and the effectiveness of its methods of regulation.

The Civil Aviation Authority is keeping under review all aspects of the performance of the Agency and reporting its findings to the Secretary of State. This advice also informs the positions taken in the Management Board by the UK representative, who is the deputy chairman of the board.

The Secretary of State has written to Jacques Barrot, vice-president of the European Commission to stress the Government's concern about the Agency's performance in the areas covered by this and the hon. Member's related parliamentary questions on the subject. The Secretary of State has sought the commissioner's proposals for resolving these problems as soon as possible and an early meeting at the highest official level.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the European Aviation Safety Agency has published a corporate plan strategy for achieving its objectives. [42749]

Ms Buck: Regulation (EC) No. 1592/2002 assigns the Agency various functions for the purposes of the proper functioning and development of civil aviation safety. The Agency is required to publish annually a programme of work for the coming year setting out how it intends to achieve this objective, which contains some of the elements normally expected in a corporate plan.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures are in place to improve working relationships between the European Aviation Safety Agency and national aviation authorities in EU member states. [42751]

Ms Buck: The European Aviation Safety Agency's Management Board has placed considerable emphasis on the importance of developing better working relationships between the Agency and national aviation authorities. The board has agreed that the joint Agency/national aviation authority group it set up to monitor the Agencies manpower planning should also address other issues affecting the Agency/national aviation authority interface as they arise.

One of the recommendations of this group is that the Agency should hold discussions with each national authority on certain aspects of manpower planning and it is hoped that these discussions will provide an opportunity to build up working relationships more generally. Initial discussions have already been held with the UK Civil Aviation Authority.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what formal contractual arrangements are in place between the European Aviation Safety Agency and national aviation authorities in EU member states to plan and manage technical resources. [42752]

Ms Buck: The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) have established framework contracts under a common format with the majority of national aviation authorities, the object of which is, for a period of three years following signature, to:

"assist the European Aviation Safety Agency in the execution of its tasks in the fields of certification, as specified in article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002."

The framework goes on to make clear that:

"Signature of the contract imposes no obligation on the parties to purchase or provide services. Only implementation of the contract through order forms and specific contracts is binding on the parties."

The framework contract between EASA and the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) was signed on 1 June 2005. Subsequently EASA have issued order forms for the provision of technical assistance for limited periods of up to three months. The CAA currently has an order covering January and February 2006.

The framework contract does not provide for the planning or management of technical resources, other than to meet regularly in a review capacity. In practice EASA and the CAA meet monthly to exchange information pertaining to these issues.

Inter-ministerial Meetings (Scottish Executive)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many inter-ministerial meetings his Department has held with the Scottish Executive since May 1999, broken down by *(a)* Scottish Executive department, *(b)* subject and *(c)* date. [39636]

Ms Buck: Ministers have regular dialogues with Ministerial colleagues in the Scottish Executive, discussing a wide range of issues of mutual interest. It is not our practice to disclose details of such meetings.

Leeds Supertram

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received following his announcement regarding Leeds Supertram. [42952]

Derek Twigg: Following the Secretary of State for Transport's announcement on 3 November 2005 regarding Leeds Supertram, 50 letters have been received concerning the scheme, including three from hon. Members. Five parliamentary questions have been asked which refer to Leeds Supertram.

Low-speed Zones

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many home zones areas have been established in each of the last five years; and what the total cost was in each of those years. [40564]

Derek Twigg: Through the one-off Home Zones Challenge programme, a total of £30 million funding was allocated to individual schemes in England for the period 2001–05. This fund was not based on yearly allocations. Of the 61 schemes selected for funding, 59 have been implemented while, as a result of public votes, two were not taken beyond the public consultation stage.

Local authorities also implemented a number of other home zones using their own resources or single capital pot resources supported by Government. The Department does not have a comprehensive return listing the number of schemes or their total cost. However, local authority returns indicate that £12.6 million of the capital allocations, made available by the Department for authorities to implement small schemes according to their priorities and policies, has been spent on home zones. The breakdown is £1.9 million in 2001–02, £2.8 million in 2002–03, £2.5 million in 2003–04, £3.6 million in 2004–05 and an estimated £1.8 million in 2005–06.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines *(i)* his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales and (3) each of the English regions owned in (x) 2003–04 and *(y)* 2004–05. [40124]

Ms Buck: The information for the Department, its agencies, NDPBs and related bodies is as follows:

DfT HQ

The requested information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The following figures are estimates based on the available information.

	2003–04	*2004–05*
Personal computers	2,279	2,113
Laptops	427	778
Servers	102	105
Printers	n/a	506
Scanners	33	28
Photocopiers[1]	209	233
Fax machines	n/a	n/a

[1] The vast majority of photocopiers are leased.

British Transport Police Authority

The British Transport Police Authority was established as an NDPB on 1 July 2004. Therefore, the requested figures, as provided by the BTP, are only applicable for the year 2004–05.

	2004–05
Personal computers	1,809
Laptops	451
Servers	70
Printers	419
Scanners	30
Photocopiers	117
Fax machines	165

Civil Aviation Authority

	2003–04[1]	*2004–05*
Personal computers	880	850
Laptops	570	550
Servers	100	100
Printers	510	560

Civil Aviation Authority

	2003–04[1]	2004–05
Scanners	75	02
Photocopiers	48	48
Fax machines	60	60

[1] Figures for 2003–04 are estimates.

Driving Standards Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	807	1,457
Laptops	100	135
Servers	43	46
Printers	147	540
Scanners	4	11
Photocopiers[1]	14	14
Fax machines	415	417

[1] 13 of the 14 photocopiers are leased.

Driver Vehicle and Licensing Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	9,963	9,089
Laptops	324	381
Servers	341	482
Printers	2,630	3,226
Scanners	173	203
Photocopiers[1]	210	210
Fax machines	371	384

[1] All photocopying machines are leased not owned.

Government Car and Despatch Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	88	94
Laptops	9	13
Servers	6	5
Printers	38	41
Scanners	1	3
Photocopiers	8	9
Fax machines	9	9

Highways Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	2,469	2,829
Laptops	633	663
Servers	258	329
Printers	508	437
Scanners	33	40
Photocopiers[1]	17	29
Fax machines	115	123

[1] In addition there are also a number of leased photocopiers in HA (61 in 2003/4 and 94 in 2004–05).

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	794	814
Laptops	395	428
Servers	102	135
Printers	450	467
Scanners	80	89
Photocopiers	70	72
Fax machines	206	208

Northern Lighthouse Board

We are not able to identify numbers of items held in each Financial Year. However, the current numbers of items held are shown in the table. The number of items held in 2003–04 and 2004–05 would not have varied much from the current numbers.

	Number
Personal computers	113
Laptops	188
Servers	31
Printers	67
Scanners	7
Photocopiers	10
Fax machines	8

Strategic Rail Authority

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	683	683
Laptops	206	206
Servers	97	97
Printers	118	118
Scanners	8	8
Photocopiers	13	13
Fax machines	15	15

Trinity House Lighthouse Service

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	180	200
Laptops	110	130
Servers	40	42
Printers	120	100
Scanners	28	28
Photocopiers	26	26
Fax machines	29	29

Note:
Figures are estimates based on the available information.

Vehicle Certification Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers	107	112
Laptops	48	53
Servers	20	22
Printers	18	20
Scanners	8	8
Photocopiers	4	4
Fax machines	6	6

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

	2003–04	2004–05
Personal computers[1]	1,061	607
Laptops	1,083	1,066
Servers	49	49
Printers	930	1,025
Scanners	29	32
Photocopiers	176	176
Fax machines[2]	n/a	n/a

[1] During 2004 many of the personal computers were replaced with desktop terminals that link to a central server.

[2] Figures for fax machines are unavailable because they are sourced locally. Therefore, this information is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without disproportionate cost.

Note:
The number of information technology assets is constantly changing. There is therefore a 10 per cent. margin of error for any figures shown in this table. A more accurate inventory could not be obtained without disproportionate cost.

Operator Licensing System

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 226W, on the Transport Commissioners, when he plans to make a statement on the consultation paper on proposals for modernising and streamlining the operator licensing system. [43951]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my written statement on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 188WS.

Pensioners (Hendon)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pensioners in Hendon have *(a)* received discounted driving licences and *(b)* qualified for free bus travel in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41616]

Ms Buck: *(a)* The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency issued 1,020,328 free driving licences to those aged 70 and over during 2005. It is not known how many of these licences were issued to residents of Hendon.

(b) In the parliamentary constituency of Hendon, over 17,000 people aged 60 or over were eligible for concessionary travel on London's buses in 2005 In the whole of the London borough of Barnet, 58,300 older people were eligible. However, the take-up of concessionary travel in the constituency of the borough is not known. In London as a whole the take-up rate of concessionary travel permits in 2004 was 85 per cent.

Railways

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, on train operating companies, what the criteria are for the evaluation of costs and benefits of propositions from train operating company franchise bidders. [39376]

Derek Twigg: The Department carries out bid evaluation in accordance with HM Treasury-approved standard methodologies for cost benefit analysis.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of passengers who will be using railways in Great Britain by 2014. [41040]

Derek Twigg: The Department's published projections for rail use are expressed as passenger kilometres rather than numbers of passengers. Current projections are set out in the paper "The Future of Transport: Modelling and Analysis" published on 21 March 2005 which is available on the Department's website. The central projection shows rail passenger kilometres increasing by 33 per cent. between 2000 and 2010 and by 1.3 per cent. a year from 2010 to 2025.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail passenger kilometres were travelled in each of the last five years. [40855]

Derek Twigg: The information is as follows:

	Total passenger kilometres (billion)
April 2000-March 2001	38.2
April 2001-March 2002	39.1
April 2002-March 2003	39.7
April 2003-March 2004	40.9
April 2004-March 2005	42.4

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's target is for an increase in rail use. [40867]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not have a current target for an increase in rail use. It has a public service agreement (PSA) to achieve 85 per cent. reliability by March 2006 as reliability was deemed to be the major limiting factor in increasing rail use.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost was of closing the Strategic Rail Authority. [41710]

Derek Twigg: The Strategic Rail Authority has not yet been fully closed. The Authority's 2005 annual report estimated that final cost expected to be incurred is £13.9 million. This relates to staff costs including redundancy.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people previously employed by the Strategic Rail Authority in technical and advisory roles have been retained in similar roles elsewhere within the rail industry. [41712]

Derek Twigg: The Strategic Rail Authority employed seven technical specialists on 1 April 2005. Of these, six have been retained in the rail industry, three of which transferred to the Department for Transport.

Road Deaths (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road deaths there have been in the Lancashire county council area in each of the last five years. [43145]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatalities in personal injury road accidents in Lancashire county council (excluding the unitary authorities of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool) for the last five years for which data is available, are given in table.

Year of accident	*Number of fatalities*[1]
2000	53
2001	62
2002	53
2003	75
2004	54

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident. Excludes confirmed suicides, death from natural causes and injuries to pedestrians with no vehicle involvement (e.g. a fall on the pavement).

South East Trains

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that all staff are transferred from South East Trains to Govia without any loss of benefits in their terms and conditions of employment and pension rights. [42239]

Derek Twigg: All staff currently employed by South Eastern Trains will be transferred to the new Franchisee on the 1 April 2006. Their transfer to the new employer will be in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 (TUPE).

Stage Cottage (East Sussex)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what renovation work has been carried out by contractors working for the Highways Agency on Stage Cottage, Hurst Green, East Sussex; and how much they have been paid. [43108]

Dr. Ladyman: Stage Cottage has undergone substantial re-decoration and refurbishment at a cost of £22,000.00 plus vat.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Highways Agency has to rent out Stage Cottage, Hurst Green, East Sussex following its purchase under a compulsory purchase order in 2005. [43109]

Dr. Ladyman: A compulsory purchase order has not yet been published for this scheme. This was a discretionary purchase at the owner's request. The Highways Agency is making arrangements through its managing agent to rent out this property as soon as possible.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Highways Agency has spent on Stage Cottage, Hurst Green, East Sussex since it was purchased under a compulsory purchase order. [43111]

Dr. Ladyman: A compulsory purchase order has not yet been published for this scheme. This was a discretionary purchase at the owner's request. A total of £24,481 plus VAT has been spent on Stage Cottage, which includes the refurbishment and management, maintenance and security costs.

Traffic Accidents (Ribble Valley)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious road traffic accidents occurred in Ribble Valley constituency in each year since 1997. [43146]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatal and serious personal injury accidents that occurred in the parliamentary constituency of Ribble Valley for each year since 1997, is given in table.

	Accident severity	
Year of accident	*Fatal*	*Serious*
1997	11	84
1998	16	93
1999	8	73
2000	6	68
2001	10	76
2002	7	73
2003	7	62
2004	3	51

The accidents in the table are those which occurred within the 2004 boundary of Ribble Valley constituency.

Transport Strategy Documents

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the transport strategy documents published by his Department and its agencies since 1997. [43187]

Ms Buck: Since 1997, the Department for Transport, and its predecessors, have published the following documents relating to overarching transport strategy:

'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (July 1998)

Transport 2010—The 10 Year Plan (July 2000)

'Delivering Better Transport: Progress report' (December 2002)

'The Future of Transport: a network for 2030' (July 2004).

Unlicensed Taxis

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of unlicensed taxis operating in *(a)* England and *(b)* Leeds North West. [43376]

Ms Buck: We have made no estimate of the extent of unlicensed taxi operation either in England as a whole or in particular local areas. However, relevant data is held by the Court Proceedings Database of the Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

Taxis in England must be licensed by the relevant local authority under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. Individuals who attempt to provide a taxi service without being properly licensed normally do so by contravening section 45 of the 1847 Act by illegally plying for hire or section 167 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 by touting.

The Court Proceedings Database shows the numbers of offenders found guilty of offences under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (wider than just illegal plying for hire) and s167 of the 1994 Act are as follows; these data are provided on the principal offence basis.

In 2004, 215 people were found guilty of offences under sections 40–68 of the 1847 Act in England; 16 people were found guilty of these offences in the West Yorkshire Police Force Area.

In 2004, 311 people were found guilty of offences under s167 of the 1994 Act in England; none of these offences were in the West Yorkshire Police Force Area.

Vehicle Testing

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what basis he deems it necessary for private motor vehicles to be tested annually once they are over three-years-old; if he will assess the merits of extending the period between tests beyond 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [41979]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The primary purpose of the MOT test is to help safeguard against unroadworthy vehicles being used on the road. The average failure rate at annual test is, and has been for many years, around 30 per cent. for cars (equating to 6,752,700 cars), 35 per cent. for light goods (about 173,250 light goods vehicles between 3 and 3.5 tonnes) and 20 per cent. for motorcycles (about 149,000 motorcycles). The failure rate for cars undergoing their first MOT since their initial registration is around 16 per cent. (and equates to 375,000 vehicles). This reflects mainly items prone to wearing such as brake pads and tyres, which high mileage drivers who fail to check their vehicles regularly can easily overlook.

The current frequency of the test represents a reasonable balance between the cost to the motoring public and the risk to road safety of allowing defective vehicles to go undetected. However Ministers keep this under review.

TREASURY

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42869]

John Healey: 100 per cent.

Carers

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost of the inclusion of carers allowance recipients in the tax credit system. [41227]

Dawn Primarolo: Carer's allowance recipients are not excluded from the tax credits system. Carer's allowance recipients who meet the appropriate qualifying conditions are eligible for child tax credit and working tax credit. Information on the current cost of paying tax credits to carer's allowance recipients is not available because we do not separately collect information on tax credits paid to recipients of carer's allowance.

Charities

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times HM Revenue and Customs audited the accounts of charitable organisations in each of the last five years. [43669]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of audits and enquiries in relation to Gift Aid tax repayment claims and charity tax returns is shown in the table as follows. Information is only available from 2001–02.

	Number of audits/inquiries
2001–02	[1]828
2002–03	813
2003–04	884
2004–05	908

[1] This does not include inquiries made in relation to Scottish charities, for which no record is available for 2001–02.

Note:
Figures do not include inquiries raised in respect of any subsidiary trading companies.

Child Care Costs (Tax Exemption)

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many firms have claimed a tax exemption on the first £50 a week of child care costs since the introduction of the exemption. [43766]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not currently available; Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs are currently assessing and monitoring the impact of the tax and national insurance contributions exemptions for employer supported child care.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Child Trust Fund vouchers have been issued to families in Tamworth constituency to date. [43460]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 658W, to the hon. Member for Paisley and Renfrewshire, North (Jim Sheridan).

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff *(a)* from the Valuation Office Agency, *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(c)* his Department will attend the (i) Mass Appraisal Valuation Symposium in Vancouver on 6–7 February, (ii) Integrating GIS and CAMA Conference in Orlando, Florida on 19 to 22 February and (iii) International Property Tax Institute International Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in August; and what the total estimated cost to the public purse will be of attendance at each of the events. [42841]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is as follows:

	Number of staff attending			
	VOA	*HMRC*	*HMT*	*Estimated cost (£)*
Event				
Valuation Symposium Vancouver February 2006	1	0	0	1,000
GIS/CAMA Conference Florida February 2006	1	0	0	1,000
IPTI Conference Kuala Lumpur August 2006	1	0	0	1,000

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42821]

John Healey: None of the staff of the Treasury are known to live in Castle Point.

Economic Activity

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were economically inactive in each London borough in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [42948]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning economic inactivity. (42948)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of inactivity for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The attached table shows the numbers of inactive people of working age, resident in each London Borough, for the 12 month periods ending February 2001 to February 2004 from the annual local area LFS, and for the 12 months ending March 2005 from the APS. The table also shows the number of inactive people as a percentage of the total working age population resident in each Borough.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Number of persons of working age resident in each London borough who are economically inactive, and working age inactivity rates

	12 months ending February 2001		*12 months ending February 2002*		*12 months ending February 2003*	
London borough	*Inactive persons (Thousand)*	*Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)*	*Inactive persons (Thousand)*	*Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)*	*Inactive persons (Thousand)*	*Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)*
Barking and Dagenham	32	33	28	28	28	28
Barnet	43	22	42	21	42	21
Bexley	28	21	28	21	26	20
Brent	51	30	45	26	53	30
Bromley	30	17	34	19	41	23
Camden	37	28	39	28	38	27
City of London	1	[2]30	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Croydon	42	21	41	20	40	19
Ealing	59	30	54	27	53	26
Enfield	44	26	45	26	45	26
Greenwich	29	22	34	25	40	29
Hackney	45	35	46	34	45	33
Hammersmith and Fulham	28	25	26	22	29	24
Haringey	49	34	50	34	45	30
Harrow	23	18	31	24	32	24
Havering	24	18	26	19	23	17
Hillingdon	33	22	31	20	30	20
Hounslow	29	21	30	22	35	25
Islington	40	33	35	29	38	31
Kensington and Chelsea	27	26	33	30	35	31
Kingston-upon-Thames	20	21	18	19	18	18
Lambeth	40	22	45	24	44	24
Lewisham	37	23	43	26	38	23
Merton	26	22	24	19	20	16
Newham	62	41	61	39	63	40
Redbridge	40	27	35	23	36	24
Richmond-upon-Thames	14	13	19	17	17	15
Southwark	48	30	45	27	47	28
Sutton	14	12	15	13	19	17
Tower Hamlets	49	39	48	37	52	39
Waltham Forest	34	24	37	26	38	27
Wandsworth	31	17	29	16	36	20
Westminster, City of	35	29	38	30	41	31

	12 months ending February 2004		*12 months ending February 2005*	
London borough	*Inactive persons (Thousand)*	*Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)*	*Inactive persons Thousand)*	*Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)*
Barking and Dagenham	29	29	31	31
Barnet	53	25	54	25
Bexley	26	20	25	18
Brent	51	29	50	29
Bromley	37	20	30	17
Camden	34	24	43	31
City of London	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Croydon	43	20	40	18
Ealing	48	23	49	24
Enfield	42	24	52	29
Greenwich	38	28	38	28
Hackney	48	35	52	37
Hammersmith and Fulham	26	21	30	24
Haringey	57	38	46	31
Harrow	32	23	29	21
Havering	22	16	28	21
Hillingdon	36	23	32	20
Hounslow	33	23	34	24

London borough	12 months ending February 2004 Inactive persons (Thousand)	12 months ending February 2004 Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)	12 months ending February 2005 Inactive persons Thousand)	12 months ending February 2005 Inactivity Rate[1] (Percentage)
Islington	35	29	35	28
Kensington and Chelsea	31	27	40	33
Kingston-upon-Thames	19	19	22	22
Lambeth	48	27	45	26
Lewisham	39	24	36	22
Merton	20	16	27	21
Newham	65	42	61	39
Redbridge	38	25	37	24
Richmond-upon-Thames	26	23	29	24
Southwark	42	26	45	28
Sutton	23	20	20	17
Tower Hamlets	48	37	51	38
Waltham Forest	41	30	41	30
Wandsworth	35	19	40	22
Westminster, City of	42	31	41	30

[1] Rate as a percentage of the resident population of working age (men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59).
[2] Rounded rate reflects small number in sample resident in City of London.
[3] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were classed as economically inactive in Tamworth constituency in each of the last 10 years as *(a)* a percentage of the population of working age and *(b)* as a total; and if he will make a statement. [43472]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning economic inactivity. (43472)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of inactivity for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The attached table shows the number of economically inactive people of working age resident in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency, for the 12 month periods ending February 1997 to February 2004 from the annual local area LFS and for the 12 months ending March 2005 from the APS .The table also shows inactivity rates, as a percentage of the resident population of working age.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Number and rates of working age persons resident in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency who are economically inactive

12 months ending	Level (Thousand)	Rate[1] (Percentage)
February		
1997	12	20
1998	15	25
1999	9	16
2000	9	16
2001	10	16
2002	11	18
2003	11	17
2004	13	21
March		
2005	11	18

[1] Rate as a percentage of the resident population of working age (men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59).

Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Electoral Administration/Registers

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the registration rate is in each ward of each constituency in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northern Ireland and *(c)* Scotland, listed in descending order and grouped according to region. [41187]

John Healey *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the registration rate in each ward of each constituency in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northern Ireland and *(c)* Scotland listed in descending order and grouped according to region.(41187)

I attach tables giving a comparison between the number of registered electors and the estimated population for wards in each parliamentary constituency in England and Northern Ireland. Data for Scotland are not currently available. Because of the length of the tables they have been provided in electronic format and will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

It should be borne in mind that the percentage of the resident population who are registered to vote does not provide a reliable estimate of the registration rate of the eligible population. This is mainly because there are definitional differences between "usually resident" and eligibility to vote and therefore the estimated resident population aged 18 and over is not the same as the number of people eligible to vote. For example, the resident population includes all those who usually live in an area irrespective of nationality whereas the parliamentary electorate excludes foreign nationals (but Commonwealth and Irish citizens are included) and may include some overseas electors who do not currently live in the area. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate and this can occur for a number of reasons. People who have more than one address, including students, may register in more than one place. Electoral

registration officers may vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died.

Table 1 contains data for England. The closest available geography to current electoral wards, for which population estimates are available, is Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards. This geography was created for outputs from the 2001 Census and is based mainly on 2003 electoral wards. The electorate counts are on electoral ward boundaries and it has been necessary to convert these to the CAS ward geography.

The latest available population data available at ward level are for mid-2002, published in April 2005. The ward electorate counts are for December 2002 parliamentary electors, including attainers. The parliamentary electorate has been used rather than the local government electorate even though the latter is definition ally closer to the resident population because the local government electorate is not available at ward level. No adjustment has been made to reflect the difference between these two time points. There are a number of wards that are split by parliamentary constituency i.e. they fall within two or more parliamentary constituencies. These are shown by an asterisk * alongside their ward name, and appear under both constituencies. Electorate and population figures for the whole ward are shown. Some wards will therefore be double counted. It is not possible to split the data for these wards.

The population data are estimates and as such are subject to a margin of. confidence. This margin of confidence is proportionately larger for ward level estimates than for local authority level estimates. The GAS ward level population estimates have been published with the status of "experimental statistics". Therefore, the estimates, and figures derived from them, should be treated with some care.

There are a relatively small number of wards (19) where the electorate counts are more than 10 per cent. greater than the population estimate. These cases are attributable to definitional differences between the estimates and electoral counts, the margin of confidence in the ward estimates, the accuracy of the electoral registers and limitations in the methodology used to convert electoral counts to the GAS ward geography.

Table 2 contains data for total electorate for electoral wards in Northern Ireland. The latest available population data available at ward level are from the 2001 Census, taken on 29 April 2001. The ward electorate counts are for 15 October 2001 and include all those registered to vote in any election. These counts do not exclude foreign nationals but do include electors. No adjustment has been made to reflect the difference between these two time points.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many electors there are in each category in each Lancashire constituency according to the current electoral registers; and how many there were in 2005. [43155]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Equitable Life

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what additional funding his Department has provided to the Parliamentary Ombudsman in relation to her investigation into the prudential regulation of Equitable Life. [43270]

Mr. Des Browne: The Treasury has provided £1.2 million to fund the Parliamentary Ombudsman's investigation into the prudential regulation of Equitable Life and a proportion of £150,000 to cover related legal costs.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer further to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2797W, on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, whether the bank has approached shareholders since Statutory Instrument 1991 No 757 was made to ask permission to increase payment to employees and retirees for the specific purpose of paying income tax; whether UK nationals are obligated to use pension payments made to them by the bank to buy a taxable investment; what the value has been of pension payments made to employees and retirees by the bank since its inception; and what the most recent valuation is of the assets held in both schemes. [43061]

Dawn Primarolo: The European Bank of Reconstruction and Development provides for retirement by making lump sum payments to employees to be invested by them to provide retirement income. As stated in the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2797W, a payment made by the bank from the bank's funds to enable an employee to purchase retirement income is, as an emolument of his employment, exempted from UK income tax by paragraph 14 of Statutory Instrument 1991 no 757.

The emolument paid to staff is determined in accordance with the rules of the bank's retirement plans. At the creation of the bank, its consulting actuaries advised that, based on a range of actuarial assumptions, the lump sum benefits under the plans would enable a married participant with 30 years service to purchase a single life annuity, with contingent spouse pension and indexation, equivalent to 70 per cent. of final EBRD gross base salary. This 70 per cent. figure was purely indicative and was not a commitment to provide a retirement income of such amount. Any income would depend upon the rate of return of the investment. However, this gross salary was initially calculated as the employees' net salary grossed up by the bank's own internal income tax. In 1992 a report by the bank's consulting actuaries found that this approach led to a level of benefits lower than in comparable organisations. Following this report the board of directors—as representatives of the bank's shareholders—on 15 December 1992 decided that the appropriate measure of gross salary for pension purposes would be one that took account of average UK tax rates. Since UK tax rates were, and are, higher than the bank's internal tax, the level of lump sum necessary to generate the same potential level of income, using the original actuarial assumptions, was greater.

As a result, both bank and employee contributions to the retirement plans which provide the lump sum payments were increased. The tax position of these lump sum payments remains as set out earlier in this answer. As stated in the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2797W, retirement income arising from the investment of the payment is liable to income tax in the normal way.

The EBRD does not make pension payments, it provides a lump sum which is intended for individuals to make investments to provide income in retirement. The form of these investments is for individuals to determine.

The bank has two plans which support the payment of lump sums at retirement: the Final Salary Plan and the Money Purchase Plan. The payments made since the inception of the plans to end March 2005—the latest date for which audited figures are available—are £50,993,820 and £47,683, 290 respectively. As at 31 March 2005, the value of assets held by the bank in respect of the Money Purchase Plan is £77,628,896 and the value of the assets held by the bank in respect of the Final Salary Plan is £73,810,750.

Family Size

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in the United Kingdom there are with *(a)* one child, *(b)* two children and *(c)* five or more children, broken down by ethnic group. [42905]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many families in the United Kingdom there are with *(a)* one child, *(b)* two children and *(c)* five or more children, broken down by ethnic group in the UK. (42905)

Specially commissioned table C0613 has been run to identify the number of families in the United Kingdom with *(a)* one child, *(b)* two children and *(c)* five or more children, broken down by ethnic group. This table can also be obtained via a request to: Census.customerservices@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The table counts all families with children (dependent and non dependent) and the ethnic group is that of the family reference person.

For definitions of variables used to create the counts, see the footnotes appended to the table.

Table C0613: Count of families by number of children in families by ethnic group of family reference person

Population: families

United Kingdom	*White*	*Mixed*	*Indian*	*Pakistani*	*Bangladeshi*	*Other Asian*
One child	5,282,575	39,559	115,892	62,885	22,769	26,071
Two children	3,197,289	23,501	86,314	48,177	18,283	19,086
Five or more children	53,139	896	1,585	7,914	3,906	847

Population: families

United Kingdom	*Black Caribbean*	*Black African*	*Other Black*	*Chinese*	*Other Ethnic group*	*Total family reference persons*
One child	86,929	46,956	9,925	22,671	20,686	5,736,918
Two children	41,817	30,934	5,349	14,935	14,537	3,500,222
Five or more children	948	2,327	226	238	594	72,620

Notes:

1. Cells in this table have been randomly adjusted to avoid release of confidential data.
2. The table counts all families with children (dependent and non-dependent) and the ethnic group is that of the family reference person.

5.43 Family

A family comprises a group of people consisting of a married or cohabiting couple with or without child(ren), or a lone parent with child(ren). It also includes a married or cohabiting couple with their grandchild(ren) or a lone grandparent with his or her grandchild(ren) where there are no children in the intervening generation in the household. Cohabiting couples include same sex couples. Children in couple families need not belong to both members of the couple.

5.44 Family Reference Person (FRP)

In a Lone parent family, the family reference person (FRP) is taken to be the lone parent in a lone-parent family. In a couple family, the FRP is chosen from the two people in the couple on the basis of their economic activity (in the priority order; full-time job, part-time job, unemployed, retired, other). If both people have the same economic activity, the FRP is identified as the elder of the two or, if they are the same age, the first member of the couple on the form.

5.18 Child

There is no age limit on the term child. For example, a married couple living with their son aged 40 would be classified as a family consisting of a married couple and their child unless the son has a spouse, partner or child living in the household.

5.31 Dependent child

A dependent child is a person aged 0–15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16–18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s). This is a change from the 1991 definition which was a person aged 0–15 in a household or a person aged 16–18, never married, in full-time education and economically inactive. The revised 2001 definition has been agreed following consultation with users. An 'adult' in a household is any person who is not a dependent child.

Source:

2001 Census.

Film Industry

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what tax reliefs were available for the film industry in each year since 1997; what the cost was in each year; and what assessment he has made of the contribution made by the film industry to the economy in each year. [42646]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* With regard to tax relief available to the film industry, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1823.

The information is not available to assess the overall contribution to the economy of the UK film industry, however the UK Film Council publishes statistics including the value of British film productions. These can be found in the UK Film Council's "Statistical Yearbook 2004–05", at Chapter 12.

Golden Rule

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the impact on the golden rule is of *(a)* writing off local authority debt and *(b)* providing gap funding on stock transfers. [40835]

Mr. Des Browne: Performance against the golden rule is measured using fiscal aggregates that cover the entire public sector: central Government plus local authorities plus public corporations. Transfers between the different levels of Government have no effect on the overall public sector fiscal aggregates.

As such, the impact on the golden rule is:

(a) None. Writing off debt owed by local authorities to central Government has no effect on the financial position of the public sector as a whole, or on any of the fiscal aggregates.

(b) None. Most transactions within the public sector associated with the transfer of housing stock from local authorities to housing associations and the writing off of associated local authority debt where necessary have no effect on the fiscal aggregates for the public sector as a whole. It is only with 'negative value' stock transfers, where the receiving association requires a dowry payment in order to take on the stock and associated liabilities, that there is a requirement for public expenditure. However, as this is a capital grant there is no consequent impact on the golden rule, which only includes current expenditure.

Local Tax Offices

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many local tax offices there are; how many have closed in each of the last five years for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [38349]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC currently operates from 661 sites, of which 242 were former HM Customs and Excise offices and 419 former Inland Revenue offices.

The number of offices closed since 2001 is shown in the table. Many of these closures arose as Inland Revenue or HM Customs and Excise moved work to other existing buildings within the same location. Information prior to 1 April 2001 is not readily available.

Period	*HM Customs and Excise*	*Inland Revenue*
1 April 2001 to 31 December 2001	2	15
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	12	26
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	11	19
1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004	17	16
1 January 2005 to 16 December 2005	10	23

Pool Re

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much Pool Re has *(a)* paid out as a result of the recent London tube and bus bombings, *(b)* paid out overall during its lifetime and *(c)* in reserves; and what income has been derived by HM Treasury from Pool Re since it was established. [43952]

Mr. Des Browne: Pool Re provides reinsurance cover for commercial property damage and consequent business interruption resulting from an act of terrorism on mainland Great Britain (excluding war and cyber terrorism risks).

(a) Pool Re, and several of its members, are currently dealing with claims arising from the tube and bus bombings of 7 July 2005. However none of the claims has yet progressed to the point where Pool Re has been called upon to make actual payments. This is consistent with Pool Re's claims payment patterns for previous terrorist events.

(b) Pool Re has paid out £609 million in respect of all incidents it has dealt with to date.

(c) Pool Re had reserves of £1.664 billion, as shown in its audited accounts at 31 December 2004. This figure has increased since that date.

Since Pool Re was established £243 million has been paid to HM Treasury in respect of amounts due under the Retrocession Agreement.

Stamp Duty

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average stamp duty paid by first-time buyers was in *(a)* England and *(b)* the United Kingdom in each year since 1996. [42823]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available as there is no requirement for taxpayers to provide information to HMRC as to whether they are a first-time buyer.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit overpayments were *(a)* disputed and *(b)* successfully disputed in each month from January to December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41466]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of overpayments disputed, and successfully disputed, between 1 January 2005 and 30 November 2005:

Year 2005	*Number of overpayments disputed*	*Successfully disputed*[1]
January	18,500	3,000
February	23,500	2,500
March	42,000	2,500
April	34,500	1,000
May	21,500	26,500
June	28,000	47,500
July	35,000	20,000
August	30,000	24,500
September	30,000	18,000
October	33,000	11,500
November	32,000	4,000

[1] Figures are the number of overpayments remitted in the corresponding month and is not a count of the number of claimants that successfully disputed an overpayment. The figures do not directly relate to the disputes that were received in the same month.

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to the nearest 500.
2. Figures for December 2005 are not yet available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many possible cases of tax credit fraud were passed to HM Revenue and Customs Special Compliance Office in each month from April 2004 to April 2005; and if he will make a statement; [24506]

(2) how many cases of possible fraudulent tax credit claims of over £1,500 have been *(a)* referred to HM Revenue and Customs Special Compliance Office and *(b)* passed to local compliance teams to investigate; and if he will make a statement; [24547]

(3) how many referrals were made to HM Revenue and Customs' Special Compliance Office in each of the last eight years; and what proportion of these referrals were about tax credits for each relevant year. [25248]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the total number of referrals received by Inland Revenue's Special Compliance Office and Criminal Investigations, which took over responsibility for prosecuting tax credit claims following the creation of HMRC in April 2005.

	Number of referrals
1998–99	2,480
1999–2000	2,194
2000–01	1,830
20001–02	1,701
2002–03	2,157
2003–04	3,939
2004–05	5,197
2005-October 2005	3,165

Figures for the number of cases involving claims over £1,500 and for the number of referrals made specifically in relation to tax credits before 2005–06 could be provided only at disproportionate cost. In the period 1 April to 30 September 2005, Criminal Investigations received 1,286 referrals relating to tax credits.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department had the tax credit disregard been set at *(a)* £3,000, *(b)* £3,500 and *(c)* £5,000 in 2003–04. [29984]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of different levels of income disregard depends on a number of factors, including the behaviour of tax credits claimants. Varying the disregard is likely to affect the reporting of changes in incomes by claimants, which would affect the Exchequer cost of tax credits. It is therefore not possible to produce a robust estimate of changes in the disregard in 2003–04.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in every case where a tax credit overpayment has been disputed and then written off since June 2005, the overpayment already recovered was to be returned to the claimant; in how many cases where overpayments were written off the amount already recovered has not been reimbursed; and what estimate he has made of the average amount not reimbursed. [40457]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Tunbridge Wells (Mr. Clark) on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 332W.

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on advertising *(a)* on television and *(b)* in printed media for HM Revenue and Customs tax credit campaigns in the last 12 months. [42399]

Dawn Primarolo: Advertising expenditure on tax credits for the 2004–05 tax year was as follows:

£2.3 million on TV advertising

£1.5 million on press advertising

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what request changes have been made by HM Revenue and Customs to companies responsible for the IT systems which administer the tax credit system in each year for which information is available. [43750]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the form requested.

Tax Receipts

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether data relating to tax receipts is available broken down by category of economic activity. [43067]

Dawn Primarolo: Data on tax receipts are published annually in the National Accounts Blue Book by the Office for National Statistics (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Produrt.asp?vlnk=1143&More=N). Table 11.1 shows taxes paid by UK residents to general Government and the European Union and "The Supply and Use Tables" (Table 2.1) show taxes less subsidies on production by industry group. Monthly figures for central Government taxes on production, taxes on income and wealth, and other taxes are shown in the Public Sector Finances release (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=805&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=422).

Teenage Pregnancies

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many teenage pregnancies there were in the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley primary care trust area in each year since 1997. [43264]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many teenage pregnancies there were in the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust (PCT) in each year since 1997. (43264)

Teenage conception figures by PCT are not available where there is risk of disclosure of information about individuals due to differences in boundaries between PCT and local authorities.

Information on conceptions is routinely published by local authorities and strategic health authorities. The most recent year for which estimates are available is 2003 Figures for the Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks local authorities are given in the table.

Number of teenage conceptions: Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks local authorities, 1997 to 2003

Area of usual residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Dartford	54	56	60	72	69	76	75
Gravesham	74	76	67	92	66	63	74
Sevenoaks	57	65	53	50	41	48	50

Wage Inflation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average increase in wage inflation was in each year since 1996–97. [42843]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average increase in wage inflation was in each year since 1996–97. (42843)

Growth in earnings is estimated from the Annual Earnings Index (AEI) which is the National Statistic for short term economic earnings indicators. The AEI figures for Great Britain are collected and published monthly. The AEI does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach a table showing the growth in average earnings in Great Britain from 1996 to 2004. The annual growth figure for 2005 will not be available until 15 February 2006 when the December 2005 figures are published.

The monthly changes to the index and growth are published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/tsdtablesl.asp?vlnk=emp. Calendar year comparisons are available on request.

The AEI is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. Each month it surveys 8600 companies, covering 12 million employees.

Annual Earnings Index

Including bonuses, excluding arrears

2000 = 100	*Index*	*Annual growth percentage*
1996	83.3	3.6
1997	86.8	4.3
1998	91.3	5.1
1999	95.7	4.8
2000	100.0	4.5
2001	104.5	4.5
2002	108.2	3.6
2003	111.9	3.5
2004	116.7	4.3

Note:

All figures based upon the calendar year.

Source:

Annual Earnings Index, Office for National Statistics.

Unemployment

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the registered unemployed in Castle Point were aged *(a)* 25 years and under, *(b)* 26 to 35 years, *(c)* 36 to 45 years, *(d)* 46 to 55 years and *(e)* over 55 years in the last year for which figures are available. [42890]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Castle Point. (42890)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles unemployment statistics for small areas from the Annual Population Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. Because of the small number of people in the sample, it is not possible to provide figures for all of the age groups specified in the question. However, Table 1 attached, shows the percentage of unemployed, by age groups for which information is available, who were resident in the Castle Point Parliamentary Constituency for the 12 month period ending in March 2005. These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 2, attached, and shows the average percentage of JSA claimants, by age bands, resident in the Castle Point constituency for the 12 months ending November 2005.

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	49
Over 25	51
Base—total unemployed	1,300

Source:

Annual Population Survey

Table 2: Percentage of claimants of jobseekers allowance by age bands resident in the Castle Point constituency: 12 month average for December 2004 to November 2005

Age band	*Percentage*
25 and under	35
26 to 35	20
36 to 45	18
46 to 55	18
Over 55	10
Base—total JSA claimants	705

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of *(a)* unemployment, *(b)* long-term unemployment and *(c)* youth unemployment was in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each year since 1997; and how many individuals this represented in each case. [43385]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment, (43385)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows unemployment rates for people resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale Parliamentary Constituency. The table covers the 12 month periods ending in February each year from 1998 to 2004. These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to sampling variability. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution. Sample sizes in this Constituency are too small to produce a time series of estimates for either long-term or youth unemployment.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA). Table 2 shows the annual average number and proportion of resident working age population of all JSA claimants, those claiming for over 12 months and those aged 18 to 24, resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency since 1997.

Table 1: Unemployed persons resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency

	All	
12 months ending February:	*Level (Thousand)*	*Rate (Percentage)*
1998	[1]	[1]
1999	1	3
2000	1	3
2001	2	5
2002	2	5
2003	[1]	[1]
2004	2	4

[1] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: JSA claimants resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency

	All		Long-term (claiming over 12 months)		Youth (aged 18 to 24)[1]	
Annual averages	*Level*	*Proportion[2] (Percentage)*	*Level*	*Proportion[2] (Percentage)*	*Level*	*Proportion[2] (Percentage)*
1997	957	1.9	165	n/a	245	n/a
1998	753	1.5	90	n/a	190	n/a
1999	679	1.3	75	n/a	155	n/a
2000	569	1.1	55	n/a	130	n/a
2001	463	0.9	20	n/a	115	n/a
2002	372	0.7	15	n/a	90	n/a
2003	382	0.8	20	n/a	85	n/a
2004	328	0.6	15	n/a	70	n/a
2005	296	0.6	15	n/a	75	n/a

n/a = Not available.
[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5 for disclosure control.
[2] Proportion of the resident working age population. Denominators based on 2001 census data adjusted to be consistent with 2001 mid-year population estimates for local authorities.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many requests have been made to the Valuation Office Agency under the Freedom of Information Act since the Act's commencement. [42825]

Dawn Primarolo: As at 30 September 2005, the date at which the last full set of statistics was collated by the Department for Constitutional Affairs, the Valuation Office Agency had received 175 requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* software manual, *(b)* external guidance and *(c)* internal guidance for the digital mapping software purchased by the Valuation Office Agency from the company Tenet. [42838]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer she received from the Minister of State (Local Government) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 250W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Valuation Office Agency spent on *(a)* foreign travel, *(b)* subsistence and *(c)* hospitality in each year since 1997–98. [42842]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency spent the following amounts on foreign travel, subsistence and hospitality in the years 2000–01 to 2004–05.

£000

	Foreign Travel	*Subsistence*	*Hospitality*
2000–01	n/a	1,050	5
2001–02	n/a	1,041	4
2002–03	3	1,040	7
2003–04	20	1,164	6
2004–05	4	1,255	6

Records prior to 2000–01 are not readily available.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Private Members' Clubs

21. **Ms Keeble:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality if she will introduce measures to end discrimination against women in private members' clubs. [43248]

Meg Munn: Discrimination in mixed-sex private members' clubs will be considered under the Government's current review of discrimination legislation. This review will lead to a Single Equality Bill, which the Government have made a manifesto commitment to introduce in the lifetime of this Parliament.

Licensing Act (Domestic Violence)

22. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality whether she has discussed with her Home Office and Department for Culture, Media and Sport colleagues the impact on domestic violence of the Licensing Act 2003. [43249]

Meg Munn: My right hon. Friend the Minister for Women has discussed this issue with Home Office colleagues in the context of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy. She does not anticipate an increase in domestic violence as a direct result of the Act, though it is too early for an impact assessment. Indeed its extra powers and review mechanisms may reduce excessive drinking outside the home.

Gender Pay Gap

24. **Mr. Khan:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to address the gender pay gap. [43251]

Meg Munn: Government have taken various measures to tackle the gender pay gap, including the creation of the Women and Work Commission, and I look forward to their final report within the next few weeks containing their findings and recommendations to close the gender pay gap.

We have also introduced and raised the national minimum wage, which has helped increase the pay of women. In October we increased the national minimum wage to £5.05. Around 70 per cent. of the beneficiaries of the uprating of the national minimum wage in October 2004 were women.

Other measures we have introduced to reduce the gender pay gap include the DTI Strategic Partnership initiative supporting a team of Equal Pay Panel of Experts, led by the TUC. The experts will offer free advice/guidance sessions to organisations looking to investigate or undertake an equal pay review. This initiative builds on the TUC Equal Pay project, which has trained over 400 union equal pay reps.

Breastfeeding

25. **Jo Swinson:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality if she will make a statement on Government policy on breastfeeding in public places. [43252]

Meg Munn: Breastfeeding is the best form of nutrition for infants and we are aware of the important contribution it can make to the health of mothers and infants. The Government are collecting data through the National Infant Feeding Survey 2005 on women's experiences of breastfeeding in public.

Equality

Ms Butler: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to ensure that *(a)* queries and *(b)* representations on all four strands of equality are dealt with consistently; and, where different procedures apply, what the reasons are for such differences. [42984]

Meg Munn: The Government are committed to the advancement of equality for all and to encouraging a society where people have an equal chance to achieve their potential. The CEHR will bring a more coherent approach to the provision of advice and information across all areas of discrimination, so that for the first time they are delivered from one place.

The Government attach great importance to the communities the CEHR serves being effectively represented in its governance and operations. The provisions in the Equality Bill make clear that the CEHR Board must include members who have knowledge and experience in the fields of discrimination the CEHR will address, as well as human rights, and provides mechanisms such as committees to facilitate further representation and involvement. Where necessary, these reflect the specific circumstances of the groups concerned, for example the CEHR's Disability Committee provides continuity with the requirements in the Disability Rights Commission Act that ensure that disabled people steer the DRC's work.

Women MPs

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to increase the number of women in Parliament. [43250]

Meg Munn: In 2002 we introduced the Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act allowing positive measures towards women's increased participation. 20 per cent. of MPs are now women compared with 9 per cent. before 1997.

We are committed to working towards gender equality throughout society, including in political life, and continue to monitor progress in this area.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Workplace Rights

9. **Mr. MacDougall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what changes to workplace rights since 1997 will be in place by 2007. [43233]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In addition to creating record levels of employment, we have also introduced a safety net of protections for the most vulnerable employees. The most significant include, paid holidays, measures to support working parents, age discrimination regulations and the national minimum wage.

In addition my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has today announced the appointment of Paul Myners as Chair at the Low Pay Commission, who is replacing Lord Turner of Ecchinswell.

Regulation has its place, but of key importance is to encourage cultural change to make working smarter, not harder. We will continue to build on our achievements so that people at work can develop their skills and have the opportunity to maximise their potential, and will ensure that flexibility works for both employees and businesses.

Gas Supply/Storage

10. **Mr. Bailey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are in place to increase capacity for gas supply and storage in the UK. [43234]

Malcolm Wicks: The market based framework in place has already brought forward investment in major new gas storage and import infrastructure. In addition, last Thursday the Secretary of State announced the introduction of a new legal regime which covers new offshore gas storage and offshore gas unloading. This will enable the development of new offshore gas storage facilities.

Company Law Reform Bill

11. **Sarah McCarthy-Fry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made on drafting the Company Law Reform Bill; and if he will make a statement. [43235]

Alun Michael: The Company Law Reform Bill was introduced in the House of Lords on 1 November 2005. It received its Second Reading in that House on 11 January 2006.

Footwear Manufacturing (Northamptonshire)

12. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make an economic assessment of the Northamptonshire footwear manufacturing industry. [43237]

Alun Michael: We have no plans to make a separate economic assessment of the Northamptonshire footwear sector. The hon. Member raised this issue in the House on 21 July 2005 when he was invited to write to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry setting out the case for such an assessment.

Employment Tribunal Awards

13. **Mr. McGovern:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to ensure that employment tribunal awards are paid. [43238]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The enforcement of awards is through the county courts and is the responsibility of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. DTI fully supports and has contributed to the provisions of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Bill that will streamline the process. Within the existing legal framework, the Employment Tribunal Service and the Courts Service are seeking ways to enhance enforcement.

Energy Supply

14. **Mr. Hands:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the current and future diversity of the UK's energy supply. [43240]

Malcolm Wicks: With declining reserves of oil and gas in the North sea, and as we become a net importer, Britain faces a new energy challenge. Diversity of energy supply is one of a number of complex issues that must be considered in the Energy Review. Our consultation document will be published on Monday.

UK Manufacturing

15. **David T.C. Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to promote manufacturing industry in the UK. [43241]

Alun Michael: Government are promoting the development of a successful dynamic manufacturing sector working in partnership with industry. Through the Manufacturing Strategy we are helping more and more companies move to high added value production through the application of science and innovation, world class practice and skills development.

Premium Rate Services

16. **Jo Swinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date the extension of Ofcom's premium rate services regulations will be implemented by the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services; and if he will make a statement. [43243]

Alun Michael: Many of the most important recommendations from the Ofcom report into premium rate service regulation have already been implemented. For example, from 15 September network operators have been obliged to withhold payments to services providers for 30 days after a call has been made thus enabling repayment or the payment of penalties to be guarantees. This is a powerful discouragement to fraudulent or exploitative activities. Other measures have also been implemented by DTI. For instance we have increased the maximum penalty for breaching the ICSTIS code of practice from £100,000 to £250,000. I expect the remaining recommendations to be implemented in the spring. It is important to get these regulatory changes right for the future and we have to meet requirements for extensive consultation of the industry and the public.

British Nuclear Fuels (Westinghouse)

17. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the status of the proposed sale of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd.'s Westinghouse interest. [43244]

Malcolm Wicks: BNFL is in discussion with parties interested in acquiring the Westinghouse business. Discussions between the parties are subject to confidentiality agreements. The company will make an announcement in the event that these discussions lead to a sale of the business.

Artists' Resale Right

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many British artists he expects will benefit from the artists' resale right. [38081]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* Based on figures from the Art Sales Index for the period March 2003 to February 2004, the most recent we have available, 1,259 works by living British artists were sold at auction which would have attracted a royalty payment. The auction houses represent approximately half of the UK art market and a similar number of sales is expected to have taken place through dealers.

Biomass (Funding)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much funding has been made available to develop markets for biomass in *(a)* heat, *(b)* combined heat and power and *(c)* power generation in each of the last 10 years. [37603]

Malcolm Wicks: Market development for biomass is supported in a variety of ways, not all of which involve direct funding e.g. bioenergy projects have been developed on the basis of the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation and the Renewables Obligation.

The most relevant direct funding has been through projects under the DTI New and Renewable Energy [Research and Development] and the DTI/Big Lottery Fund Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme. The following table gives the combined spend directly addressing the requested categories to December 2005.

New and Renewable Energy / Capital Grants Scheme

£

	CHP	*Heat*	*Power*	*Total*
All years	4,330,485	1,699,505	5,666,471	11,696,462
1995–96	230,852	70,273	179,264	480,389
1996–97	223,211	127,885	365,556	716,652
1997–98	176,162	254,989	232,509	663,659
1998–99	196,264	193,568	115,330	505,163
1999–2000	139,831	147,174	414,073	701,078
2000–01	235,995	164,947	228,088	629,030
2001–02	124,377	107,556	460,795	692,728
2002–03	303,979	23,598	353,318	680,895
2003–04	582,576	99,618	332,694	1,014,888
2004–05	1,862,276	293,204	151,640	2,307,120
2005–06	254,964	216,691	3,058,205	3,529,861

There has also been spend on biomass heat under the DTFs Clear Skies Initiative, which has been running since 2003. The total spend since the programme began is £1,499,390 [breakdown into individual years could have been achieved only at disproportionate cost.]

Additionally there has been funding of £60,000 during year 2004–05 from Defra's Community Energy Programme on biomass/CHP schemes. This programme started in year 2001–02, but there was no spend on biomass CHP before 2004–05.

The above figures do not include any support from the Devolved Administrations or the Regional Development Agencies—which could have been reported only at disproportionate cost.

Cape Town Treaty

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effects of the Cape Town treaty on the purchase of more efficient and less environmentally damaging new aircraft in developing nations. [42029]

Alun Michael: The convention and protocol may help to facilitate the financing of new aircraft in developing nations which ratify these instruments but no such specific assessment has been made. It is for each lending institution to make its own assessment of the likely impact of the convention and protocol in arriving at any decision to finance new aircraft.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether any UK companies have registered with the registry that will be overseeing the operation of the Cape Town treaty. [42030]

Alun Michael: No registrations can be made in the registry established under the convention and protocol until it comes into operation on 1 March 2006.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the economic effects of the Cape Town treaty. [42031]

Alun Michael: We will produce a regulatory impact assessment prior to taking forward ratification of the convention and protocol. In 1998 an economic impact assessment was commissioned by the Aviation Working Group (set up as an ad hoc industry group to contribute to the development of the convention) and IATA on the potential economic benefits of the proposed convention and protocol. The study was prepared under the auspices of the INSEAD Business School and the New York University Salomon Center.

Coal-fired Power

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Department plans to take to promote the sale of carbon capture equipment for coal-fired power stations to other countries in 2006. [42033]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department presently has no plans at present to promote the sale of Carbon Capture equipment for coal-fired power stations to other countries. Currently Carbon Capture and Storage technologies are not yet commercially viable and therefore not in a position to be sold for export abroad. However, we are working with China and the United States of America on R&D into Carbon Capture and Storage technologies. In addition with DEFRA we are supporting a £3.5 million feasibility study to assess the possibility of Carbon Capture and Storage in China as part of a EU project.

CREST Scheme

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many pupils have taken part in the British Association's CREST scheme for gifted and talented young people, broken down by local education authority; what other national schemes for gifted and talented young people are supported by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [42066]

Barry Gardiner: The CREST scheme is delivered through SETNET's sub regional network of SETPOINTS. The number of awards presented since the inception of the scheme in 2001 has been broken down by region and is presented in the following table.

Region	*Number of awards*
North-West	17,016
North-East	2,932
Yorkshire and Humber	921
Greater Merseyside	25,954
West midlands	18,726

Region	Number of awards
East Midlands	5,408
Eastern	7,833
London	3,246
South East	5,144
South West	8,289
Wales	8,722
Scotland	2,869
Northern Ireland	10,433
Total	117,493

Information on uptake of the BA CREST awards by local education authority is not collected. The CREST scheme is not specifically targeted at gifted and talented young people, although many gifted and talented young people participate. There are a number of other schemes that fit into this category delivered through organisations supported by core funding from the Department.

The Royal Academy of Engineering runs the Best programme, which includes four schemes which provide personalized learning opportunities for gifted and talented students: the Engineering Education Scheme, Headstart, Year in Industry and the Engineering Leadership Award. In addition to these schemes the Academy also collaborates with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth.

The Research Councils support BA CREST and Nuffield Science Bursaries. Nuffield Science Bursaries give post-16 students science based projects lasting 4 to 6 weeks during the summer holidays. These projects are carried out in universities, industry and research institutions and students work alongside researchers.

SETNET delivers 32 key national schemes, including those already discussed, comprehensive details are available on their website at http://www.setnet.org.uk/cgi-bin/go.pl/resources/index.html

Departmental Estate

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42891]

Alan Johnson: The DTI administrative estate does not include any land or property in the Castle Point constituency.

Energy Imports

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the UK's energy requirements for 2004–05 came from *(a)* Germany and *(b)* Poland; and what the cost of energy imported from each country was. [40747]

Malcolm Wicks: Imports of energy products from Germany and Poland during the calendar year 2004 are shown in the following table. It is possible that some of the energy products were produced outside Germany and Poland, with German or Polish companies acting as intermediaries.

	Thousand tonnes		£ million	
	Quantity imported from Germany	Quantity imported from Poland	Value of energy imported from Germany	Value of energy imported from Poland
Steam coal	8	1,142	0.2	41.0
Anthracite	5	3	0.3	0.2
Other solid fuel	39	8	5.1	1.3
Petroleum products	1,288	80	270.8	15.4

Overall, energy imports from Germany and Poland each accounted for less than one per cent. of UK primary energy demand.

EU Budget

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of the recent EU budget settlement for the period 2007 to 2013 for future EU funding in Durham and Tees Valley. [43092]

Alun Michael: I set out the impact of the EU budget settlement for the UK's future Structural Funds allocations in my written statement to Parliament on 20 December 2005. Durham and Tees Valley will be eligible to receive funding under the competitiveness objective during the 2007 to 2013 financial perspective. However, the methodology for allocating competitiveness funding to individual regions has still to be decided. This will form part of the consultation on the UK's National Strategic Reference Framework for future Structural Funds spending, which the Government plan to take forward over the coming months.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effect of the implementation of the UK National Allocation Plan for Phase 1 of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on the profitability of the UK power generation sector. [43516]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department commissioned independent research to assess the potential impact of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on the UK power generation sector: 'Implications of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme for the UK Power Generation Sector' in July 2005. A report by IPA Energy Consulting was published in January 2005 on the DTI website. This follows an earlier report commissioned from Ilex Consulting to assess the potential impact of the scheme, 'Implications of the EU ETS for the UK Power Sector', published in September 2003. Both reports have considered different scenarios for the operation of the scheme and the potential impact on profitability among other issues. Phase I started in January 2005 running to December 2007 and it is therefore too early to assess the actual impact of the phase on the generation sector. Copies of the reports are available on the DTI website—http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/ipa_euets_report.pdf (IPA) and http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/ilex_report.pdf(Ilex)

EU Toys Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he made of the EU Directive on the safety of toys; and if he will include consideration of hybrid products that increase the risk of children choking in the assessment. [43858]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Toys Directive, implemented in the UK in the Toys (Safety) Regulations 1995, has been very effective in ensuring that toys sold in the UK comply with essential safety requirements.

The Toys Directive is currently being revised and DTI officials are actively involved in the discussions with European colleagues. The issue of safety of toys in food is a live issue in these discussions.

Felindre-Tirley Gas Pipeline

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which alternative routes were explored before the 1km corridor for the liquid gas pipeline proposed by the National Grid from Felindre to Tirley was chosen; on what basis these alternative routes were not chosen; what consultation there has been between National Grid, Carmarthen county council and the general public on the pipeline; and whether a compulsory purchase order will be granted for the land owned by those who refuse to accept the terms offered by the National Grid. [43171]

Malcolm Wicks: National Grid have not applied for consent to lay a pipeline from Filindre to Tirley. If and when they do then an explanation of the alternative routes considered, the reasons for the preferred route and justification for the discounting of others will have to be given. Any such application will be advertised and an opportunity given for representations to be made to the Secretary of State.

In view of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's quasi-judicial responsibilities for confirming compulsory purchase orders, I cannot give an indication as to whether or not such an order would be confirmed.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many households in *(a)* Dewsbury constituency and *(b)* the Yorkshire and Humber region were in fuel poverty in each of the last 10 years. [43179]

Malcolm Wicks: Figures for the number of households in fuel poverty in England are produced from analysis of the English House Condition Survey. The most recent data on the level of fuel poverty in England corresponds to 2003 and was published in July 2005 in the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy Third Annual Progress Report. This showed that the number of fuel poor households in England in 2003 was around 1.2 million.

Prior to 2003, however, this survey was conducted on a five-yearly basis. Therefore, the number of households in fuel poverty in England is not available for all of the last 10 years. Regional figures for England are available from the English House Condition Survey for 1996, 2001 and 2003, when the respective figures for England were 5.1 million, 1.7 million and 1.2 million.

Government office region

Yorkshire and the Humber	*Number of households in fuel poverty*
1996	678,000
2001	238,000
2003	180,000

It is not possible to break down figures to constituency level.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many households in *(a)* Tamworth constituency and *(b)* Staffordshire were in fuel poverty in each of the last 10 years. [43466]

Malcolm Wicks: Figures for the number of households in fuel poverty in England are produced from analysis of the English House Condition Survey. The most recent data on the level of fuel poverty in England corresponds to 2003 and was published in July 2005 in the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy Third Annual Progress report. This showed that the number of fuel poor households in England in 2003 was around 1.2 million.

Prior to 2003, however, this survey was conducted on a five-yearly basis. Therefore, the number of households in fuel poverty in England is not available for all of the last 10 years. Regional figures for England are available from the English House Condition Survey for 1996, 2001 and 2003, when the respective figures for England were 5.1 million, 1.7 million and 1.2 million.

Number of households in fuel poverty

	Government office region—West Midlands
1996	660,000
2001	228,000
2003	146,000

It is not possible to break down figures to constituency or county level.

Gas Prices

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the economic impact of the level of gas prices in the UK since November 2005. [42676]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government takes the recent increases in gas prices very seriously, and particularly their impact on the competitiveness of UK industry. We understand that this creates tough trading conditions, especially for energy intensive users, and we are aware of a few companies having reduced production in response to the very high prices since November. This will, of course, have a negative impact on UK industrial output, but in terms of overall GDP this will be relatively minor.

I have visited a number of major industrial gas users and am continuing to meet with companies, business representatives and gas suppliers to discuss gas prices and security of supply. Energywatch and DTI held a seminar with smaller gas users and the public sector on 30 November 2005 to discuss energy purchasing strategies. We are also undertaking some research into the capability of UK industry to reduce their gas demand.

The impact on UK businesses of increases in gas prices will depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas a particular company uses, the degree of their exposure to spot and forward prices and the duration of high prices. It will also be affected by the energy prices paid by their competitors. A further sector-specific issue is whether they are in a competitive market where international trade sets the price or in a sector where prices are determined more locally and rising energy costs could be passed

Provisional data for October 2005 shows that UK retail gas prices for small, medium and large industrial users were below the EU15 median. However, individual companies will have agreed commercially confidential contract terms and prices that might differ from these averages. I am also aware, from my industry visits and meetings, that, there is some evidence that gas prices in the UK for some of our very large industrial users is above those on the continent, and I recognise the risk that this presents to UK competitiveness. Officials are working closely with industry and OFGEM, with a view to help, wherever possible, to mitigate the situation and reduce these impacts.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of energy companies choosing to use their coal fired power stations rather than their gas fired power stations because of high gas prices. [42677]

Malcolm Wicks: Any increase in overall annual CO_2 emissions from coal fired power stations running at a higher rate than usual will need to be covered by allowances under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. There is a fixed number of allowances which are allocated directly to installations, such as power stations. If an installation wants to increase emissions above its allowance, it will need to buy extra allowances from other holders of allowances who are able to abate emissions and therefore have allowances to sell. Allowances can also be bought through Kyoto protocol mechanisms whereby credits can be bought for emissions reductions in mainly developing countries. The Emissions Trading Scheme therefore works to ensure that those responsible for increased CO_2 emissions on an annual basis have to pay for offsetting reductions in emissions elsewhere.

Other environmental impacts from coal fired electricity generation are subject to controls which are monitored and enforced by the Environment Agency. These controls are designed to offer sufficient flexibility to respond to changing commercial circumstances without compromising overall environmental objectives.

Gas Supplies Agreement

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the implications for the UK of the recent agreement on gas supplies between Russia and the Ukraine. [42621]

Malcolm Wicks: The dispute reinforces the importance of progressing a EU energy policy, as agreed at the EU informal Heads of Government meeting at Hampton Court in October; and of developing bilateral relations with gas exporting countries, to ensure an appropriate framework for importing gas into Great Britain. The current review of energy policy will consider policy options to ensure that the UK is on track to meet the medium and long-term goals in the Energy White Paper, against the background of developments since 2003, including our increasing dependence on imported gas.

Gas Turbines

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the feasibility of running gas turbine engines on renewable biofuel; and if he will make a statement. [42198]

Malcolm Wicks: Work was commissioned on the use of gas from the anaerobic digestion of biomass in small gas turbines or micro-turbines, in 2001. The reports can be found on the DTI website under the title DTI/Pub URN 02/1345—Distributed Power Generation Using Biogas Fuelled Micro-turbines Advantica Technologies Limited, January 2002.

Work has also been supported on the use of gas from the thermal gasification of biomass and waste in micro-turbines and is reported in URN 04/1804 Development of a Micro-Turbine to Run on Gasifier Producer Gas, Biomass Engineering Limited, May 2004. Further work in this area is being supported through Rural Generation Ltd. and Queens University Belfast and should report later this year.

The DTI is also supporting Talbots Heating, who are using wood combustion to provide the energy to drive a micro-turbine. The latest report here is Bio-mass Fuelled Indirect Fired Micro Turbine, DTI/Pub URN 05/698.

At Siemens Industrial Gas Turbines in Lincoln, we are supporting work to investigate the use of gas from the pyrolysis and gasification of biomass and wastes in larger gas turbines. This should also be reporting at the end of this year.

No work has been supported or evaluated on the use of liquid bio-fuels derived from vegetable and animal oils and fats in gas turbines. Industry has shown very little interest in this application. We understand that commercial alternatives are available, using reciprocating engines that are currently generating under the renewables obligation.

Elsewhere, we understand from the International Energy Agency—of which the UK is a member—that some work is ongoing in Canada on the use of liquids derived from the pyrolysis of wood in gas turbines.

Home Accident Safety Survey

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what arrangements he plans to put in place to replace the Home Accident Safety Survey; and when an announcement is expected to be made. [43857]

Mr. Sutcliffe: DTI has no plans to replace the Home Accident Surveillance System.

Hydroelectric Power (Wales)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how much and what proportion of

electricity supplied to consumers in Wales was produced from hydroelectric power in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [43323]

(2) how much and what proportion of electricity supplied to consumers in Wales was produced from *(a)* renewable energy sources and *(b)* wind power in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [43329]

Malcolm Wicks: The majority of the electricity generated in Wales is supplied to the national grid system that covers England, Wales and (since 2005) Scotland. Since there is a two way movement of electricity between England and Wales using the grid it is not possible to say how much and what proportion of electricity supplied to consumers in Wales is produced from a particular source.

However, information on generation by country is available and has been published by this Department in "Energy Trends". Data for Wales for the years 2001 to 2004 are shown in the following tables. Data are not available before 2001.

GWh

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Hydro	259	273	201	305
Wind, wave and solar	337	376	378	547
Other renewable sources	113	132	201	192
Total renewables	709	782	780	1,044
Total generation in Wales	28,986	32,067	30,054	35,235

Percentage

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Hydro	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.9
Wind, wave and solar	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.6
Other renewable sources	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.5
Total renewables	2.4	2.4	2.6	3.0
Total generation in Wales	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Knowledge Partnerships

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the interface between universities and small and medium-sized enterprises through knowledge partnerships. [43236]

Barry Gardiner: During the course of 2004–05 over £32 million of government grant support was committed to Knowledge Transfer Partnerships to help businesses improve their competitiveness and productivity through the better use of knowledge, technology and skills that reside within UK universities. This was augmented by £53 million from participating firms, 87 per cent. of which were SMEs.

In addition, the Government have has increased the funding available to Universities under the Higher Education Innovation Fund—which is rising to £110 million per year. This supports a wide range of activities including support for SMEs. Interaction with SMEs is on the rise—for example, the Higher Education Business Interaction survey shows an increase in HE research contracts with SMEs from 3,510 in 2001–02 to 4,148 in 2002–03. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation is endeavouring to arrange a convenient time to discuss these matters further with my hon. Friend.

Nuclear Decommissioning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many participants submitted evidence to the recent Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Draft Strategic Plan. [41431]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has completed its consultation with stakeholders on its first Strategy. In total, the NDA received over 270 sets of comments from a wide variety of organisations and individuals. The NDA has acknowledged all comments and has sought the permission of respondents to publish their comments on the NDA website, and intends to reply to respondents on points raised.

Petroleum Products

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many times the UK has failed to meet its stock obligations of Category 2 petroleum products; [40677]

(2) what plans he has to replace the Compulsory Stocking Obligation in respect of petroleum products; [40706]

(3) what representations he has received about the establishment of a privately-funded stockholding agency to replace the Compulsory Stocking Obligation; [40707]

(4) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Compulsory Stocking Obligation in maintaining adequate stocks of petroleum products. [40709]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK meets its international obligations to hold stocks of oil for use in the event of disruption of supplies by imposing obligations on companies. We believe that stocks held by companies are, in the event of an emergency, likely to be where they will be needed and capable of being quickly processed into the supply chain. The release of stocks following Hurricane Katrina has shown that the UK system was able to respond well to the disruption which occurred.

The UK is currently required to hold stock equivalent to 67.5 days annual consumption, both in total and also in each of the three categories into which the total is divided. Obligations are based on sales. Changes in the market, with small companies below the threshold for the obligation entering a supply chain previously dominated by oil companies, meant that between March 2000 and October 2004, although the UK met the total obligation in all but two months, in 41 of the 56 months we did not hold the full level of stocks necessary to meet that part of the obligation relating to category 2 (gas oil, diesel oil, kerosene and kerosene based aviation fuels). In order to return to full compliance with the UK obligations the Government agreed increases in company obligations with industry, and the UK has been fully compliant with the obligations since November 2004.

We must, however, consider future needs. The UK's obligation will increase as our domestic production of oil declines. We have, therefore, consulted the oil industry and others about a new system which will ensure that the UK can continue to meet its obligations in future. We propose that this system should be based on products from refineries or entering the UK as imports. As we work with the industry to establish the system, we have agreed to explore the long-term potential of establishing an agency to ensure that stocking obligations are met.

Predictive Diallers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many calls were made from call centres in his Department in 2004–05 using predictive diallers; how many such calls resulted in contact being made with the recipient without a Government agent available to talk to them; and what assessment he has made of the likely impact of Ofcom's policy on silent calls on the use of predictive diallers in departmental call centres. [28165]

Alun Michael: The Department of Trade and Industry does not use predictive dialling in any of its call centres.

Regional Development Agencies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of Regional Development Agency expenditure is from his Department's funding streams. [42827]

Alun Michael: In 2005–06 the Department of Trade and Industry is contributing £590 million (27 per cent.) of the Regional Development Agencies' total funding.

Restriction of Hazardous Waste Substances Directive

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Government plan to implement the EU restriction of hazardous waste substances directive; and what the EU response has been to the UK's timescale. [41924]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The Government transposed the requirements of the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS) directive on 7 October 2005, (SI 2005 no. 2748). These regulations will come into force on 1 July this year, in line with the implementation timetable specified within the directive.

Sakhalin Energy Investment Company

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether a copy of the report on revised SEIC (Sakhalin Energy Investment Company) river crossings strategy document has been submitted to his Department. [41226]

Ian Pearson: The Export Credits Guarantee Department has received a number of Reports on this subject.

A copy of the latest river crossings strategy can be found on the Sakhalin Energy website at:

www.sakhalinenergy.com/documents/doc_lender_eia_sr1.pdf

Reports on the river crossings carried out to date can be found at:

http://www.sakhalinenergy.com/environment/rivers/riv_main.asp

Small Business Research Initiative

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much each Science Council has awarded under the Small Business Research Initiative; what percentage this represents of its overall Research and Development budget; and when further allocations will be made. [42930]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* Historically, Research Councils (which are not Government Departments) have voluntarily contributed to SBRI targets but did not collect accurate data during 2003–04 and 2004–05 on the proportion allocated to small businesses.

Following the announcement in the Budget by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the SBRI would now be mandatory, the Research Councils will promote a Small Business Research scheme (similar to, but distinct from, SBRI). They are committed to spending at least 2.5 per cent. of a baseline of £815 million in 2005–06 on university/SME collaborations and directly with SME's.

Allocations have been, and will continue to be, made throughout the year with Councils advertising funding opportunities on their individual websites.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he plans to implement the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive. [43239]

Malcolm Wicks: On 14 December Government announced review of proposals for implementing the WEEE directive in the UK. This decision reflected the continuing concerns expressed by businesses and stakeholders. It also reflected the Government's commitment to implementing the directive in the UK in a way, which maximises the environmental benefits associated with the directive and minimises the costs to business.

The review will be undertaken by a cross departmental team and will be followed by a full consultation exercise in the spring before we proceed to transpose the main provisions of the directive into UK law. A new timetable for implementation will not be set until the review is concluded.

Wave Power

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research his Department has conducted on the effectiveness of the *(a)* oscillating water column and *(b)* superbuoy wave power installations. [43304]

Malcolm Wicks: Since 1976 the DTI and its predecessor the Department of Energy has supported the following oscillating water column research projects:

File number	Project title	Contractor	Start date	End date	DTI/DEn Spend (£)
V/01/00004/00/00	Development of Oscillating Water Columns	National Engineering Laboratory	1 April 1976	31 March 1978	1,898,645
V/01/00045/00/00	Feasibility Study of the Wells Oscillator	Queens University of Belfast	1 January 1979	31 October 1979	50,150
V/04/00147/00/00	Consultancy on Review of NEL Oscillating Water Column Device (OWC)	National Engineering Laboratory	22 August 1990	22 July 1991	17,500
V/03/00157/00/00	Wave Tank Testing of Wave Power Collectors	Wavegen	1 September 1991	31 May 1992	49,324
V/03/00162/00/00	Costing and Assessment of Art OWC	Advanced Mechanics and Engineering Limited	3 August 1992	30 April 1993	23,260
V/02/00174/00/00	Assessment of Art Ospres, Tow-Out and Turbine	Wavegen	1 December 1993	31 March 1994	11,850
V/06/00180/00/00	Wave Energy Conversion: Wavegen Project Development Conversion	Wavegen	1 February 2000	31 January 2002	34,500
V/06/00183/00/00	Research into the Further Development of the Limpet Shoreline Wave Energy Plant	Wavegen	12 June 2000	11 June 2002	231,703
V/06/00190/00/00	Prolongation of Deployment and Monitoring of 'SPERBOY' Wave Energy Device	University of Plymouth	1 April 2001	31 March 2002	49,803
V/06/00196/00/00	The Potential for Using Disused Coastal Mineshafts to Exploit Wave Energy	Wardell Armstrong International Ltd	1 August 2001	31 July 2004	114,479
V/06/00201/00/00	Near Shore Floating OWC—Prototype Development and Evaluation	Wavegen	1 January 2003	31 July 2004	67,820
V/06/00202/00/00	Near Shore Floating OWC—Power Take—Off System	Wavegen	1 January 2003	30 June 2005	131,500
V/06/00201/00/00	Near Shore Floating OWC—Prototype Development and Evaluation	Wavegen	1 January 2003	31 July 2004	67,820
V/06/00202/00/00	Near Shore Floating OWC—Power Take—Off System	Wavegen	1 January 2003	30 June 2005	131,500

DTI is not aware of any wave power device called "superbouy". However, DTI has funded a project concerning a device called "Sperboy" carried out by the University of Plymouth. This was: V/06/00190/00/00, Prolongation of Deployment and Monitoring of 'SPERBOY' Wave Energy Device. Details of this project are included in the table.

Wind Turbines

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment procedures he has established for applications for grant-aided wind turbine projects to ensure their viability in terms of electricity generation. [42325]

Malcolm Wicks: Grants given under the Clear Skies Programme stipulate that approved products are used and that these meet relevant product regulation guidelines. Further details can be obtained from the Clear Skies website at www.clear-skies.org.

Applications are assessed on their technical merit but it is for the customer to decide whether evidence of performance and payback period is acceptable.

Many customers install renewable technologies as their individual environmental commitment and although concerned with economic viability this is not their overriding driver when choosing to install a renewable technology.

Stringent criteria were used to assess all project applications made under the offshore wind capital grants programme.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what criteria in terms of minimum electricity generation are set by his Department for grant-aided wind turbine projects on domestic properties. [42326]

Malcolm Wicks: Under the Clear Skies Programme, which offers grants for the installation of domestic wind turbines, the turbines must have a minimum output of 500w at a wind speed of 12m per second.

WTO Meeting (Hong Kong)

Ms Barlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made following the roadmap for a final agreement to the Doha development round agreed to in Hong Kong; what steps the Government are taking to promote a pro-development agenda within the negotiations; and if he will make a statement. [42512]

Ian Pearson: The World Trade Organisation ministerial in December set a deadline of the end of April for modalities, and the end of July for tariff schedules. Strong political will and hard work will be needed to achieve these deadlines. The World Economic Forum in Davos, later this month, and the associated trade meetings, will provide the first opportunity for the major players to define their ambitions for the year and to set out a path to April.

The UK Government are strongly committed to a pro-development outcome and will continue to push hard for an ambitious development package.

HEALTH

Animal Testing

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are to carry out an independent assessment of the use of animals in *(a)* drug safety testing and *(b)* medical research; and if she will make a statement. [41103]

Jane Kennedy: There are no plans for an independent assessment of the use of animals as surrogate humans in either drug safety testing or medicinal research.

Aspartame

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies have been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated by her Department on the potential dangers to health from the inclusion of aspartame in foodstuffs; and if she will list make a statement. [42625]

Caroline Flint: Aspartame was first reviewed in 1982 by the United Kingdom's Committee on toxicity, consumer products and the environment (COT), a committee of independent experts who advise the Government on the safety of food chemicals. New data on aspartame was reviewed by COT in 1992 and the UK Committee on the carcinogenicity of chemicals in food, consumer products and the environment (COC) in 1996. The COT was satisfied that aspartame was acceptable for use in food and the COC considered there was no link between brain tumors and aspartame.

In 2001, the European Commission's Scientific Committee on food (SCF) revisited its previous safety assessment of aspartame and concluded that there is no evidence to suggest a need to revise the outcome of their earlier risk assessment.

In July 2005, the COC considered the findings of a study published by the Ramazzini Institute on the potential carcinogenicity of aspartame. The Committee made initial observations on the data and noted the data will be fully evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority. The Food Standards Agency will consider its position on aspartame in light of the advice from EFSA, when this is received.

Blood Type

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department takes to ensure that individuals are aware of their blood type. [42027]

Caroline Flint: The Department has no plans to ensure that individuals are made aware of their blood type.

Breastfeeding

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the health effects of food additional to breast milk on babies aged between four and six months. [29594]

Caroline Flint: The Department recommends breast milk as the best form of nutrition for infants and recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of an infant's life. If a mother is unable to, or chooses not to breastfeed, a breast milk substitute should be used.

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition stated in 2003 that there is sufficient evidence that exclusive breastfeeding for six months is nutritionally adequate. The Department has not commissioned further research into the health effects of food additional to breast milk between four and six months.

BT10 Contamination Incident

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the gross cost to public funds was of the recent BT10 contamination incident; and what proportion of costs incurred have been refunded by Syngenta. [42405]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency has not estimated the total cost to public funds associated with the recent BT10 contamination incident. No costs have been refunded by Syngenta.

Community Health Services

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements she proposes to put in place for *(a)* reviewing and *(b)* managing clinical governance in areas where a variety of providers deliver community health services. [41890]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for ensuring that community health services have satisfactory arrangements for clinical governance, whether they are provided by the PCT or commissioned from alternative providers. The Healthcare Commission's annual health check of PCTs will among other things assess how well they are discharging this responsibility.

Cosmetic Surgery

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate has been made of the total cost of the website providing information for people considering cosmetic surgery, as announced by her Department's Chief Medical Officer on 22 December 2005, broken down by cost area; and what her latest estimate is of the website's annual running costs. [41966]

Jane Kennedy: The Department wishes to promote patient safety by ensuring that people who are considering cosmetic surgery have access to reliable, evidence-based information to help them to make properly informed decisions. The Department therefore launched its information resource for patients considering cosmetic surgery on 22 December 2005.

The Department spent £5,000 on developing the text of this resource, which is not hosted as a separate website but is held in a dedicated section comprising of 58 pages within the main Departmental website. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of maintenance or development costs by section or page.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the regulation of the cosmetic surgery industry. [42045]

Jane Kennedy: Cosmetic surgery is currently regulated as a listed service under the Care Standards Act. Providers must adhere to the provisions of the Private and Voluntary Healthcare Regulations 2001 and are inspected by the Healthcare Commission.

The Department accepted the recommendations made in the report of the expert group on the Regulation of Cosmetic Surgery, published on 28 January 2005, and plans to regulate to improve patient safety for people receiving non-surgical cosmetic treatments involving botulinum toxin and dermal fillers.

Diamorphine

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the availability of diamorphine to the NHS. [41899]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is in close contact with both suppliers of diamorphine to the national health service and is continuing to monitor the supply situation carefully. The product is available from both Wockhardt UK and Chiron, but supplies are limited and are likely to remain so for the coming months.

Femara

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which health authorities allow for the prescription of Femara. [41122]

Jane Kennedy: Femara (letrozole) is licensed for the treatment of early invasive breast cancer in postmenopausal women who have received prior standard adjuvant tamoxifen therapy. Prescribing of Femara is a matter for local decision; there are no national restrictions on the prescribing of this drug.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently undertaking an appraisal of Femara as part of a wider appraisal of hormonal therapies for the treatment of early breast cancer. Information about NICE'S current work programme is available on the NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk

In 1999, the Department issued Health Service Circular (HSC) 1999/176, which asks national health service bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from NICE has not yet been issued. These arrangements should include an assessment of the available evidence.

Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff there were in the Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust in each year since its creation. [41604]

Jane Kennedy: The latest figures available for national health service staff in the Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust by main staff group for the years 1994 to 2004 are shown in the table.

NHS staff in the Hammersmith hospitals NHS Trust by main staff group as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1994[1]	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust total	4,791	4,609	4,209	4,316	4,242	5,322	5,404	5,804	5,805	5,726	6,146
Medical and dental staff	818	743	737	781	524	548	751	812	913	911	953
Non-medical staff total	3,973	3,866	3,472	3,535	3,718	4,774	4,653	4,992	4,892	4,815	5,193
Professionally qualified clinical staff total	2,163	2,265	1,930	1,920	2,079	2,838	2,762	3,017	2,879	2,850	3,048
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	1,658	1,645	1,352	1,337	1,481	2,161	2,095	2,345	2,178	2,034	2,210
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff total	505	620	578	583	598	677	667	672	701	816	838
Qualified allied health professionals	243	229	205	199	218	222	208	213	213	254	265
Other qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	262	391	373	384	380	455	459	459	488	562	573
Support to clinical staff total	n/a	956	983	1,074	1,057	1,382	1,306	1,380	1,343	1,325	1,471
Support to doctors and nurses	n/a	765	776	873	882	1,174	1,042	1,123	884	862	979
Support to ST&T	n/a	191	207	201	175	208	264	257	459	463	492
NHS infrastructure support total	n/a	644	555	537	577	552	574	583	658	626	658
Central functions	n/a	367	308	304	334	313	361	369	403	379	405
Hotel, property and estates staff	n/a	163	147	136	122	118	98	94	123	96	94
Managers and senior managers	90	114	100	97	121	121	115	120	132	151	159
Other and unknown total	0	1	4	4	5	2	11	12	12	14	16

n/a = Not available.
[1] A new system for coding the non-medical workforce was introduced in 1995. 1994 figures are not directly comparable with later years.
Sources:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census
Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Herceptin

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Department holds data from the process of licensing Herceptin for late stage breast cancer that could be made available to expedite the licensing of the drug for early stage breast cancer. [25362]

Jane Kennedy: When the marketing authorisation holder, Roche, submits a licence variation application for the use of Herceptin in early stage breast cancer, new clinical data will be required to support this indication. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency already holds the quality, pre-clinical and clinical data which it assessed for Herceptin for the indication of late stage breast cancer and these will be available if required. However, it is very unlikely there will be a need to reassess previously submitted data.

Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her estimate is of the take-up of winter influenza vaccine in *(a)* at-risk groups and *(b)* all other groups since September. [31912]

Caroline Flint: Information on influenza uptake since 2005 in at risk groups and those aged 65 and over is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/AboutUs/MinistersAndDepartmetLeaders/ChiefMedicalOfficer/Features/FeaturesArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4103271&chk=2ijGJ5.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure provision of free influenza vaccinations for people who qualify in areas where supplies of the vaccine have been exhausted. [26151]

Caroline Flint: Having been alerted that some general practitioners may be facing a shortage of vaccine, the Department wrote to all primary care trust flu immunisation co-ordinators with details of how to order additional vaccine from our contingency stock, should extra be required by practices in their area. This vaccine has now been distributed to those affected practices. In addition to this, we have also secured an extra 800,000 doses of vaccine which will be delivered this month.

Mental Illness

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information the Department collects on the ethnic origin of patients treated for mental ill-health in Hackney North and Stoke Newington. [41229]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of discharges from national health service hospitals with a primary psychiatric diagnosis, by ethnic origin, East London and the City Mental Health Trust, 2004-05

Ethnic origin	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
British (White)	600	490	1,090
Irish (White)	60	40	90
Any other White background	160	140	300
White and Black Caribbean (Mixed)	20	30	50
White and Black African (Mixed)	20	10	30
White and Asian (Mixed)	0	10	10
Any other Mixed background	10	10	10
Indian (Asian or Asian British)	50	40	90
Pakistani (Asian or Asian British)	40	20	70
Bangladeshi (Asian or Asian British)	130	70	190
Any other Asian background	30	20	50
Caribbean (Black or Black British)	150	160	310
African (Black or Black British)	170	130	300
Any other Black background	140	80	220
Chinese	10	10	20
Any other ethnic group	40	20	50
Not stated	100	50	140
Total	1,710	1,310	3,020

Notes:

1. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is, the data is ungrossed.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Figures may not add up due to rounding.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Minibuses

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the pilot use in Croydon of minibuses instead of ambulances to ferry inebriated patients to hospital has been considered for introduction in other parts of the country. [41121]

Jane Kennedy: The Government is always interested in new initiatives to tackle alcohol harms. We are aware that London Ambulance Service is currently piloting the use of minibuses instead of ambulances to ferry patients involved in minor alcohol-related incidents to hospital. This trial will be reviewed in January and we will be interested to see the outcome of the evaluation.

This would ultimately be a local matter for health, social care, police and other agencies to determine how best to meet the needs in their area.

Pharmaceuticals (Adverse Reactions)

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people have died as a result of adverse reactions to pharmaceuticals in each of the last five years; [41102]

(2) what estimate she has made of the cost to the NHS of treating people who have suffered adverse reactions to pharmaceuticals in each of the last five years. [41104]

Jane Kennedy: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Commission for Human Medicines (CHM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the yellow card scheme. Approximately 19,000 reports of suspected ADRs are sent to the MHRA/CHM through this scheme each year. It is not possible to estimate from the yellow card scheme the number of people who suffer adverse reactions to medicines since the scheme is associated with an unknown level of under-reporting.

It is important to note that the submission of a suspected ADR report does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships, including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease.

The table shows the total number of suspected ADR reports and ADR reports with a fatal outcome received via the yellow card scheme from 2001 to 2005 inclusive.

Total number of suspected ADR reports and reports with a fatal outcome received by the MHRA.

	Total number of reports	*Number of reports with a fatal outcome*
2001	21,460	648
2002	17,511	667
2003	18,621	738
2004	18,977	857
2005	19,927	1,013

A study funded by the MHRA and published in the *British Medical Journal* on 2 July 2004, was conducted in two large hospitals in Merseyside in order to ascertain the current burden of ADRs in the national health service. The study found that of 18,820 patients aged over 16 years admitted to hospital over a six-month

period, there were 1,225 admissions judged to be related to an ADR, giving a prevalence of 6.5 per cent. Of these 1,225, the ADR was judged to lead directly to the admission in 80 per cent. of cases. The median bed stay was eight days, accounting for 4 per cent. of the hospital bed capacity. The projected annual cost of such admissions to the NHS was £466 million.

Prescription Charges

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the cost to her Department of including all patients who are terminally ill within the exempt category for the purposes of prescription charges. [42755]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The estimated cost to the Department would be in the region of £2 million per annum in lost prescription charge revenue.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, column 588, on Private Members' Bills, when the information ceased to be collected; and if she will make a statement. [32753]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested has never been collected.

Smoking and Blindness

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to cite the links between smoking and blindness in public health campaigns on smoking cessation. [34196]

Caroline Flint: We currently do not have any plans to cite the links between smoking and blindness in our public health campaigns on smoking cessation. We are in the process of developing our future strategy on public health campaigns on smoking. However, it is widely recognised that smoking is linked to many serious and chronic conditions.

PRIME MINISTER

Telephone Tapping

Mr. Evans: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what decision has been made on requests for the tapping of hon. Members' telephone lines; [43854]

(2) what representations he has received *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* against tapping right hon. and hon. Members' telephone lines; [43855]

(3) what recent discussions he has had on the tapping of hon. Members' telephone lines; [43856]

(4) if he will make a statement on the Wilson doctrine on tapping hon. Members' telephones. [44186]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Members to the written ministerial statement I made on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS.

DEFENCE

C-130 Hercules

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he is having with manufacturers of the Hercules C130J and K about retrospectively fitting foam flame retardants to the fuel tank. [43371]

Mr. Ingram: The Hercules Integrated project team is discussing with Marshalls Aerospace the possible fitting of explosive suppressant foam to our C-130 aircraft.

Correspondence

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether the letter of 10 April 2001 from Alan Burnham, acting chief executive of the War Pensions Agency, to Nick Gibbons of the Cabinet Office was seen by the responsible Minister when it was received; [41146]

(2) whether the advice from the War Pensions Agency on the defensibility of the proposed restriction on compensation to civilian detainees of the Japanese to British citizens with a blood link with the UK was made known to Ministers when the decision was made to restrict payments. [41142]

Mr. Touhig: There is no evidence to suggest that the letter of 10 April 2001 or other advice from the Agency on the defensibility of the birthlink criterion were seen by Ministers at the time; however, Ministers were made aware of the concern, that had been expressed by the chief executive, that substantial numbers of claims would be rejected as a result of adopting the "birthlink" criterion before this was made public by the Veterans Minister on 11 July 2001.

The Ministry of Defence's current review of the consistency of eligibility criteria will consider the genesis of the birthlink criterion, in which the agency had been closely involved. It will also consider the nature and handling of the concerns that the agency's chief executive raised in the light of early experience of operating of the birthlink criterion.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42898]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence does not own or lease any land or property in the Castle Point constituency. However the following freehold properties are used by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association which is funded by this Department:

A property used by the Air Training Corps in Waverley Drive, Thundersley; and

A Cadet Centre in Runnymede Road, Canvey Island.

Departmental Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in the Southend, West constituency. [41757]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence does not own or lease any land or property in the Southend, West constituency. However the following properties are used by reserve forces and Cadets Association, which is funded by the Department:

a property used by the Air Training Corps (leasehold), in Wells Avenue, Southend; and

an Army Cadet Centre (freehold) property in Eastwood road, Leigh on Sea.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 667W, in what ways the estimated cost of the Eurofighter Typhoon is commercially sensitive. [42967]

Mr. Ingram: The Eurofighter Typhoon financial figures concerned will remain commercially confidential until their release will no longer be prejudicial to the UK's interests.

Iraq

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what resources he has made available to the Oxfordshire coroner to ensure that he is able to proceed with inquests into the deaths of UK personnel in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [32360]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

Additional funding has been made available to assist the coroner on an exceptional basis. This has allowed Thames Valley police and Oxfordshire county council to provide additional staff dedicated to the preparation of inquest cases relating to those British personnel and others who have met their deaths in Iraq since March 2003. Further funds will be made available in the next financial year. In all £80,000 will be paid.

ISAF (Afghanistan)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters are available to NATO in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan; and to which members of NATO they belong. [42628]

Mr. Ingram: As of 14 January, there are 15 helicopters dedicated to NATO in Afghanistan. These have been provided to ISAF by Germany, Spain and Italy. Other NATO members, such as the United States, have helicopters in Afghanistan which can be made available to ISAF depending on operational task and priority.

Mercian Regiment

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Catterick is being considered as a possible location of the headquarters of the new Mercian Regiment. [42462]

Mr. Ingram: As the hon. Member will be aware, there is an ongoing study into the future of Infantry Regimental Headquarters (RHQ). It is too early to speculate on what the outcomes of this review will be, but it is anticipated that a final decision will be announced by the spring.

Military Complaints Procedures (Independent Assessor)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 12–13W, on the Independent Assessor of Military Complaints procedures, on what basis he made his decision that aspects other than those involving the policing of the 11 and 12 July 2004 North Belfast parades had been examined in sufficient detail. [42406]

Mr. Ingram: As indicated in my answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 12–13W the policing of the North Belfast parades was examined in considerable detail by Keir Starmer QC and Jane Gordon in their special report for the Policing Board published in November 2004. Although this report did concentrate on the policing aspects of the parades, it also included consideration of the Army's support to the PSNI.

In light of this report, the relevant arrangements were fully reviewed internally following the 2004 marching season by the PSNI and Army, and a comprehensive and progressive training programme was initiated to exercise and develop these arrangements prior to marching season 2005. We are satisfied with the arrangements in place for joint operations with the PSNI and believe that they properly and fully address the concerns raised in the report.

Procurement Contracts

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many procurement contracts for military equipment with a value greater than £1 million have been agreed with non-UK companies in each year since 2001; what their total value was in each year; how many such contracts were won by *(a)* US companies, *(b)* non-EU companies and *(c)* EU companies in each year since 2001, broken down by country; what the value was of each such contract; and if he will make a statement. [42070]

Mr. Ingram: The information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Project Hyperion

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will announce the conclusions of Project Hyperion; and if he will make a statement. [42981]

Mr. Ingram: Work to consider the benefits of rationalisation and collocation of the two main Army HQs-HQ land (currently based in Wilton) and HQ Adjutant General (currently based in Upavon)—is ongoing. The Army is still determining the possible size and structure of the new HQ organisation and, in parallel, assessing a number of site options. We intend to inform the House about the final size and structure of the new HQ towards the end of this year. It is planned

that an announcement about possible future locations will be made by the spring. Full collocation—assuming it is finally approved—is unlikely to be completed before 2009.

Research and Development Facility (Colchester)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the research and development facility at Caversfield. [41480]

Mr. Ingram: The current proposal, subject to Trades Union consultation, is to close the Clothing Research and Development facility. Under the proposal, acquisition essential services would be moved into the Defence Clothing Integrated Project Team, also based at Caversfield, and the Research Programme would be competed for by industry and academia.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will arrange for an independent review of the operation of the research and development facility following its transfer from Colchester to Caversfield in 2001. [41481]

Mr. Ingram: The future of the Clothing Research and Development facility has been under constant review both prior to, and since its transfer from Colchester. Independent advisors have already been involved in the review process.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people were made redundant when the research and development facility was transferred from Colchester to Caversfield; how many staff from Colchester transferred to Caversfield; and how many of the transferred staff still work for R and D at Caversfield. [41477]

Mr. Ingram: The number of people made redundant when the research and development facility was transferred from Colchester to Caversfield was 24.

The number of Colchester staff that transferred to the DLO Caversfield site was 46.

Of those that moved from Colchester to Caversfield in March 2001, six remain employed within the Defence Clothing Research and Project Support.

Royal Navy

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* surface ships, *(b)* submarines and *(c)* auxiliary vessels are (i) available to and (ii) deployable by the Royal Navy; and what the equivalent numbers were in 2000. [42624]

Mr. Ingram: The vessels available to be deployed by the Royal Navy, which is interpreted as those platforms in Fleet Time having achieved their mandatory collective training, together with the comparative figures for the year 2000, are:

	January	
	2000	*2006*
Surface ships	83	62
Submarines	6	5
Auxiliary vessels	22	17

Territorial Army

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many members of the Territorial Army qualified for their annual bounty in each of the last five years; [41663]

(2) how many members of the Territorial Army have been mobilised more than once in the last five years; [41655]

(3) how many vacancies there are in the Territorial Army; [41657]

(4) what percentage of soldiers on operational service are members of the *(a)* Territorial Army and *(b)* Regular Army Reserve; [41659]

(5) what the strength of the Territorial Army is, broken down by *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks; [41660]

(6) whether members of the Officer Training Corps (OTC) are included in the current strength of the Territorial Army; and how many members of the OTC there are. [41661]

Mr. Touhig: The number of Territorial Army personnel qualifying for annual bounty in any training year (April-March) is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, information on paid bounties (usually for the qualifications gained in the previous year) is shown in the following table.

Period	
April 2004 to March 2005	23,560
April 2003 to March 2004	25,450
April 2002 to March 2003	26,020
April 2001 to March 2002	26,050
April 2000 to March 2001	28,370

Note:

Totals have been rounded to the nearest 10. Those totals divisible by five have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

1,113 members of the Territorial Army (TA) have been called out more than once over the past five years. This figure includes individuals who may have reported for mobilization but subsequently did not mobilize for medical or other reasons. Information on individuals in this category is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The strength (broken down by officers, soldiers and officer training corps (OTC)) and liability of the TA (including OTC) as at 1 December 2005 can be found in the following table:

Strengths of the Territorial Army (TA) as at 1 December 2005

	Territorial Army	*of which are Officer Training Corps (OTC)*	*of which are mobilised*
Liability	41,610	3,500	—
Total	37,430	5,750	1,180
Officers	5,450	—	200
Soldiers	31,980	5,750	980
Surplus/Deficit[1]	-4,180	2,250	—

[1] The surplus/deficit figure is the difference between the liability and the total number of TA personnel.

Notes:

1. The data excludes full-time reserve service (FTPS).
2. Figures exclude 1,070 non-regular permanent staff (NRPS), of which 200 are officers and 880 are soldiers.
3. The data have been rounded to the nearest 10, numbers ending in '5' have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.
4. Totals have been rounded separately and therefore may not be equal to the sum of their parts.

Currently, the TA and Regular Army Reserve form approximately 8 per cent. and 1.4 per cent. respectively of the Regular Army's overall capability deployed on operations (this includes members of the TA and Regular Army Reserve who have been mobilized in support of operations but not necessarily deployed).

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Territorial Army who were mobilised and attended RTMC Chilwell subsequently were not deployed *(a)* on medical grounds, *(b)* because of failure of individual training directives tests at RTMC and *(c)* for other reasons in each of the last five years. [41664]

Mr. Touhig: Numbers of TA personnel who attended RTMC Chilwell and did not pass to a receiving unit are set out in the following table; figures for those TA members who reached a receiving unit but were not subsequently deployed are not available.

Reason for 'failure'	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Medical and dental failures	20	20	1,040	50	40
Individual revocations upheld	n/k	n/k	980	210	50
Employer revocations upheld	n/k	n/k	770	140	40
Post no longer available	30	20	180	0	0
Administrative grounds	0	0	30	0	0
Compassionate grounds	0	0	20	0	0
Non-acceptance by receiving unit	0	0	10	0	0
Volunteer changed mind	0	0	0	0	0

Note:
The data has been rounded.

Figures are not held on the number of individuals who attended RTMC but were not mobilised due to failure of individual training directive tests. These individuals would be accepted by the deploying unit and either given the required level of training or returned to a (non-deployed) unit.

WALES

Police Force Restructuring

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on police force restructuring in Wales. [41874]

Mr. Hain: Having engaged in discussion with hon. Members, Chief Constables, representatives of police authorities, local authorities, and other stakeholders across the whole of Wales. I see no realistic alternative to a single force for Wales if the objectives set out in the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary are to be achieved.

However, the Government recognises that there are issues that require further discussion and we are working closely with forces and authorities to help refine their business cases and address any outstanding issues.

Welsh Budget

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he last met the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss the Welsh Budget. [40676]

Mr. Hain: I met the Chancellor and the Chief Secretary on 5 December 2005 and the Chancellor on 7 December 2005, in addition to which I engage with them on matters relevant to the Welsh Budget as and when they arise.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Embassy (Madagascar)

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar. [42008]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave a statement to the House on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 137–38WS covering the closure of several embassies and high commissions, including that of the British embassy in Madagascar. The embassy closed on 15 August 2005.

Burma

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Northampton, South (Mr. Binley) of 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1081W, on Burma, what actions in the United Nations Security Council he expects will promote reform and positive change in Burma; [32537]

(2) if he will make it his policy to seek the referral of Myanmar to the United Nations Security Council. [32772]

Ian Pearson: We fully support US efforts to get Burma onto the UN Security Council's agenda. We believe that a Security Council discussion of the situation in Burma, including human rights issues, would increase the pressure on the Burmese regime to effect genuine change. It would send a powerful signal to the Burmese leadership that the Security Council—the primary UN body responsible for international peace and security—is concerned about the human rights situation and is monitoring developments.

Egypt

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will take steps to investigate the allegations of harassment of Sudanese refugees in Cairo by the Egyptian authorities; and if he will make representations on behalf of those killed and injured as a result of the incident in Mostafa Mahmoud Park. [41529]

Dr. Howells: We have taken a close interest in the situation of Sudanese refugees in Egypt. The British embassy in Cairo has participated in meetings with the Egyptian authorities, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and has expressed concern at the tragic incident in Mustafa Mahmoud Square on 30 December.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry has informed the UNHCR that the Egyptian Prosecutor-General is carrying out an investigation of the incident.

Eritrea-Ethiopia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the withdrawal of UN peacekeepers from Eritrea on *(a)* the peaceful resolution of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border dispute and *(b)* stability and security in the Horn of Africa. [39709]

Ian Pearson: The Eritrean demand for staff of Canadian, European, Russian and US nationalities to be removed from the UN Mission to Ethiopia/Eritrea (UNMEE) has added to the already highly tense situation. The withdrawal of those, plus other staff for their own safety, has in addition to the Eritrean restrictions on UNMEE already in place, further reduced UNMEE's monitoring and conflict prevention capability. This reduced capability and the resulting increase in tension may have a negative impact both on progress towards a peaceful resolution of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute, and on stability and security in the Horn of Africa.

We supported a Security Council Presidential Statement strongly condemning the Eritrean demand and previous restrictions, and have urged Eritrea to co-operate fully with UNMEE. We also continue to underline to both Ethiopia and Eritrea that there should be no return to war; that the decision of the Boundary Commission is final and binding, and must be implemented; and that they should engage in dialogue on all the issues that divide them.

EU Structural Funds

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have received advocating the broadening of the scope of EU structural funding to include a wider range of projects. [41815]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The eligibility of projects for support from the EU structural funds is determined by the relevant Council and Commission Regulations governing those funds. The regulations for the 2007–13 period are still being negotiated. The Government's position in the negotiations is developed through consultation. Government departments and national and regional bodies maintain regular dialogue with stakeholders and their representatives, including Regional Development Agencies, Regional Assemblies, local authorities, MPs, MEPs, Councillors, through correspondence, information events, and meetings with ministers and officials.

The scope of structural funding has been an aspect of discussions on the proposals to improve the strategic focus of spending in this area over the next programming period. The Government supports these proposals, as have the majority of UK stakeholders. The change in focus will inevitably affect the eligibility of some activities.

European Council

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what matters in respect of inward investment into the poorer regions of *(a)* the new member states from eastern Europe and *(b)* the United Kingdom were discussed at the European Council meeting on 15 to 16 December 2005; and what assessment he has made of the likely effects on the poorer areas of Wales of the agreed conclusions of the council. [41556]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The European Council in December agreed the overall budgetary framework for the EU for the period 2007 to 2013, including Structural and Cohesion Funds (SCF). The agreement marked a historic shift in EU funding to the new EU member states, and they will receive over half of the SCF budget in the next period. Nevertheless, West Wales and the valleys will continue to receive an amount of convergence funding similar to which they received in this financial perspective.

Iran

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether Iran is organising training camps for non-Iranian operatives for *(a)* military and *(b)* terrorist activity. [41829]

Dr. Howells: We are aware of reports that Iran is providing training to groups seeking to undermine peace in the Middle East through violence. We remain deeply concerned about Iran's approach to terrorism and the nature of its relationship with Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. We are also deeply concerned about and continue to investigate Iran's links to extremist groups in Iraq. We have pressed Iran to renounce all support for groups using terror and violence. We have also urged Iran to take effective action against members of Al-Qaeda and "jihadist" groups using Iran as a base, transit route or refuge, and to co-operate actively with the rest of the international community against them.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what funds have been provided by his Department for the promotion of civil society in Iran. [43364]

Dr. Howells: Funding is available through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) programme budgets to support projects in Iran in areas such as engaging with the Islamic world; drugs and crime; climate change;

governance; and counter terrorism. The largest of these funds, the FCO's Global Opportunities Fund has a total of £34.6 million for use in projects around the world for financial year 2005–06.

Jordan

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the security situation in Jordan. [43366]

Dr. Howells: We assess that there is a high threat from terrorism in Jordan. Attacks could be indiscriminate and happen at any time and in any place. Further information about the security situation can be found on the travel advice pages of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at http://www.fco.gov.uk.

Nigeria

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Nigerian government on its decision to remove homeless people from Lagos and Abuja; and if he will make a statement. [41528]

Ian Pearson: The relocation of people and property in Abuja is part of a long-running policy of city structure planning and affects both residents and businesses in all levels of society. The Nigerian Minister for the Federal Capital Territory has assured us that only structures built without planning permission and valid land allocation have been affected, that occupants and property owners are given notification well in advance, and that alternative arrangements are being made for communities affected including the offer of plots of land at subsidised rates. We have raised this issue with the Nigerian Government to ensure that humanitarian concerns are being taken into account. The Department for International Development Nigeria Office is in contact with the Nigerian authorities about possible support on these issues.

In Lagos, civil servants have been moved out of government housing. This is a result of a change in the remuneration package for Nigerian civil servants, as part of a wider programme of civil service reform. The entitlement to many non-monetary allowances such as free housing and vehicles has been replaced by higher salaries. We have not made representations on these evictions.

Palestine

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the security situation in Gaza. [43365]

Dr. Howells: We remain concerned at the recent escalation of violence in Gaza and continue to call upon Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas to take all the necessary steps to take full control of security in the area. Some progress has been made but more needs to be done. The PA is working closely with the US Security Co-ordinator, General Dayton, in order to improve its effectiveness on security. The EU are working with the PA to expand the current EU Police Support mission to increase the operational capacity of the Palestinian police force.

On 6 January, we updated our travel advice, available from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk, stating that we advise against all travel to the Gaza Strip due to the current security situation and urge all British nationals who do not have continuous and professional close security protection to leave Gaza. Our travel advice is kept under constant review.

Religious Freedom Panel

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next expects to convene a meeting of the Religious Freedom Panel; and if he will make a statement. [42809]

Ian Pearson: We will be contacting members of the panel this month to seek suggestions on possible themes for discussion and guest speakers with a view to convening a meeting in March.

Wherever possible, we aim to work with officials, religious leaders and non- governmental organisations (NGOs) at both an international and local level to promote mutual understanding and tolerance. While we have working contacts with many faith groups and NGOs, we value the breadth that the Freedom of Religion Panel can offer and look forward to a meeting in the near future.

Promotion of human rights, including freedom of thought, conscience and religion, is at the heart of our foreign policy. We condemn instances where individuals are persecuted because of their faith or belief, wherever they happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned.

We take every appropriate opportunity, including with our EU partners, to urge states to pursue laws and practices which foster tolerance and mutual respect and to protect religious minorities against discrimination, intimidation and attacks. We also regularly raise specific cases of religious persecution with the Governments concerned.

Renditions

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government have refused a request by the United States for the rendition through the United Kingdom of *(a)* Mohammed Sadeek Odeh and *(b)* Mohammed Rashed Dauod al-Owhali since 1997. [43594]

Dr. Howells: We have found no evidence that the Government have refused a request from the United States for the rendition of Mohammed Sadeek Odeh or Mohammed Rashed Daoud al-Owhali since 1997.

Somalia

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage the development of a democratic government in Somalia. [24294]

Ian Pearson: With international partners we supported the Somali National Reconciliation process in Nairobi, which led to the return of the Transitional Federal Government and Parliament to Somalia in June

2005. We continue to urge members of the Transitional Federal Government and Parliament in Jowhar and Mogadishu to reconcile their differences and create the conditions for effective, inclusive government, supervised by the Transitional Federal Parliament.

The Transitional Federal Charter envisages the development of a new constitution to be followed by democratic elections in five years. We and international partners are committed to supporting this process.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received on the conduct of the Hamdab (Merowe) dam project, Sudan; and if he will make representations to the Chinese Government about the role of Chinese contractors in restricting traditional access to water supplies. [40460]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has received no representations about the Merowe dam project but our embassy in Khartoum is following the matter closely. It is for the Government of Sudan to set the terms of contracts for infrastructure in its territory, and to ensure that these terms are complied with. Our ambassador discussed the dam project with the Governor of River Nile State, where the dam is located, on his visit to the area in December 2005 and pressed the Sudanese Government to work closely with those communities affected by the project and ensure that their rights and interests are respected. The embassy will continue to raise the consequences of the dam project with the Government of Sudan, and stress the importance of ensuring that such projects, and those implementing them, do not violate the local population's rights.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the co-operation of the Government of Sudan with the deployment of the African Union force in Darfur; [40497]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on expediting the clearance, movement and access throughout Darfur of equipment and personnel needed by the African Union force. [40498]

Ian Pearson: Relevant UN Security Council Resolutions require all parties to the conflict in Darfur to co-operate fully with the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). We are currently pressing the African Union (AU) and the Government of Sudan to sign a Status of Mission Agreement, which will provide a clear legal basis for AMIS, and for other administrative barriers on issues such as customs clearance or the imposition of curfews to be resolved as soon as possible.

However, co-operation by the Government of Sudan has been inconsistent and, at times, detrimental to the effective deployment of AMIS. We regularly discuss this with the AU and any problems are pursued with the Government of Sudan directly by Ministers and via our embassy in Khartoum.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he has had with the members of the UN Security Council regarding greater co-operation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the African Union to promote stability and security in Darfur; [40502]

(2) what discussions he has had with the members of the UN Security Council regarding the possible role of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the long-term stability of Darfur. [40503]

Ian Pearson: We regularly discuss such issues with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and with members of the UN Security Council. The DPKO is responsible for the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) which liaises closely with the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). UNMIS and the African Union (AU) maintain close and regular contact and have undertaken joint activities on the ground in Darfur, such as training in policing and operational planning. They have also agreed that AU personnel will provide escorts for UNMIS human rights observers throughout Darfur. Additionally, the DPKO runs the UN Assistance Cell to the AU based in Addis Ababa, which helps support the AU in planning and providing technical advice for AMIS and works closely with other partners to facilitate the AU Commission's efforts to secure required resources and other support needs for AMIS. We will continue to encourage both the DPKO and the AU to co-operate closely to promote stability and security in Darfur.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether at the meeting of the General Affairs Council of the EU on 21 and 22 November 2005 he proposed supplying tactical lift helicopters to the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur; [42182]

(2) whether at the meeting of the EU General Affairs Council on 21 and 22 November 2005 he proposed assisting the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur by providing it with output from satellite surveillance; [42183]

(3) whether at the meeting of the EU General Affairs Council on 21 and 22 November 2005 he proposed providing intelligence from electronic interception to the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur. [42184]

Ian Pearson: The meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the EU on 21 and 22 November 2005 discussed the EU's Strategy for Africa in detail, including the need for increased support for peace and security throughout the continent: there was no specific discussion on Sudan.

The UK and other international partners recently participated in a joint assessment mission with the African Union (AU) to examine the effectiveness of the AU Mission in Sudan. The recommendations and conclusions of this report were discussed by the AU at their Political and Security Council meeting on 12 January. We have made clear that we stand ready to help the AU implement the recommendations of this report and improve the effectiveness of the mission.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the treatment of *(a)* dissidents and *(b)* pro-democracy campaigners in Zimbabwe. [42438]

Ian Pearson: We and our EU partners judged the March 2005 presidential elections as neither free nor fair. In addition to the human rights situation, we held reservations about the election environment. We therefore commend the 5 December 2005 African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights resolution on human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, available at http://www.zlhr.org.zw/media/releases/jan_02_06.htm.

Until there is the full restoration of democratic accountability, respect for human rights and the rule of law, the Government will continue to support those working for peaceful change in Zimbabwe.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Zimbabwe; and what assessment he has made of the prospects for the restoration of democracy in that country. [42439]

Ian Pearson: The political situation remains dire. Mugabe's ZANU(PF) Government continues to tighten its grip on power, including by clamping down on political and social challenge through the illegal confiscation of passports and the harassment of journalists and the trade unionists.

Until Mugabe changes his policies, Zimbabwe will continue to suffer and ordinary citizens will be denied their basic and fundamental rights. Pressure to reform from within Africa is growing, and frustration within Zimbabwe is building. We will continue to support all those who are working towards the restoration of good governance in Zimbabwe.

CABINET OFFICE

Christmas Celebrations

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what measures his Department took to celebrate Christmas in 2005. [42379]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office provided decorated Christmas trees in some buildings. The Department had a corporate greeting card which was sent to people with whom we had worked during 2005. 100 per cent. of the material of the card was from sustainable managed forests, and 40 per cent. of its cost went to charity.

A number of Cabinet Office employees attended and participated in the Whitehall Carol Service organised by the Whitehall-wide Christian Network. Participants included myself and Sir Gus O'Donnell, the Cabinet Secretary, who gave a reading at the service.

Employees organised their own work unit celebrations in the form of meals or parties and some employees decorated their work areas as agreed with their management unit at their own cost. Christmas themed meals were sold on set days in departmental employee canteens.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41258]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The information requested for the Cabinet Office is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41347]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The number of cars owned by the Cabinet Office; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model, is shown in the table.

Number, model, fuel type and efficiency of cars owned by the Department

Make/model	*Type of petrol*	*Fuel efficiency*
2 × Toyota Prius	Hybrid electricity/ petrol	65.7 mpg (combined)
Vauxhall Vectra LS DTI	Diesel	10.76 average miles/ltr
Ford Focus LX TD DI	Diesel	10.47 average miles/ltr
Peugeot 406 GLX HDI	Diesel	9.52 average miles/ltr
LDV 400 Convoy Minibus	Diesel	5.78 average miles/ltr

For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the GCDA, my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Transport has asked the Chief Executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

All cars owned and leased are used whilst undertaking official business/duties.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41281]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office does not deliver services directly to the public which may be open to identity fraud. Therefore the Department does not provide this training for their front desk or administrative staff.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in the Southend West constituency. [41754]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not own any land or property in the Southend West constituency.

Departmental Estate (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* land, *(b)* property and *(c)* other assets his Department owns in Gravesham constituency. [43279]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not own any land, property or other assets in the Gravesham constituency.

Departmental Land/Property

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42897]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not own any land or property in the Castle Point constituency.

Electronic Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what provisions the Government has made in relation to Implementing Electronic Government to facilitate *(a)* electronic exchange of property information between local authorities and the Valuation Office Agency and *(b)* extend the use of geographical information systems by local authorities. [42603]

Mr. Woolas: One of the 22 Local e-Gov National Projects was Valuebill, which examined ways of effectively and efficiently linking local government and the Valuation Office Agency. This project has now been completed and is being rolled out by London Connects. With regard to geographical information systems, these are readily available commercial products, which local authorities have been able to procure in the same way as any other business software package, according to business need. Local e-government priority outcome G14 requires all local authorities in England to provide

"GIS-based presentation of information on roadworks in the local area, including contact details and updated daily".

This outcome is required to be implemented by the end of March 2006.

English Partnerships

Mr. Benton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria English Partnerships used in deciding to end support for housing market renewal land remediation schemes in South Sefton. [41243]

Yvette Cooper: English Partnerships (EP) is continuing to support housing market renewal schemes in Merseyside.

In Sefton, English Partnerships has already invested in acquiring properties in the Bootle area for a combination of refurbishment, new building and some demolition. Planning permission has been granted for two housing association projects providing affordable homes and work is expected to begin in February 2006.

English Partnerships has also provided funding for the acquisition of four former industrial sites and the remediation of one of those sites.

Any further investment by English Partnerships in Sefton will be dependent upon the identification of projects which deliver strategic and transformational physical change which could not be otherwise achieved, and the availability of funding (in addition to Housing Market Renewal Fund allocations, of which some £9 million has been allocated to Sefton in 2005–6).

Funding for housing market renewal areas has been increasing year by year, and against that background and an updated agenda for English Partnerships, English Partnerships is now taking a more strategic role in housing market renewal areas going forward.

In such areas, English Partnerships is no longer providing general funding to assist land assembly and demolition. It is intended that core housing market renewal funding will be used for these purposes. Instead, English Partnership will focus on a limited number of major strategic interventions which fit English Partnerships role in delivering and supporting regeneration projects of national significance, and which would not otherwise be achievable. By definition these projects will be large scale, complex in nature and involve transforming rundown urban areas.

English Partnerships is also continuing to offer valuable advice and support to pathfinders, including on masterplanning, delivery models and best practice drawn from other national programmes.

Local Government Compensation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of compensation claims to local government was in 2004–05; and what assessment the Government has made of the effect of the trend towards compensation claims on local government. [42608]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

London Gateway Port Harbour

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister why the representations made by the hon. Member for Castle Point on the London Gateway Port Harbour proposal during 2005 were not included in his most recent circular letter listing representations received. [43312]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Secretary of State circulated on 9 January representations he received in direct response to his minded approval letter of 20 July 2005 on the proposed London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order in which he had invited representations on certain particular matters. The hon. Members letters sent before the Secretary of State's letter of 20 July were taken in account in the writing of that letter.

It remains open to the hon. Member to make a representation in response to the invitation contained in the Secretary of State's letter of 9 January.

Official Residences (Council Tax)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) pursuant to his answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 782–3W, on official residences (council tax), whether *(a)* he and *(b)* a civil servant

registered his residence at Admiralty House with Westminster City Council as a second home for council tax purposes; [43381]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 782–3W, on official residences (council tax), whether he has had his council tax bill for his residence in Hull paid from public funds in each year since 1997–98; [43382]

(3) pursuant to his answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 782–3W, on official residences (council tax), on what date he became aware that his council tax bill on his Admiralty House residence was being paid from public funds. [43383]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The answer given by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 782W, set out in full the arrangements for the payment of council tax on his official residences.

Park Police (Newham)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations his Office has received on the activities of Newham council's park police. [33162]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has had no representation on the activities of Newham council's park police as this does not fall under ODPM remit.

South East Plan

Mr. Soames: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what estimate he has made of how many additional *(a)* general practitioners, *(b)* hospitals, *(c)* health centres, *(d)* teachers, *(e)* primary schools, *(f)* secondary schools, *(g)* further education institutions, *(h)* police officers, *(i)* police stations, *(j)* court facilities, *(k)* social workers, *(l)* other care workers, *(m)* fire officers and *(n)* fire stations will be required in West Sussex in relation to the additional 58,000 houses indicated in the South East Plan; [42372]

(2) what assessment he has made of what improvements to transport infrastructure will be required before an additional 58,000 houses can be built in West Sussex, as indicated in the South East Plan. [42373]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not made any such estimates. The South East Plan is still being drafted by the South East England Regional Assembly. The Assembly expects to submit the remainder to Government at the end of March 2006. Thereafter the plan will be subject of public consultation and also testing by an independent panel, to enable Government to reach conclusions about the amount of housing required in West Sussex and all other parts of the South East.

Vacant Dwellings

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the reasons for dwellings being vacant in *(a)* each local authority in Essex and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years. [42385]

Yvette Cooper: It is for local housing authorities to assess, as part of their strategic housing function, the reasons why dwellings in their areas are vacant. In general, the Government recognises that dwellings are vacant for a variety of reasons. About half of all private sector vacant dwellings are empty for less than six months and many of these will be unoccupied for transactional reasons to do with sale and renovation and will come back into occupation once sold or renovated. Dwellings that are vacant for non-transactional reasons often have problems associated with disrepair that must be overcome. From April local authorities will have new powers to bring empty houses back into use. We urge every local authority to use their new powers to improve housing in their area.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria the Valuation Office Agency is applying in assessing whether a residential property starts incurring a business rate liability if a householder works at home in whole or part; and when these criteria were last amended. [42609]

Mr. Woolas: The criteria applied by valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) are set out in the council tax manual published by the VOA on its website at www.voa.gov.uk. The guidance was last updated on 4 March 2004 to reflect the decision of the Lands Tribunal in the case of Tully *v.* Jorgensen (VO) 2003 RA 233.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what role the Valuation Office Agency plays in valuing properties owned by *(a)* central government, *(b)* public sector agencies and *(c)* local authorities other than local authority housing stock. [43007]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency provides valuation advice to central government departments, public sector agencies and local authorities through its District Valuer Services business stream.

The range of valuation advice encompasses asset Valuations for resource accounting and compulsory purchase; advice on the purchase and sale of property; specialist building surveying advice and valuations of mineral bearing property, land fill sites and plant and machinery.

Wind Turbine Projects

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what planning guidance his Department has issued in respect of wind turbine developments on domestic premises. [42324]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Statement 22 "Renewable Energy" published in 2004 sets out the Government's planning policies for all types and scales of renewable energy projects. PPS22 sets a positive framework for the development of renewable energy by ensuring that local planning authorities include policies in their plans to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources.

In particular, it notes that small scale renewable energy projects can provide a limited but nonetheless valuable contribution to meeting local and national needs.

PPS22 does not contain specific advice on the issue of wind turbine developments on domestic premises. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be reviewing the relevant Part of the General Permitted Development Order later this year, to see if it would be appropriate to extent householders' permitted development rights in respect of the installation of micro-generation technology.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures are in place to notify widows and widowers of the monetary benefits available to them when a spouse has passed away. [42170]

Mr. Plaskitt: We keep under review the way that information is made available about benefits so that bereaved people, at this very difficult time in their lives, know about their possible right to benefit and can act on it at the right time. Information is available from the local Jobcentre Plus and social security offices, and the Department for Work and Pensions website gives information about bereavement benefits together with leaflets and claim forms for downloading. Leaflets NP45 "A guide to Bereavement Benefit", D49 "What to do after a death in England and Wales" and D49S "What to do after a death in Scotland" are available for professional advisers and the public, and are reviewed and revised as necessary annually.

As well as providing traditional sources of information, we have been working in partnership with funeral directors, registrars and voluntary groups such as Cruse, National Association of Widows and Citizens Advice Bureaux who may be contacted by bereaved people. In addition we will continue to look for opportunities across Government and their services as they develop, to improve advice about this particular benefit, to those most in need of it—the newly bereaved.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* smallest, *(b)* average and *(c)* largest amount fraudulently claimed in benefits which has resulted in a prosecution in respect of which all proceedings are complete is since 1997. [39536]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The smallest amount fraudulently overpaid in benefits which has resulted in a prosecution is £0.00. Examples of cases where there has been no benefit overpayment are; collusive employers; attempted duplicate encashment of benefit cheques and order books; aiding and abetting; and identity fraud involving applications for a national insurance number.

Information regarding the average and largest amounts fraudulently claimed in cases which lead to prosecution is not available as such records are not maintained.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has spent on advertising in respect of benefit fraud in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [41984]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

£000

	Advertising spent
2001–02	8,039
2002–03	35
2003–04	8,383
2004–05	6,017
2005–06	4,553

Notes:
1. Figures are for the advertising spent for the Targeting Fraud (2001 to 2002) and Targeting Benefit Fraud (2003 to 2006) campaigns. The figure for 2005–06 is for invoices paid in the year to date.
2. All figures are exclusive of VAT.
3. The figures in these tables refer to media spend only, excluding production and other costs.
4. All figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the national targets are for the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate; and what the performance of relevant offices in South Devon has been against those targets. [41995]

Mr. Plaskitt: Nationally, the three main business objectives of the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate for 2005–06 are; to complete 50 full and focused inspections; to complete two specialist inspections; and to complete 100 assignments by the Performance Development team.

The Benefit Fraud Inspectorate has no offices in South Devon.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of local authorities detected fraudulent claims for *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit resulted in prosecutions in each of the last six years. [42547]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information on the number of fraudulent claims for housing benefit and council tax benefit that have been detected is not available. Therefore it is not possible to provide the percentage of fraudulent claims that have been prosecuted.

The number of successful prosecutions for benefit fraud by local authorities in each of the last six years is given as follows.

Prosecutions and conviction for benefit fraud by local authorities

	Number of court summons issued (prosecutions)	*Number of successful prosecutions (convictions)*
1999–2000	—	861
2000–01	—	1,112
2001–02	2,101	1,732
2002–03	3,187	2,503
2003–04	4,601	3,747
2004–05	5,544	4,688
2005–06 (Q1 and Q2 only)	3,336	2,892

Note:
The number of court summons issued is not available prior to 2001–02.
Source:
Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit Management Information Returns.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to reduce the complexity of the benefits system. [41825]

Mr. Plaskitt: The National Audit Office in Annex A of its report "Dealing with the complexity of the benefits system", published on 18 November 2005, acknowledged that the Department has already taken a number of steps to tackle complexity. We announced at the Public Accounts Committee hearing on 7 December 2005 that we are setting up a dedicated benefit simplification team which will seek to build on those steps.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's expenditure was on each benefit listed in the 7 December 2005 Uprating Statement in each year from 1990–91 in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* real terms using 2003–04 prices. [41490]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information has been placed in the library.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the take-up rate of council tax benefit *(a)* in total and *(b)* by income decile; and if he will make a statement. [41575]

Mr. Plaskitt: The latest information on the take-up rate of council tax benefit is available in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2002/2003", a copy of which is in the Library.

The information is not available broken down by income decile.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to publish a bill on housing benefit reform; and if he will make a statement. [40884]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Government set out its intention in the Queen's speech to bring forward legislation by the end of this Parliamentary Session to reform support for housing costs. We will also be setting out more broadly our proposals for welfare reform in a Green Paper to be published shortly.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what evidence he has collected on the effect of the local housing allowance on work incentives in Pathfinder areas; and if he will make a statement. [40885]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department has commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of the nine Pathfinder local authorities where the local housing allowance is being tested. The evaluation is collecting evidence on work incentives in Pathfinder areas but this will not be reported upon until the end of the evaluation later this year.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average change has been in the amount of housing benefit overpayments going unrecovered in *(a)* Pathfinder and *(b)* non-Pathfinder areas since the Pathfinder pilots started. [40887]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of rolling out the local housing allowance to *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland if additional central funding was provided to benefit authorities to support the transition at a level comparable to the funding provided to Pathfinder authorities. [40917]

Mr. Plaskitt: Until the evaluation of the local housing allowance Pathfinders is complete and the design, timing and approach to a national rollout is determined, we are unable to say what amount of transitional funding would be made.

It is unlikely that funding provision to cover the transition to the local housing allowance would be identical under a national roll-out to that provided to the Pathfinder authorities, because of the additional costs associated with running and evaluating a pilot.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total housing benefit paid to residents was in *(a)* the London borough of Croydon and *(b)* Greater London in 2004–05. [41137]

Mr. Plaskitt: The total housing benefit paid in the London borough of Croydon for 2004–05 was £118,986,098. The total housing benefit paid in all London boroughs for 2004–05 was £3,396,902,703.

These figures are the gross expenditure amounts taken from the 2004–05 housing benefit audited final subsidy claims. As audit processes are not yet complete, the amounts are subject to change.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to include in the proposed Housing Benefit Bill a pilot scheme for the social rented sector and housing benefit sanctions for antisocial neighbours. [42735]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Government set out its intention in the Queen's speech to bring forward legislation by the end of this parliamentary session to reform support for housing costs. We will also be setting out more broadly our proposals for welfare reform in a Green Paper due to be published shortly.

The Government announced in the Respect Action Plan, published on 10 January, that it is considering the use of sanctions to ensure that those households who are evicted for antisocial behaviour take up help offered to them. If we decide to go ahead, we will look for a suitable legislative vehicle.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of raising all housing benefit and council tax benefit earned income disregards in line with inflation since 1988. [38495]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information necessary from which to make such an estimate is not available.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average shortfall resulting from the single room rent restriction on housing benefit has been in each year since its introduction. [38496]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Median rent shortfall for housing benefit claimants restricted by the single room rent

	£
1997–98	25
1998–99	24
1999–2000	24
2000–01	26
2001–02	26
2002–03	[1]
2003–04	30
2004–05	31

[1] A reliable estimate of the median shortfall in 2002–03 is not available due to data limitations.

Notes:
1. A shortfall is defined as the difference between the rent charged by the landlord and the maximum amount of housing benefit a claimant could receive. This does not take into account non-dependant deductions or any income over the applicable amount.
2. The average measure given in this response is the median as this will not be as influenced as the mean by a small number of extreme observations, some of which may be recorded incorrectly in the data. It is therefore more representative of the average rent shortfall.
3. The average rent shortfalls presented in the table apply only to those cases assessed under the single room rent restriction where this restriction results in a rent shortfall. Some cases assessed under the single room rent restriction will be bound by other Rent Officer restrictions and some will not face a shortfall. In 2004–05 three-quarters of all cases assessed under the single room rent restriction faced a shortfall as a result of this restriction.
4. Average rent shortfalls are rounded to the nearest pound.

Source:
Rent Officer data, England and Wales from 1997–98 to 2000–01 and England only from 2001–02 onwards.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will update the table on the number of households claiming means-tested benefits set out on 31 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 602W, broken down by *(a)* household type and *(b)* number of children. [42543]

Mr. Plaskitt: The most recent available information is in the following table.

Income support (IS), income-based jobseeker's allowance (JSA(IB)), housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB) recipients by family type: Great Britain, May 2003

	IS/JSA(IB)	HB	CTB
Single (no children)	2,977,000	2,195,000	2,728,000
Couple (no children)	442,000	439,000	686,000
Single parent (one child)	473,000	411,000	422,000
Single parent (two children)	315,000	293,000	306,000
Single parent (three or more children)	208,000	199,000	209,000
Couple (one child)	92,000	91,000	99,000
Couple (two children)	87,000	88,000	93,000
Couple (three or more children)	92,000	79,000	84,000
Total benefit units with at least one person receiving benefit	4,686,000	3,796,000	4,628,000
Total number of adults in benefit units where at least one person is receiving benefit	5,399,000	4,494,000	5,591,000
Total number of children in benefit units where at least one person is receiving benefit	2,431,000	2,244,000	2,348,000

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Numbers are based on 1 per cent., 5 per cent. and 100 per cent. samples, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. JSA(IB) figures have been derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. WPLS totals.
4. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
5. Income-based JSA includes cases with underlying entitlement to contribution-based JSA.
6. Council tax benefit totals exclude any second adult rebate cases.
7. Housing benefit figures exclude any extended payment cases.
8. Children are defined as children aged under 16 and young persons aged 16 to 18 in full time education.
9. There will be a significant overlap between the figures as most people receive both HB and CTB, and a significant proportion also receives IS or JSA.
10. Single parents are defined as all claimants with dependants and without a partner.
11. Figures may be affected by the introduction of the new tax credits in April 2003.
12. IS figures include MIG claimants.

Sources:
1. Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples.
2. Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) 100 per cent. data.
3. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2003.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people he estimates were entitled to but did not receive each benefit administered by his Department and its agencies in each year since 1997–98; what the sum of unclaimed benefit was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [41464]

Mr. Plaskitt: Estimates of the numbers entitled to, but not receiving the main income-related benefits administered by the DWP—minimum income guarantee/income support, jobseeker's allowance (income-based)—as well as local authority administered housing benefit and council tax benefit, can be found in the DWP publication series entitled: "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up", along with estimates of unclaimed benefit. Copies of the annual reports are held in the Library. The latest edition presents patterns in the take-up of each benefit, between 1997–98 and 2002–03.

These estimates predate the introduction of pension credit, which replaced MIG in October 2003. Estimates of pension credit will be published on 31 January 2006; this publication will include the first six months of pension credit. Estimates for the full year 2004–05 are expected to be published in May 2006.

Currently it is not possible to estimate take-up rates for disability living allowance and attendance allowance. Following a recommendation in "Meeting DWP's long-term information needs on disability: a feasibility report", (DWP Research report number 267), the Department is commissioning research to test two possible approaches to establish whether it is possible to estimate take-up rates for these benefits. Results will be available in 2007.

Information on other DWP administered benefits is not available.

Child Maintenance

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much child maintenance outstanding from 1993–94 to 2004–05 from non-resident parents with cases with the Child Support Agency resulted from *(a)* full maintenance assessments and maintenance calculations where the outstanding amount is deemed to be possibly uncollectable or collectable, *(b)* full maintenance assessments and maintenance calculations where the outstanding amount is deemed probably uncollectable, *(c)* interim maintenance assessments where the outstanding amount is deemed to be possibly uncollectable or collectable and *(d)* interim maintenance assessments where the outstanding amount is deemed to be probably uncollectable; and what proportion of each category of debt has been recovered. [27502]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much child maintenance outstanding from 1993–94 to 2004–05 from non-resident parents with cases with the Child Support Agency resulted from *(a)* full maintenance assessments and maintenance calculations where the outstanding amount is deemed to be possibly uncollectable or collectable, *(b)* full maintenance assessments and maintenance calculations where the outstanding amount is deemed probably uncollectable, *(c)* interim maintenance assessments where the outstanding amount is deemed to be possibly uncollectable or collectable and *(d)* interim maintenance assessments where the outstanding amount is deemed to be probably uncollectable; and what proportion of each category of debt has been recovered.

The tables provided show Agency debt from 1994–1995 to 2004–2005 split by collectability and assessment type. These are cumulative figures representing debt arising from the respective year and all previous years as no debt has ever been written off by the Agency.

As reported in the 2004/05 annual report, the Agency updated the classification criteria used to analyse debt. This was to reflect improved management information around the recoverability of debt, resulting in more debt being classified as collectable. The outstanding amounts will be pursued vigorously through the Enforcement Directorate.

The Agency currently receives over £585 million maintenance per year however there is still a culture surrounding its activities whereby some non-resident parents perceive it as acceptable not to comply with the Agency and make their maintenance payments. The Agency has therefore begun to take steps to tackle this issue.

Debt has been increasing year on year because many non-resident parents actively avoid their obligations for example by changing jobs when the Agency imposes enforcement action on them or changing addresses whenever the Agency locates them. The Agency recognises that it needs to make more use of its powers of enforcement, and has started to take steps to do this, however this is constrained by the requirements of the legal process and dependent on decisions made by the courts.

A dedicated Enforcement Directorate has been set up to focus on the collection of debt from the more difficult cases and the Agency is aggressively pursuing non-compliant clients more pro-actively than in the past. The directorate's aims are also to change the culture to one where it is not acceptable to deliberately avoid payment of maintenance.

The creation of the Enforcement Directorate has already improved the Agency's enforcement performance and effectiveness with improved outcomes at the more routine stages of enforcement for example, bailiff action, third party debt orders and charging orders.

The number of liability orders granted is improving with more than 4,500 liability orders being granted already this financial year. Also this year the amount collected by bailiff teams has doubled to £3 million and the Agency has achieved successful outcomes in increasing numbers of committal actions. In addition, the directorate has achieved collections of £8.39 million from April to November 2005, with November achieving the highest in month collections of £1.42 million.

The actions outlined above should therefore start to reduce the historic debt levels and improve compliance.

The achievements are modest in the context of the total debt but demonstrate that more focussed enforcement action can be successful. I have also made recommendations to Ministers on further improving enforcement following my review of the operations of the Agency.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Child maintenance outstanding as reported in annual report and accounts

£ million

Cumulative Agency Debt position at year end 2004–05	*Full maintenance assessment*	*Maintenance calculation*	*Interim maintenance assessment*	*Default maintenance decision*
Collectable	459.19	88.9	78.5	11.2
Possibly uncollectable	290.24	n/a	309.30	n/a
Probably uncollectable	1,017.26	28.5	938.66	n/a
Deferred	30.83	n/a	0.17	n/a
Total	1,797.52	117.40	1,326.63	11.20

Maintenance collected as reported in the annual report and accounts

£ million

Sums received	*Full maintenance assessments*	*Maintenance calculations*	*Interim maintenance assessments*	*Default maintenance assessments*	*Total*
2004–05	482.70	93.02	8.78	0.91	585.41
2003–04	549.14	18.89	11.96	0.28	580.27
2002–03	558.57	n/a	13.98	n/a	572.55
2001–02	513.93	n/a	14.52	n/a	528.45
2000–01	483.84	n/a	18.71	n/a	502.55
1999–2000	437.25	n/a	23.43	n/a	460.68
1998–99	370.08	n/a	22.30	n/a	392.38
1997–98	286.48	n/a	19.68	n/a	306.16
1996–97	201.41	n/a	11.80	n/a	213.21
1995–96	127.73	n/a	6.72	n/a	134.45
1994–95	74.20	n/a	—	n/a	74.20

n/a = Not available.

Notes:

1. The annual report and accounts for previous years were re-published in 1997–98, due to a change in accounting policy in reporting collectability of the debt. Also, the Agency did not publish audited accounts in 1993–94; and no figures are therefore shown for this year.
2. The new scheme was launched on 3 March 2003, and (monies from new scheme cases and default maintenance decisions) began to accrue in the 2002–03. Information is provided from this date.
3. The "Deferred" figures represent arrears maintenance that the Agency has agreed not to collect from non-resident parents because the Agency was wholly or partly responsible for the build-up of those arrears.
4. Full maintenance assessments and interim maintenance assessments include new and old scheme cases. Maintenance calculated and default maintenance decisions are new scheme only.
5. The Agency is unable to provide the proportion recovered for each debt category. The principle behind the recoverability of debt as reported in the annual report and accounts is based on a sample of cases examined as part of a National Audit Office approved annual debt analysis exercise.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many requests for information Child Support Agency staff may make to the DVLA each month; how many requests were made in each month since 2001; and what the average time taken to respond was. [30092]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many requests for information Child Support Agency staff may make to the DVLA each month; how many requests were made in each month since 2001; and what the average time taken to respond was.

Under the terms of the July 2002 Service Level Agreement, the Child Support Agency may issue up to 70 requests for information from the DVLA per calendar month (840 per year) nationally.

The Agency holds robust data on the number of requests for information issued to the DVLA for each month since 1st December 2003:

	Number
2003	
December 2003	29
2004	
January	48
February	54
March	60
April	56
May	52
June	48
July	47
August	54
September	44
October	39
November	52
December	45
2005	
January	47
February	46
March	45
April	47
May	41
June	60
July	41
August	33
September	55
October	45

We can also say with accuracy that a total of 871 requests for information were issued to the DVLA in the period from 1st April 2002 to 30th November 2003, although we cannot break this down on a monthly basis.

We do not currently have robust information on volumes of requests issued to the DVLA earlier than April 2002.

The average time taken to obtain a response from the DVLA is not available, but under the terms of the Service Level Agreement requests for information from the Child Support Agency should be returned within 10 working days of their receipt by the DVLA. The table below outlines the current success rate achieved against that target in the current financial year:

	Percentage
2005	
April	90
May	66
June	40
July	71
August	82
September	87
October	100

I hope you find this information useful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of cases on the Child Support Agency old scheme have been reassessed in the last three years. [30004]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of cases on the Child Support Agency old scheme have been reassessed in the last three years.

The information requested is not available.

I am sorry I can't be more helpful at this time.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what contingency plans he has prepared in relation to computer systems used by the Child Support Agency; [30018]

(2) by what date he will decide whether to cease using the new computer system provided by EDS to assess Child Support Agency cases; and if he will make a statement. [30023]

Mr. Plaskitt: We recognise that there are ongoing problems with the service delivered to clients of the Child Support Agency via the computer system. These are unacceptable and we continue to work closely with EDS to effect improvement.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Scotland have been non-compliant with their Child Support Agency assessment in each quarter since the first quarter of 1996. [31129]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Scotland have been non-compliant with their Child Support Agency assessment in each quarter since the first quarter of 1996.

Such information as is available is set out in the attached table.

The information requested cannot be extracted for new scheme cases and old scheme cases on the new computer system in Scotland for the period March 2003 to the present. Therefore the table refers to old scheme cases prior to the introduction of the new scheme.

It should be noted that whilst the number of non compliant cases increased by two thousand between February 1996 and February 2003, the overall caseload also increased over the same period. The compliance rate in reality increased over this time from 58 to 76 per cent.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Number of non compliant Child Support Agency collection service cases in Scotland, in each quarter from February 1996 to February 2003

	Non compliant cases
February 1996	7,000
May 1996	6,000
August 1996	7,000
November 1996	7,000
February 1997	7,000
May 1997	7,000
August 1997	6,000
November 1997	6,000
February 1998	6,000
May 1998	7,000
August 1998	8,000
November 1998	8,000
February 1999	9,000
May 1999	7,000
August 1999	9,000
November 1999	10,000
February 2000	10,000
May 2000	10,000
August 2000	10,000
November 2000	11,000
February 2001	12,000
May 2001	12,000
August 2001	12,000
November 2001	13,000
February 2002	12,000
May 2002	10,000
August 2002	9,000
November 2002	8,000
February 2003	9,000

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Compliance is defined as all those cases which are open and have paid money via the collection service in Scotland over the preceding quarter.
3. The table only includes old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment. Those with a punitive interim maintenance assessment are excluded from this analysis, in line with the Agency's target definition.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what use has been made by the Child Support Agency of *(a)* attachment of earnings orders, *(b)* withdrawal of driving licences and *(c)* other enforcement powers in each of the last three years; and what estimate he has made of the cost of tagging absent parents failing to pay monies owed for their children. [41106]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Child Support Agency does not use attachment of earnings orders; the child support legislation allows for a deduction from earnings order (DEO) to be made.

The following table below shows the number of cases with a DEO as a method of maintenance collection in the particular month stated. This table also shows the percentage of cases this affects.

Month	*Cases with DEO as a method of maintenance collection*	*Percentage of cases with DEO as a method of collection*
November 2002	134,000	24
November 2003	—	—
November 2004	131,000	22
September 2005	147,000	22

Notes:
1. Numbers include deduction from earnings requests (DER's), which are issued when the non-resident parent is in the armed forces.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Robust information covering the period May 2003 to February 2004 is not currently available.
4. The number of cases includes those old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment, and those new scheme cases with either a full maintenance calculation, or a default maintenance decision. Old scheme cases with a punitive interim maintenance assessment (an imposed assessment due to the non co-operation of the non-resident parent), a small number of which would have deductions from earnings orders in place, are excluded from this analysis in line with the Agency's target definitions, as are new scheme cases being processed clerically. There are also currently around 5,000 cases for which the method of payment is unknown, some of which could be DEOs.

Committal to prison or disqualification from holding a driving license are enforcement sanctions used as a last resort by the agency when all other enforcement measures have failed. The court will decide which of the sanctions is the most appropriate.

The following table shows the committal to prison and disqualification from driving outcomes in Great Britain.

Number

	Suspended committal sentence	*Committal sentence*	*Driving licence—suspended sentence*	*Driving licence—disqualified*
2003–04	95	8	9	1
2004–05	224	8	31	5
November 2005–06	212	8	13	4
Total	531	24	53	10

The following table shows the number of litigation cases instigated in England and Wales.

Number

	County court judgements	*Bailiffs*	*Third party debt orders*	*Charging orders*
2003–04	513	3062	1395	922
2004–05	1180	4446	1292	851
November 2005–06	1348	4962	1132	878
Total	3041	12470	3819	2651

The following table shows the number of litigation cases instigated in Scotland.

Number

	Arrestments	*Attachments*	*Attached goods auction*	*Letters of inhibition*
2003–04	768	81	4	102
2004–05	457	115	2	232
November 2005–06	323	97	2	331
Total	1548	293	8	665

We have made no estimation of the cost of tagging.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what targets his Department has for improvement in customer perception of the performance of the Child Support Agency; and if he will make a statement. [41333]

Mr. Plaskitt: Ministers will set targets for 2006–07 which will be aimed at ensuring real, sustained progress towards performance improvements and delivery.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidelines are given to staff at the Child Support Agency in relation to the circumstances in which deduction of earnings orders can be imposed; and if he will make a statement. [41371]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidelines are given to staff at the Child Support Agency in relation to the circumstances in which deduction of earnings orders can be imposed; and if he will make a statement.

A deduction from earnings order is a method of enforcement action to be used on non-resident parents in employment if there is an indication that payment will not be made or when payment breaks down. The law does not require the Agency to repeatedly warn clients or wait for a history of non-payment to emerge.

Child Support Agency staff are advised of the action to take in cases where a deduction from earnings order is appropriate in on-line procedural guidance, Adviceline bulletins and through training. They are asked to consider imposing a deduction from earnings order on a case if any of the following situations arise:

Other methods of payment have been ineffective with payments late, missed or partial.

The non-resident parent fails to respond to arrears notices, warning letters or calls.

The Agency holds a confident employer details for the non-resident parent.

The non-resident parent voluntarily requests payment direct from earnings.

Our staff are advised that whether or not a deduction from earnings order can be imposed depends upon the type of income the non-resident parent is receiving. I have listed below a summary of the additional scenarios that should be taken into account before a deduction from earnings order is imposed:

The non-resident parent has two or more employers

The non-resident parent is not classed as employed.

The non-resident parent is self-employed

The non-resident parent is in receipt of Statutory Sick Pay

The non-resident parent is in receipt of Statutory Maternity Pay,

The non-resident parent is in receipt of Statutory Redundancy Pay.

The non-resident parent is the subject of Sequestration (in Scotland).

The non-resident parent's employer is outside of Child Support Agency jurisdiction.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether it is his policy that there will be no major reductions in front line staffing at the Child Support Agency; and if he will make a statement. [41385]

Mr. Plaskitt: As stated in the Government response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee report on 24 March 2005, there will be no major reductions in front line staffing until the new computer system is working effectively.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will publish the assessment of the Child Support Agency's business transformation plan made by the new chief executive; and if he will make a statement. [41400]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have received the report from the chief executive and we are considering the findings. The Secretary of State will make an announcement on child support shortly.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he is taking to strengthen the Child Support Agency's powers to require non-resident parents to provide information on their current address and employment details; and if he will make a statement. [41545]

Mr. Plaskitt: It is a criminal offence, under Section 14A of the Child Support Act, for not supplying information to the Agency when requested to do so or by knowingly providing false information. This offence currently carries a maximum £1,000 fine.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the Child Support Agency has responded to representations to it from men who were deemed to be fathers without care but subsequently proved not to be the father for compensation or interest on the sums taken from them in addition to reimbursement of the sum itself; and if he will make a statement. [42683]

Mr. Plaskitt: If maintenance has already been paid by the alleged non-resident parent when he is found not to be the father, he will receive a refund of any maintenance paid.

Compensation or interest would not normally be paid in addition unless there has been maladministration on the part of the Agency. Each case is considered on its merits.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost has been of running the Child Support Agency including all capital costs, in each year since 1994–95; and if he will make a statement. [21433]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January, 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total cost has been of running the Child Support Agency including all capital costs in each year since 1994–95. The information that you requested is in the following table:

£ million

	Net administration costs	*Capital expenditure*	*Maintenance paid*
1994–95	192.393	1.993	82.4
1995–96	199.268	1.880	128.63
1996–97	224.525	3.937	207.75
1997–98	225.942	1.375	298.80
1998–99	231.174	2.458	389.96
1999–2000	260.333	4.310	457.44
2000–01	250.046	1.423	498.86
2001–02	290.413	0.247	526.80
2002–03	294.286	1.467	570.69
2003–04	322.983	0.517	580.09
2004–05	325.619	0.457	583.15

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many Child Support Agency cases which have gone to court those paying maintenance have been ordered to make repayments over a period of longer than 16 years. [26099]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many Child Support Agency cases which have gone to court those paying maintenance have been ordered to make repayments over a period of longer than 16 years.

I am not able to provide this information as the Agency does not hold data that can identify what repayment arrangements have been ordered by the courts. I am sorry I could not be more helpful.

Disability Discrimination Act

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has carried out research into awareness of the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 for recruitment and employment of disabled people among *(a)* small, *(b)* medium-sized and *(c)* large businesses; and what steps he is taking to increase awareness among such businesses with particular reference to enabling access to workplaces. [30943]

Mrs. McGuire: The primary impact on recruitment and employment of disabled people among businesses of all sizes stems from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003. These Regulations significantly extended the employment provisions of the 1995 Act to cover small employers and all previously excluded occupations, except the armed forces, from 1 October 2004. Research into the impact of the Act has formed part of DWP's on-going programme of research into the awareness of Disability Discrimination legislation.

The Department commissioned two research projects to determine employers' awareness of, and their responses, to the duties introduced in October 2004, The results were published in 'Research Report 202: Disability in the workplace: Employers and service providers responses to the Disability Discrimination Act in 2003 and preparation for 2004 changes'; and 'Research Report 277: Disability in the workplace: Small employers' awareness and responses to the

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the October 2004 duties'. Copies of these reports can be found in the House of Commons Library.

DWP is planning research that will continue to analyse the awareness of and response to the Disability Discrimination Act, particularly among those with duties specific to the DDA 2005. Employers of all sizes will be captured both within the survey and case study aspect of this research, and results will be published in a report due in autumn 2006.

DWP launched a further awareness campaign on 1 December 2005 aimed at reminding small businesses about the duties placed on them by the October 2004 legislative changes.

Electronic Data Systems

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions his Department has had with the National Audit Office on the Child Support Agency contract with Electronic Data Systems. [41665]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what representations his Department has received from the National Audit Office on the background to the Child Support Agency contract with Electronic Data Systems.

The Select Committee Report in January 2005, on the Performance of the Child Support Agency provided Government with a number of recommendations. Recommendation 3 focused on the CSA contract with EDS:

"We recommend that the National Audit Office undertakes a comprehensive study of the background to the CSA contract with EDS as soon as it is feasible to do so, and that Parliament should debate the findings in Government time on the floor of the House."

The Government noted this recommendation in its response to the Select Committee in March 2005.

National Audit Office has commenced an investigation into Child Support Reforms, which will address this recommendation. It is currently in the process of gathering evidence.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Job Losses (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what support his Department will provide to people in Warrington who lose their jobs as a result of the closure of the Safeway distribution centre. [43242]

Margaret Hodge: Funding has been approved to enable the Jobcentre Plus Rapid Response Service to support the Safeway workers in a variety of ways. A Skills Training Analysis will be conducted to assess individuals' existing skills and to identify specific needs in relation to further employment. In addition, funding will enable the provision of job focused training if not available from other sources or Jobcentre Plus partners.

Specific funding has also been allocated to enable Jobcentre Plus staff within the affected district to assist individuals through this process, giving information, advice and guidance.

Additionally, Jobcentre Plus staff are working closely with the company to provide help by:

attending planning meetings with the company's Human Resources team;

holding one to one briefing sessions for affected staff;

placing financial advisers with the company, initially for two weeks;

holding a mini Jobsfair at the company;

conducting interviews for claiming benefit on the company premises and issuing all relevant paperwork;

making arrangements to take claims on Saturday mornings at the Jobcentre;

arranging for personal advisers to contact staff currently off sick to offer assistance.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of increasing the level of jobseeker's allowance (JSA) by *(a)* £1 per week, *(b)* £5 per week and *(c)* £10 per week for each rate of JSA. [41384]

Mr. Plaskitt: No such estimate has been made.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the off-flow from jobseeker's allowance found work in each year from 1990–91; and if he will make a statement. [41438]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available prior to 1998. For the available information, I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 381W.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged over 50 years claimed jobseeker's allowance (JSA) in Houghton and Washington, East constituency in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04 and *(d)* 2004–05; and what percentage (i) remained on JSA, (ii) found work, (iii) moved onto income support and (iv) moved onto incapacity benefit in each year. [42446]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claims where the claimant is aged 50 or over in the Houghton and Washington, East parliamentary constituency and percentage who left the benefit

	Case load	*Percentage left JSA*
2001–02	900	77.8
2002–03	900	66.7
2003–04	1,000	70.0
2004–05	1,100	81.8

Notes:
1. Figures refer to financial years from 1 April to 31 March.
2. All figures refer to JSA claims where the claimant is aged 50 or over. People who have had multiple JSA claims will be counted more than once.
3. Per cent. left JSA refers to the percentage of JSA claims (where the claimant was aged 50 or over) that had terminated by the end of the financial year.
4. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred; percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. terminations dataset.

National Insurance Numbers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applicants for national insurance numbers have been waiting more than *(a)* one month, *(b)* three months and *(c)* six months for them to be issued. [42214]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not collected centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Non-resident Parents (Maintenance Payments)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* custodial sentences have been imposed and *(b)* driving licences have been confiscated for the persistent non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in each of the last three years (i) in the United Kingdom and (ii) in the Middlesbrough courts area. [38943]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* custodial sentences have been imposed and *(b)* driving licences have been confiscated for the persistent non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in each of the last three years (i) in the United Kingdom and (ii) in the Middlesbrough courts area.

The information you requested is set out as follows:

Committal to prison and the removal of driving licences in Great Britain:

	Number of cases referred to court	*Suspended prison sentences*	*Committal to prison*	*Suspended driving licence withdrawals*	*Driving licence withdrawals*
2003–04	240	95	8	9	1
2004–05	662	224	8	31	5
2005–06 (April to November)	554	212	8	13	4

Notes to table:

(i) The figures are given for Great Britain since the Northern Ireland Child Support Agency administers child support in Northern Ireland.

(ii) The fact that the number of suspensions and actual penalties is less than half the number of referrals is explained by the number of debtors who enter into agreements to pay rather than attend court. Similarly, only a very small number of debtors actually go to prison or lose their driving licences because the courts normally suspend a sentence on condition that the defendant commits to pay.

No custodial sentences have been imposed in the Middlesbrough courts area.

One driving licence has been withdrawn in the Middlesbrough courts area. This was in June 2005.

I hope this information is helpful.

Pensioners (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners in Castle Point who do not claim their full entitlement of benefits and allowances. [42828]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

Latest estimates of the number of pensioners who are entitled to but not receiving the minimum income guarantee, housing benefit and council tax benefit are available on a national basis only. They can be found in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2002/2003". Copies of the publication are available in the Library.

These estimates are published annually in the DWP report "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-up". The next set of statistics, due to be released on 31 January 2006, will contain figures for the first six months of pension credit.

Currently it is not possible to estimate take-up rates for disability living allowance and attendance allowance. The Department is commissioning research to establish whether it is possible to estimate take-up rates for these benefits. Results will be available in 2007.

Information on the number of pensioners entitled to but not receiving other DWP administered benefits is not available.

Pensions

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate expenditure on state pensions with the winter fuel allowance and pension credit being abolished, state second pension being retained and the basic state pension being raised to the level of the guaranteed credit and increased in line with earnings thereafter for *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2010, *(c)* 2020, *(d)* 2030, *(e)* 2040 and *(f)* 2050 as a percentage of gross domestic product. [34789]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table:

	Total expenditure (percentage)
2006	5.4
2010	5.8
2020	6.3
2030	7.7
2040	8.6
2050	9.3

Notes:

1. The figures include spending on basic state pensions, additional pensions, over 75s TV licence and Christmas bonuses.
2. Expenditure on basic state pension, additional pension and other pensioner benefits are based on PBR 2005 long-term projections for future GB benefit expenditure.
3. The additional gross cost of raising the BSP to the GC level from 2006–07 has been provided by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD). These figures are for GB only.
4. All figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1 percent.

5. There would also be a reduction in spending on other means tested benefits such as housing and council tax benefit and increase in tax revenues if the basic state pension was linked to guarantee credit level and then uprated by earnings.
6. Under this hypothetical policy change there would be losers. People who had less than full BSP or received pension credit with a disabled or carers premium may lose under this system.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate expenditure on state pensions with the winter fuel and pension credit being abolished, state second pension being abolished and the basic state pension being raised to the level of the guaranteed credit and increased in line with earnings thereafter for *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2010, *(c)* 2020, *(d)* 2030, *(e)* 2040 and *(f)* 2050 as a percentage of gross domestic product. [34848]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table:

	Total expenditure (percentage)
2006	5.4
2010	5.8
2020	6.2
2030	7.3
2040	7.8
2050	7.9

Notes:
1. The figures include spending on basic state pensions, additional pensions, over 75s TV license and Christmas bonuses.
2. Expenditure on basic state pension, additional pension and other pensioner benefits are based on PBR 2005 long-term projections for future GB benefit expenditure.
3. The figures for additional pension are based on the assumption that all SEPRS and S2P accruals up to 5 of April 2006 would still be paid.
4. The figures for the gross costs of raising the basic state pension to the guarantee credit level from 2006–7 and the costs of paying the existing SERPS and S2P accruals are provided by the Government Actuary's Department, they are based on PBR forecasts and are for GB only.
5. There would also be a reduction in spending on other means tested benefits such as housing and council tax benefit and increase in tax revenues if the basic state pension was linked to guarantee credit level and then uprated by earnings.
6. Under this hypothetical policy change there would still be losers. People who had less than full BSP or received pension credit with a disabled or carers premium may lose under this system.
7. The figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1 percent.

Abolishing S2P would mean that the contracted out rebate would no longer need to be paid. This would save:

	Percentage
2006	0.9
2010	0.7
2020	0.6
2030	0.5
2040	0.4
2050	0.4

Note:
The figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1 percent.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to help contracted and sub-contracted workers achieve appropriate pensions. [39757]

Mr. Timms: The Government have taken a number of steps to help all people save for their retirement, including contracted and sub-contracted workers who do not have access to a suitable company pension scheme. For employees, the introduction of the state second pension in April 2002 is helping around 18.7 million people to build up entitlement to a second tier pension: this includes around 5.8 million low earners, and around 8.8 million moderate earners.

We also introduced stakeholder pensions in April 2001 as an additional pension option. These are flexible and portable with a limit on annual management charges, and they allow for minimum contributions of as little as £20 at a time. As stakeholder pensions are also open to non-earners, policy holders can continue to contribute to their pension plan in any periods of non-employment. These features may be of particular benefit to contracted and sub-contracted workers, who may have interrupted work patterns.

The Government's informed choice programme is also helping people, including contracted and sub-contracted workers, improve their pension provision by raising overall levels of financial education and awareness of the need to plan and provide for retirement. We aim to ensure people have tailored, accurate and timely information, and to improve levels of financial literacy and capability. Overall we are trying to achieve a behavioural and cultural change so that all people actively plan for their retirement.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department is undertaking of the merits of the Pensions Commission's recommendation of a national pension savings scheme run by an independent not-for-profit body. [41852]

Mr. Timms: The Government have welcomed the Pensions Commission's second report, and welcomed its proposals and options as the right basis for building the concensus we need.

The Government are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Commission in detail. This includes recommendations on a National Pension Savings Scheme. We are consulting with the public and stakeholders on these key issues, as part of the National Pension Debate; in order to develop these ideas and test them against the criteria that we believe will deliver a lasting settlement.

At this stage of the debate no decisions have been taken on this specific recommendation, and we are ruling nothing in and nothing out.

Telephone Helplines

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many telephone calls to the Child Support Agency *(a)* were received, *(b)* received an engaged tone and *(c)* were disconnected during the interactive voice response process for the period April 2002 to September 2005 for (i) all calls and (ii) calls relating to the cases being progressed on the new computer system; and if he will make a statement. [24540]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 19 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions: how many telephone calls to the Child Support Agency were *(a)* received *(b)* engaged and *(c)* disconnected during the interactive voice response process for the period April 2002 to September 2005 for (i) all calls and (ii) calls relating to the cases being progressed on the new computer system; and if he will make a statement.

The information requested is contained in the attached table.

As you will see, since experiencing the major, well-documented problems associated with the introduction of the new Child Support Scheme in March 2003, the Agency has shown significant improvements in telephony performance.

In particular, for those calls for which management information is available as to the eventual outcome of the call:

In the period April-September 2005, 82 per cent. of total calls received were answered, up from 58 per cent. in 2003–04.

In the period April-September 2005, only 3 per cent. of total calls received were ineffective (which means they received an engaged tone, or failed due to other system problems) down from 14 per cent. in 2003–04.

Calls abandoned can be split into two types, those abandoned while in queues waiting for staff to answer them and those calls abandoned in the automated touch tone/Interactive Voice Response (IVR) part of the process before they have joined a queue to be answered by staff (for example if the client does not have a National Insurance number to hand and hangs up to go and find it before calling back).

Calls abandoned in the automated touch-tone/IVR part of the process have remained relatively stable at around 6 per cent. of total calls received over the last 3 years.

Calls abandoned once in a queue has fallen from 22 per cent. of total calls received in 2003–04 to 10 per cent. in the period April-September 2005.

89 per cent. of calls which entered a queue after passing through the IVR/touchtone part of the process were successfully answered between April and September 2005, up from 73 per cent. in 2003–04.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Number of calls received by the CSA and the outcomes of those calls April 2002 September 2005

Numbers of calls (Thousand)	*April 2002-March 2003*	*April 2003-March 2004*	*April 2004-March 2005*	*April-September 2005*
New System (CS2 old and new schemes)				
Attempted customer calls to CS2 numbers	n/a	1,693	2,922	1,595
calls for which outcome not recorded	n/a	125	48	27
calls for which outcome recorded	n/a	1,568	2,874	1,569
calls that received an engaged / busy tone	n/a	39	36	19
other ineffective calls	n/a	29	94	39
calls abandoned / lost during the IVR process	n/a	362	320	135
calls that were answered from the queue (post IVR)	n/a	891	2,018	1,223
calls abandoned in queue (post IVR)	n/a	246	406	153
% of accounted for calls answered	n/a	57	70	78
% of calls that were answered from the queue	n/a	78	83	89
Old system (CSCS—old scheme)				
Attempted customer calls to CSCS numbers	4,145	4,358	2,815	1,109
calls for which outcome not recorded	45	20	0	0
calls for which outcome recorded	4,100	4,338	2,815	1,109
calls that received an engaged / busy tone	See note 1	459	90	3
other ineffective calls	See note 1	326	115	32
calls abandoned / lost during the IVR process	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
calls that were answered from the queue (post IVR)	3,121	2,525	2,222	965
calls abandoned in queue (post IVR)	528	1,028	389	109
% of accounted for calls answered	76	58	79	87
% of calls that were answered from the queue	86	71	85	90
Total CSA (both schemes and systems)				
Attempted customer calls to both CSCS and CS2 numbers	4,145	6,051	5,738	2,705
calls for which outcome not recorded	45	145	48	27
calls for which outcome recorded	4,100	5,906	5,689	2,678
calls that received an engaged / busy tone	See note 1	498	126	21
other ineffective calls	See note 1	355	210	72
calls abandoned / lost during the IVR process	n/a	362	320	135
calls that were answered from the queue (post IVR)	3,121	3,417	4,240	2,189
calls abandoned in queue (post IVR)	528	1,274	794	261
% of accounted for calls answered	76	58	75	82
% of calls that were answered from the queue	86	73	84	89

Notes:

1. Total calls received exclude calls outside working hours.
2. It is not possible to break down ineffective calls into those that did or did not receive an engaged tone for old system calls in 2002–03.
3. Other ineffective calls are those that result in a ring tone but no reply, fail due to network technical problems, or are answered by a BT message but do not connect to the CSA system.
4. The figures exclude new system (CS2) calls received between April 2003 and June 2003 (of which there were 225,000) as the Agency does not hold disaggregated management information as to the outcome of these calls.
5. 'Calls for which outcome not recorded', are those which were received but for which, due to problems with the MI system, the eventual outcome was not recorded. Some of these calls would have been answered, and others would have been abandoned. The volume of such calls has decreased significantly in the last 3 years as management information systems have improved.
6. 'Calls for which outcome recorded' are those which were received and for which there is management information to track the eventual outcome.

7. IVR denotes the automated touch tone part of the process where customers enter their details via the telephone key pad. Once callers have cleared this part of the process, they enter a queue to be answered by a member of CSA staff. There is no IVR process on the old system.
8. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand, and percentages to the nearest per cent. Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Kettering constituency were entitled to winter fuel payment in each year since its introduction. [37048]

Mr. Timms: Information relating to winter fuel payments for the winters of 1997–98 and 1998–99 is not available. The information for Kettering constituency from winter 1999–2000 is in the following table. These figures are also available in the Library.

Kettering constituency	*Payments made*
1999–2000	17,360
2000–01	19,395
2001–02	19,745
2002–03	19,965
2003–04	20,425
2004–05	20,510

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Local authorities and parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
Information Directorate, 100 per cent. sample

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received winter fuel payments in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster in 2004–05. [42118]

Mr. Timms: In winter 2004–05 there were 44,700 people in the Barnsley local authority area and 58,575 people in the Doncaster local authority area who received a winter fuel payment.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
Information Directorate, 100 per cent. sample.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what factors he took into account when deciding that pensioners who reached pensionable age after 25 September 2005 should not be eligible to claim winter fuel payments for the winter of 2005–06; [42382]

(2) what the annual cost implications are of restricting eligibility for the winter fuel payments to those pensioners who reach pensionable age before 25 September of the year in which the allowance becomes payable. [42383]

Mr. Timms: To be eligible for a winter fuel payment people must have reached age 60 by the end of the qualifying week, which for this winter was the 25 September 2005. This is to ensure that the majority of payments are made before Christmas.

If the qualifying week in Great Britain had been 31 December for this winter's payment, around an additional 160,000 people in Great Britain would have become eligible to receive a payment around March 2006 at a cost of approximately £23 million.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are in place to suspend the payment of the winter fuel payment when a claimant enters residential care. [42662]

Mr. Timms: Anyone who satisfies the conditions for receiving a winter fuel payment for any day in the relevant week is entitled to receive a payment. Decisions about entitlement are based on information in the Department's record. Customers are entitled to question decisions if the information on which they are based is incorrect.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Central Witness Bureau

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made on the creation of a central witness bureau; and if he will make a statement. [42778]

Fiona Mactaggart: This project is progressing well and we expect to be able to make an announcement before the beginning of the next financial year.

Child Pornography

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people *(a)* received a police caution for and *(b)* were convicted of possession of indecent photographs of children in each year since 1995. [42573]

Paul Goggins: The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the table and gives the number of offenders cautioned and found guilty of possession of indecent photographs of children in England and Wales, 1995 to 2004.

Number of offenders cautioned and found guilty at all courts for offences relating to child pornography, England and Wales, 1995 to 2004[1]

Offence Description	*Disposal*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Take or make indecent photographs of children[2]	Cautioned	18	15	14	26	31	35	38	63	239	201
	Found guilty	44	69	103	82	139	218	289	434	1,048	978
Possession of an indecent photograph of a child[3]	Cautioned	11	16	17	19	34	25	32	53	205	162
	Found guilty	37	79	81	105	99	77	75	97	239	184

[1] All data given refer to the principal offence only.
[2] Offences under the Protection of Children Act 1978, section 1 and section 6 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, section 84.
[3] Offences under the Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 160 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Services Act 2000, section 41(3) (previously 181/06).

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals to the Criminal Cases Review Commission have been received; and how many cases the Criminal Cases Review Commission has referred back to the courts. [42025]

Fiona Mactaggart: The total number of applications received by the Criminal Cases Review Commission up to 31 December 2005 is 8,343. Out of these 308 have been referred back to the courts.

Criminal Damage Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under section 1(1) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971. [41010]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of males and females proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under section 1(1) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971, England and Wales, 2004 is given in the following table.

Number of males and females proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under section 1(1) Criminal Damage Act 1971, England and Wales, 2004[1]

Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Males*		*Females*	
		Proceeded against	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Arson not endangering life	Criminal Damage Act 1971 S.1(1) (named 'arson' by virtue of s.1(3))	1,163	850	174	172
Other criminal damage	Explosive Substances Act S.2 (in part) and S.3 (in part); Malicious Damage Act 1861 SS.35, 36, 47 and 48; Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Area Act 1979 S.28(1); Post Office Act 1953 S.60; Criminal Damage Act 1971 S.1 (1) (an offence or offences against the Criminal Damage Act 1971, value of damage over £5,000 or one offence under the Criminal Damage Act 1971 whatever the value of damage involved, when committed at the same time as an additional offence other than Criminal Damage)	12,032	8,157	1,327	972
Racially aggravated other criminal damage	Criminal Damage Act 1971 S.1 (1) as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 S.30(1) and (2)	448	195	69	34
Religiously aggravated other criminal damage	Criminal Damage Act 1971 S. 1(1) as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 S.30(1) and (2)	14	9	3	—
Racially or religiously aggravated other criminal damage	Criminal Damage Act 1971 S. 1(1) as amended by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 S.30(1) and (2)	74	43	13	9
Causing damage to an allotment through negligence or any unlawful act. Criminal damage, value £5,000 or less	Allotments Act 1922 S.1 9; Criminal Damage Act 1971 S.1(1); Magistrates Courts Act 1980 S.22 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.46	38,714	28,620	4,105	2,876

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis

Criminal Law (Environmental Matters)

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to amend the criminal law in relation to environmental matters as a consequence of the judgment of the European Court of Justice of 15 September 2003. [41027]

Fiona Mactaggart: In its judgment of 13 September 2005 the European Court of Justice annulled certain European legislation to protect the environment through criminal law because it had been adopted under the wrong treaty provisions. That annulment has no impact on the application of national laws of the United Kingdom. Moreover, the United Kingdom relied largely on existing legislation in order to comply with the instrument. The Government have no plans to amend the criminal law in relation to environmental matters as a consequence of the judgment.

Departmental Objectives

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress towards his Department's strategic objective 2. [41055]

Fiona Mactaggart: Strategic objective 2 (more offenders are caught, punished and stop offending, and victims are better supported) is underpinned by our public sector agreement (PSA) targets:

No. 2 part (f)—to improve victim and witness satisfaction

No. 3—to improve the delivery of justice

And our PSA Standard to reduce reoffending.

The latest performance against these targets and the Standard was published in the Home Office autumn performance report 2005 Cm6707 on 19 December 2005 and is available on the Home Office website.

More information is available in the Home Office departmental report Cm6528 which was published in June 2005 and is also available on the Home Office website. The next Home Office department report will be published shortly after the end of the 2005-06 financial year.

DNA Database

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to bring the number of British citizens whose DNA is kept on record down to the EU average. [43285]

Andy Burnham: There are no plans to bring the number down. The relatively large number of people on the British National DNA Database means there is a greater chance of matching DNA found at the scene of a crime to a suspect. The Database provides the public with a vital intelligence tool, providing around 3,000 intelligence matches per month. There has been a four-fold increase in the number of detections obtained through the use of DNA between 1999 and 2005.

Drug Addicts (Treatment)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the scheme of giving drug addicts who commit non-violent offences treatment in the community rather than short prison terms; and whether there are plans to expand the scheme to include those who commit non-violent offences under the influence of alcohol. [39591]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) aims to make the most of opportunities provided by the criminal justice system to direct drug misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment and break the destructive cycle of drugs, offending and prison.

Key elements of the Programme are delivered in all areas of England while the "intensive" elements of the Programme are currently operational in 97 areas with high levels of acquisitive crime. This includes testing individuals for Class A drugs who are charged with a trigger offence. Testing on Arrest is currently operational in three areas of England and will commence in all other DIP intensive areas in England on 31 March 2006. The results of the tests are also used to inform court decisions on bail and sentencing. It is a matter for the courts to determine the most appropriate sentence according to the offence committed.

From October 2000 until the introduction of the community order of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 in April 2005, drug treatment was delivered as a requirement of a community sentence through the Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO). The DTTO is gradually being replaced by the Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) of the community order for offenders aged 18 or over.

There are no plans to extend DIP to include those who commit offences under the influence of alcohol. An Alcohol Treatment Requirement (ATR) is available to courts as a non-custodial sentencing option for offences linked to alcohol use.

Drugs Act

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the change in the numbers of people who will be *(a)* arrested, *(b)* brought to court and *(c)* imprisoned in the next three years as a result of the Drugs Act 2005. [41698]

Paul Goggins: The regulatory impact assessment drawn up in connection with the implementation of the Drugs Act 2005 focussed on the additional number of convictions and offenders imprisoned on an annual basis. The figures were 2,294 and 287 respectively. No estimate was put on numbers of arrests and prosecutions.

Drugs Rehabilitation Programme

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response the Government have made to requests for funding for the detoxification and rehabilitation programme operated by RADAR in conjunction with Coldturkey UK. [41421]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

We have no record of having received any formal bid to central Government for the funding of any drug services operated by The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR).

However, the Department's currently funds RADAR through the section 64 general scheme as follows:

	£
2003-04	86,400
2004-05	95,000
2005-06	95,000

This core funding is for RADAR's central administrative costs, and covers their objectives to work towards change enabling disabled people to control their own lives, by promoting regulation, good practice and equality of opportunity, advocating the removal of physical and attitudinal barriers: informing disabled people, disability organisations and others on matters affecting disabled people, and supporting disability organisations.

Golden Jubilee Medal

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend HM the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal awarded to prison officers or armed forces personnel who had five years of service by February 2002 to officers working in private prisons. [36288]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prison Custody Officers (PCO) currently working in contracted sector prisons who had completed five years of service in the public sector Prison Service by February 2002 and who fall within the set eligibility criteria are eligible for the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. There are no plans to extend the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal to any other staff employed within the contracted prison sector.

Highways Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under section 132(1) of the Highways Act 1980. [41012]

Fiona Mactaggart: Persons proceeded against and found guilty at the magistrates courts of offences under section 132(1) of the Highways Act 1980 cannot be separately identified on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as they form part of a miscellaneous group which cannot be analysed.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences have been committed by those released on home detention curfew, broken down by offence. [30808]

Fiona Mactaggart: As at 31 October 2005 over 119,000 offenders had been released on to the home detention curfew scheme since it was introduced in January 1999. As of 31 October 2005, the Home Office had been notified of 4,095 offenders (or 3.4 per cent. of the total) who had been convicted, cautioned or were awaiting prosecution for 7,437 further offences committed or allegedly committed while they were subject to the scheme. The following table breaks down this figure by further offences.

Breakdown of all further offences

28 January 1999 to 31 October 2005	*Total*
Total	7,437
Violence against the person	833
Sexual offences	18
Burglary	337
Robbery	100
Theft and handling	1,780
Fraud and forgery	252
Drug offences	589
Motoring offences	1,733
Other	1,794

Independent Monitoring Boards

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the size is of the independent monitoring board for each *(a)* prison and *(b)* Immigration Removal Centre establishment; what the membership is of each board; and if he will make a statement. [16380]

Fiona Mactaggart: The complement of each prison and immigration removal centre Independent Monitoring Board is shown the following table together with the number of members in each Board as on 3 October 2005.

Board	*Complement (maximum Board size[1])*	*Number of members (as on 3 October 2005)*
Prisons		
Acklington	19	15
Albany	10	7
Altcourse	20	12
Ashfield	13	10
Ashwell	12	5
Askham Grange	10	10
Aylesbury	14	11
Bedford	12	[1]13
Belmarsh	20	18
Birmingham	20	[1]21
Blakenhurst	20	14
Blantyre House	10	[1]12
Blundeston	12	10
Brinsford	16	9
Bristol	15	13
Brixton	20	16
Brockhill	10	10
Bronzefield	17	16
Buckley Hall	14	10
Bullingdon	20	15
Bullwood Hall	10	[1]13
Camp Hill	12	10
Canterbury	10	10
Cardiff	17	11
Castington	13	11
Channings Wood	14	12
Chelmsford	19	17
Coldingley	10	10
Cookham Wood	10	9
Dartmoor	16	12
Deerbolt	17	12
Doncaster	20	7
Dorchester	10	9
Dovegate	20	16
Downview	14	13
Drake Hall	12	11
Durham	20	15
East Sutton Park	10	11
Eastwood Park	13	10
Edmunds Hill	14	7
Elmley	20	10
Erlestoke	10	13
Everthorpe	13	9
Exeter	17	12
Featherstone	15	11
Feltham	20	14
Ford	14	11
Forest Bank	20	15
Foston Hall	10	10
Frankland	18	17
Full Sutton	18	14
Garth	17	12
Gartree	15	15
Glen Parva	20	18
Gloucester	11	11
Grendon/Springhill	15	12
Guys Marsh	19	14
Haverigg	12	[1]13
Hewell Grange	10	9
High Down	19	12
Highpoint	20	17
Hindley	18	14
Hollesley Bay	10	8
Holloway	20	15
Holme House	20	14
Hull	20	17
Huntercombe	15	13
Kingston	10	9
Kirkham	11	[1]13
Kirklevington	10	9
Lancaster Castle	10	10
Lancaster Farms	17	13
Latchmere House	10	[1]12
Leeds	20	16
Leicester	10	[1]13

Board	Complement (maximum Board size[1])	Number of members (as on 3 October 2005)
Lewes	17	14
Leyhill	10	12
Lincoln	12	[1]16
Lindholme	20	14
Littlehey	13	[1]14
Liverpool	20	15
Long Lartin	17	15
Low Newton	15	8
Lowdham Grange	13	13
Maidstone	12	[1]13
Manchester	20	19
Moorland	20	14
Morton Hall	15	10
New Hall	16	8
North Sea Camp	10	[1]11
Northallerton	10	9
Norwich	20	20
Nottingham	13	[1]17
Onley	19	14
Parc	20	16
Parkhurst	13	12
Pentonville	20	[1]22
Peterborough	20	15
Portland	17	17
Preston	16	17
Ranby	20	16
Reading	10	8
Risley	20	17
Rochester	13	11
Rye Hill	17	12
Send	10	[1]11
Shepton Mallet	10	9
Shrewsbury	10	[1]14
Stafford	14	12
Standford Hill	10	8
Stocken	15	[1]18
Stoke Heath	20	12
Styal	17	16
Sudbury	10	10
Swaleside	19	6
Swansea	16	13
Swinfen Hall	14	9
The Mount	16	[1]17
The Verne	12	14
Thorn Cross	12	12
Usk	15	11
Wakefield	19	12
Wandsworth	20	19
Warren Hill	10	9
Wayland	15	14
Wealstun	18	16
Wellingborough	11	[1]12
Werrington	10	8
Wetherby	14	14
Whatton	16	10
Whitemoor	16	15
Winchester	20	14
Wolds	10	[1]12
Woodhill	20	16
Wormwood Scrubs	24	18
Wymott	16	11
Immigration Removal Centres		
Campsfield House	13	13
Colnbrook	12	9
Dover	12	7
Harmondsworth	15	10
Haslar	10	8
Oakington	12	8
Tinsley House	12	8
Yarl's Wood	12	9

[1] New board complements were issued, as a guide to Boards, in spring 2005. Minimum and maximum board sizes were set at 10 and 20 Board members respectively and recommended complements are being achieved though natural wastage.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications were submitted to join the Independent Monitoring Board for each prison and immigration removal centre establishment in each of the last five years; what proportion were successful; and if he will make a statement. [16382]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is provided in the following tables.

Applications and appointments made to IMBs in prisons in the last five years

Period	Number of applications	Number of appointments	Percentage of appointed
Year ending 3 October:			
2000–01	261	116	44.4
2001–02	189	79	41.8
2002–03	388	260	67
2003–04	336	275	81.8
2004–05	233	191	82
Last five years	1,407	921	65.5

Applications and appointments made to immigration removal centres in prisons in the last five years

Period	Number of applications	Number of appointments	Percentage of appointed
Year ending 3 October:			
2000–01	6	3	50
2001–02[1]	8	9	112.5
2002–03	7	7	100
2003–04	20	20	100
2004–05	14	10	71.4
Last five years	55	49	89.1

[1] Included a transfer.

Parenting Contracts

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many parenting contracts have been signed in each of the past two years. [42148]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Youth Justice Board has collected data on the number of parenting contracts entered into by youth offending teams since one April 2004. 555 parenting contracts were made between 1 April 2004 and 31 March 2005 and 218 between 1 April 2004 and 30 September 2005 (the latest period for which data is available).

The Department for Education and Skills has collected data regarding parenting contracts in cases of non-attendance and exclusion from school since September 2004. 5,717 parenting contracts were recorded for truancy and 410 for exclusion between September 2004 and 31 July 2005 (the latest period for which data is available).

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many parenting contracts have been breached in each of the past two years. [42149]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data is not collected on the number of parenting contracts that are breached.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many breached parenting contracts have led to parenting orders in each of the past two years. [42150]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data is not collected on the number of parenting contracts which are not complied with and lead to a parenting order.

Parenting Orders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many parenting orders have been made without the child or young person appearing in court for offending in each of the past two years. [42155]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 26 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 allows youth offending teams to apply for parenting orders in respect of children and young people who have engaged in antisocial behaviour or criminal conduct. Parenting orders under section 26 can be made without the child or young person appearing in court.

This power came into force on 27 February 2004. The Youth Justice Board has collected data on its use since 1 April 2004. 80 parenting orders under section 26 were made during April 2004 to March 2005 and 71 were made during April 2005 to September 2005 (which is the latest available data).

Prison Escapes

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many escapes from *(a)* prisons and *(b)* young offenders institutions there have been in each year since 1995, broken down by the relevant categories set out in the Departmental Annual Report; and if he will make a statement. [42779]

Fiona Mactaggart: The number of escapes from prisons and Prison Service escorts for each category of establishment is shown in the following table.

Escapes from prisons in England and Wales April 1995 to December 2005

	Adult		*Young offender*		*Juvenile*		*Total*	
	Prison	*Prison service escort*	*Prison*	*Prison service escort*	*Prison*	*Prison service escort*	*Prison*	*Prison service escort*
1995–96	41	33	4	3	7	0	52	36
1996–97	30	19	3	1	0	0	33	20
1997–98	19	10	0	0	4	0	23	10
1998–99	16	7	7	0	5	0	28	7
1999–2000	23	7	6	1	1	0	30	8
2000–01	8	8	3	0	0	0	11	8
2001–02	14	10	1	1	0	0	15	11
2002–03	5	12	0	0	0	0	5	12
2003–04	6	6	4	0	0	0	10	6
2004–05	11	7	0	0	1	1	12	8
2005–06[1]	1	7	0	0	0	0	1	7

[1] To December

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what help is offered by his Department to prisoners to cease smoking. [39660]

Fiona Mactaggart: People in prison are being helped to stop smoking through services specially targeted to meet their needs, including nicotine replacement therapy. In 2001–02 the Department of Health ran a pilot project on smoking cessation in prison. It publication, "Acquitted", is a reference guide for those starting up new stop smoking services in the prison setting and outlines key learning points from the project. It is targeted at both NHS smoking services and prisons. An evaluation is under way to report on the Department of Health's £1.5 million investment, between 2003 and 2006, for smoking cessation services in prisons.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the number of vulnerable people in prison. [41153]

Fiona Mactaggart: As regards adult offenders, the Criminal Justice Act 2003 provides that a custodial sentence may only be imposed on adult offenders when the offence is so serious that no other sentence can be justified. A wide range of non-custodial sentences is available to deal with offenders. While sentencing in individual cases is entirely a matter for the courts, the Government believes that prison should be reserved for dangerous, violent and seriously persistent offenders.

The 2003 Act also provides that before passing a custodial sentence on an offender who is or appears to be mentally disordered, the court must consider any information before it relating to his mental condition, and the likely effect of a custodial sentence on that condition. Section 166 of the Act specifically allows the court to mitigate sentences for mentally disordered offenders, and to impose non-custodial sentences where normally a custodial sentence would be justified.

Hospital orders rather than custodial orders can be issued at the sentencing stage, and where mental health issues come to light only while in custody, the offender can be removed from prison and transferred to a secure hospital.

The Sentencing Guidelines Council (which issues sentencing guidelines to which criminal courts in England and Wales must have regard) has issued a guideline confirming that mental illness is generally a mitigating factor in sentencing.

The 'Development Programme for Extending Offender Health Support', a joint initiative between the Home Office and Department of Health, has recently

been introduced to help the courts identify, assess and make appropriate recommendations for the care and management of offenders with health and social care needs. The programme's underpinning goal is to ensure that prison is not a default destination for vulnerable individuals whose care and management needs could more appropriately be met elsewhere.

Juvenile offenders are dealt with under a separate sentencing structure that provides for their special vulnerability.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why recent services at the mosque in Broadmoor Prison have been cancelled. [41685]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

I am informed by North West London strategic health authority that services at the mosque in Broadmoor hospital have not been cancelled. Just before Eid celebrations, the weekly prayer session at the mosque was postponed due to the unavailability of the visiting Imam.

I understand at Broadmoor hospital, prayer sessions are conducted at the mosque by a visiting Imam every Friday. I have been assured that Broadmoor hospital has no intention or desire to reduce access to the mosque.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for the *(a)* expansion of and *(b)* creation of new prison facilities at HMP Full Sutton, near York; and if he will make a statement. [42364]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans, at present, to either expand Her Majesty's Prison Full Sutton or to build a new prison on the site adjacent to the existing prison.

Development of this site remains an option for providing additional prison capacity if necessary.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there have been for supplying illegal drugs in prisons in each year since 1997. [36135]

Paul Goggins: Decisions to prosecute are taken by the Crown Prosecution Service and the number of prosecutions undertaken is not collated by the Prison Service. The number of visitors arrested on suspicion of supplying drugs into prison and the number of prisoners found guilty at adjudication of offences involving drug smuggling through visits is given in the table.

	Number of visitors arrested on suspicion	*Number of prisoners found guilty of smuggling drugs through visits at adjudication*
2004–05	439	1,065
2003–04	448	884
2002–03	404	988
2001–02	526	1,123
2000–01	499	1,169
1999–2000	728	1,086

Probation Officers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the complaints made by *(a)* members of the public, *(b)* hon. Members and *(c)* members of the House of Lords in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the outcome of each complaint was about the conduct of probation officers. [37548]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department does not collect the information in the form requested. A National Complaints Procedure, agreed by the Secretary of State, enables local probation areas to handle complaints. Complaints must be from offenders or their nominated representatives. Unresolved local complaints are escalated to the independent Prison and Probation ombudsman. The following table details the number of complaints received by the Prison and Probation ombudsman since 1 September 2001, the date on which the NPS complaints procedure, and the ombudsman's responsibility for investigating complaints about the probation service were implemented.

Complaints made by offenders or their representatives about the Probation Service, received by the Prison and Probation ombudsman since 1 September 2001

	Number received	*Number eligible*
September 2001 to March 2002	83	5
April 2002 to March 2003	191	31
April 2003 to March 2004	279	28
April 2004 to March 2005	307	41

The number eligible column shows the number of complaints out of all those received that have been eligible for the ombudsman to investigate. The ombudsman's terms of reference (and the NPS complaint procedure) require that all three stages of the complaint procedure must have been completed before the ombudsman may investigate a complaint. The three stages are: informal investigation by the local office, formal investigation by the Chief Officer or a senior officer nominated by the CO, and finally the appeal stage when a panel of three Board members hears the appeal. The ombudsman may accept complaints that are referred to him within one month of the complainant receiving the result of the appeal.

Security Guards

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend the 20 March deadline for the licensing of security guards. [43105]

Paul Goggins: From 20 March 2006 it will be an offence to work as a manned guard (security guard, CCTV operative, Cash and Valuables in Transit, Close Protection) without a licence from the Security Industry Authority. Keyholders will also need to be licensed from that date. This date will not be extended beyond 20 March.

Serious Organised Crime and Police Act

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department has issued to the police on the implementation of the Serious

Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 in the vicinity of Parliament since the recent arrest and conviction of Maya Anne Evans. [38812]

Paul Goggins: No guidance has been issued on the provisions of the Serious Organised Crime Act dealing with Parliament Square. Home Office officials have worked closely with the Metropolitan police on the implementation of this legislation. We do not consider that written guidance to the Commissioner is necessary. However, we keep the need for guidance under review, in the light of operational experience.

Torture

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions will be affected by the Law Lords ruling that evidence extracted under torture is inadmissible in judicial proceedings. [39751]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have no reason to believe that any convictions will be affected by this ruling. In criminal proceedings in England and Wales, the courts have a range of powers to prevent the admission of evidence that may have been obtained improperly or illegally, including through means of torture. Courts have the discretion to exclude evidence if it is unduly prejudicial or unfair, and a judicial discretion to stay proceedings if they are considered to be an abuse of the court's process. Defendants also enjoy the protections afforded by Article six of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), the right to a fair trial. Article three of the ECHR also prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment.

In addition, a confession is not admissible unless it meets the requirements set out in sections 76 and 78 of Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). That is, the evidence will not be admissible if it is unreliable or has been obtained by oppression. Section 76(8) of PACE states that oppression includes torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and the use or threat of violence

Young Offenders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the recidivism rate among young offenders was in each of the last eight years. [42168]

Fiona Mactaggart: Reconviction rates for young offenders following a pre-court disposal, a non-custodial sentence at court or discharge from custody have been published as part of the Home Office's monitoring of its PSA (Public Service Agreement) target on reducing reoffending. The most recent data were published in "Juvenile reconviction: results from the 2003 cohort". The report shows one year reconviction rates for juvenile offenders (those aged 10 to 17) for 1997 and 2000 to 2003.

Some statistics on reconviction rates for young offenders released from prison or starting a community sentence have been published in "Prison Statistics: England and Wales" and "Probation Statistics, England and Wales" but these are on a different basis from the PSA results. These publications are available in the House of Commons Library.

Reconviction rates should be used with caution as a number of different factors can influence them. Reconviction rates can be adjusted to take account of the changing characteristics of offenders and these adjusted rates are published on the Home Office's website. The most recent data show that there has been a reduction in re-offending for young offenders of 2.4 per cent. against the 2000 baseline. The Home Office Public Service Agreement target is to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2006.

Youth Resettlement Action Plan

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department expects to publish the Youth Resettlement Action Plan. [42164]

Fiona Mactaggart: A National Youth Resettlement Framework for Action is in the final stages of development by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. The framework should be ready for publication by the end of February. I will ensure the hon. Member receives a printed copy and will arrange for copies to be placed in the House Libraries.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland were prosecuted for illegally obtaining benefits in each year since 1999. [43628]

Mr. Hanson: The total number of people who have been prosecuted for illegally obtaining benefits in each year since 1999 is:

	Prosecuted
2000–01	245
2001–02	471
2002–03	335
2003–04	243
2004–05	236
2005–2006[1]	161

[1] To 17 January 2006.

CCTV

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police-monitored CCTV cameras are in operation in *(a)* East Belfast District Command Unit, *(b)* South Belfast and *(c)* North Belfast. [22883]

Mr. Woodward: The following table provides the number of PSNI monitored CCTV cameras in East, South and North Belfast District Command Units:

District command unit	*Number of CCTV cameras monitored by PSNI*
South Belfast	29
North Belfast	36
East Belfast	11

Hospital Staff (Working Hours)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in the implementation of the European Working Time Directive in relation to the working hours of *(a)* consultants, *(b)* junior house doctors and *(c)* nursing staff in hospitals in Northern Ireland. [42415]

Mr. Woodward: The latest information on junior doctors indicates that 71 per cent. of junior doctors are compliant with the European Working Time Directive. Information on consultants and nursing staff is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on housing benefit in Northern Ireland in respect of tenants in *(a)* Housing Executive property, *(b)* Housing Association property and *(c)* the Private Sector in 2005. [43056]

Mr. Hanson: £195 million was spent on housing benefit in Northern Ireland in respect of tenants in Housing Executive properties and £176.5 million in respect of Housing Association and Private Sector properties in the financial year 2004–05. Information with regard to this latter figure cannot be disaggregated further.

Independent Monitoring Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Government expects the publication of the next report by the Independent Monitoring Commission. [42689]

Mr. Woodward: The next report of the Independent Monitoring Commission is expected at the end of January and will be published as soon as possible thereafter.

Joseph Rafferty

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has made to the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic about the murder of Joseph Rafferty on 12 April. [14894]

Mr. Woodward: There have been no representations made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland with the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic about the murder of Joseph Rafferty on 12 April.

Loyalist Paramilitary Disarmament

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will call for loyalist paramilitary disarmament in Northern Ireland. [43724]

Mr. Woodward: The Government's position is clear; there is no place for paramilitary and criminal activity in a democratically governed Northern Ireland. As with the IRA, we remain committed to seeing complete and verified decommissioning of weapons held by all loyalist groups.

Male Prisoners (Nationality)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* female and *(b)* male prisoners in Northern Ireland are of foreign nationality; and what the nationalities concerned are in each case. [42720]

Mr. Woodward: As of 12 January 2006 the Northern Ireland Prison Service had: *(a)* 3.6 per cent. (1) of the total female population of 28 were foreign national prisoners and *(b)* 2.4 per cent. (31) of a total male prisoner population of 1,279 were foreign nationals. A breakdown by nationality is provided in the table.

Nationality	*Number of female prisoners*	*Number of male prisoners*
Algerian	—	1
Belgian	—	1
Chinese	—	4
East Timorese	—	1
French	—	1
German	—	1
Italian	—	2
Latvian	—	2
Liberian	—	1
Lithuanian	—	10
Polish	—	5
South African	1	1
Spanish	—	1
Total	1	31
Percentage of total populations as at 12 January 2006 (28 and 1,279)	3.6%	2.4%

Note:
These figures exclude immigration detainees as these persons are not prisoners under the terms of the Prison Service Act 1953.

Motoring Offences

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men were convicted of motoring offences in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [21633]

Mr. Woodward: The following table provides statistics, by gender, of persons convicted of motoring offences during the period 1999 to 2003 (2003 is the most up-to-date data currently available).

Persons convicted of motoring offences, by gender: 1999–2003

	Convictions		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*
1999	13,869	1,913	15,782
2000	13,344	2,046	15,390
2001	12,403	2,063	14,466
2002	12,330	2,014	14,344
2003	14,049	2,293	16,342

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were stopped by police for suspected motoring offences in each of Northern Ireland's parliamentary constituencies in each of the last 24 months; and how many were subsequently prosecuted in each month. [41108]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record statistics of the number of motorists stopped for motoring offences. The closest available information is detailed in the tables 1 to 4 and

relates to road policing detections by District Officers and Road Policing Officers recorded by District Command Unit (DCU).

Statistics relating to convictions are also only available by District Command Unit. Tables 5 and 6 provide details of the number of prosecutions for motoring offences during the period 2002–03 (2003 being the most recent year for which statistics are available).

The tables have been placed in the Library.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were breathalysed in each of Northern Ireland's parliamentary constituencies in each of the last 24 months; and how many were subsequently prosecuted in each month. [41109]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record statistics relating to the number of people breathalysed by parliamentary constituency but by District Command Unit. Tables detailing the number of preliminary breath tests conducted in each DCU by District Officers and Roads Policing Officers during the period 2004–05 have been placed in the Library.

Prosecution data relating to drink driving offences is also only available by District Command Unit. The statistics provided in tables 5 and 6 covers the period 2002–03 (2003 being the most recent year for which this data is available).

Paramilitary Arms

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the quantity of paramilitary arms at large in Northern Ireland. [19414]

Mr. Woodward: The decommissioning of paramilitary weapons is a vital element in the process of taking violence out of Northern Ireland permanently.

On 26 September 2005, the IICD determined that the IRA had met its commitment to put all its arms beyond use in a manner called for by the legislation and that it remained for them to address the arms of all loyalist paramilitary groups, as well as other paramilitary organisations. The IICD has confirmed that it has an inventory of decommissioned IRA weapons. The IICD will, however, retain possession of this inventory until its mandate is complete and will, along with the Government, continue to work tirelessly in the pursuit of complete decommissioning by all paramilitary organisations both republican and loyalist.

Police Numbers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of police officers on out-of-station duty each day was in each district command unit in the Province in each of the last five years. [17534]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI Human Resource Department do not hold data in relation to the average number of police officers "out-of-station duty" on each day in each DCU for the last five years.

However, since the inception of the Human Resource Planning Strategy under the objective of Improving Organisational Performance through efficient and effective deployment practices, the PSNI has committed to increasing the percentage of officer time spent on front line policing to 72 per cent. by 2007–08.

The Front Line Policing Measure for the PSNI currently stands at 56.6 per cent. for 2004–05 and they are currently on target to achieve the 2005–06 target of 60 per cent.. This figure cannot be fully calculated until the completion of activity sampling towards the end of the financial year.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many regular Police Service of Northern Ireland *(a)* full-time reserve and *(b)* part-time reserve officers are on (i) long-term sick leave and (ii) short-term sick leave within Castlereagh. [19574]

Mr. Woodward: As of the 19 October 2005, Castlereagh DCU recorded the following sick absence details for regular, full-time reserve and part-time reserve officers:

9 regular officers on long-term sick absence (over 28 days)

28 regular officers on short-term sickness absence (under 28 days)

2 full-time reserve on long-term sickness absence (over 28 days)

1 full-time reserve on short-term sickness absence (under 28 days)

No part-time reserve constable recorded as sick.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what ballistic and armouring tests are carried out on *(a)* patrol cars, *(b)* armoured land rovers and *(c)* VIP cars in the Police Service of Northern Ireland fleet; and to what standard such testing is conducted; [27303]

(2) what *(a)* standards and *(b)* procedures are used by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in relation to the procurement and use of ballistic steel for armouring purposes; [27304]

(3) in what posts *(a)* Mr. David Graham, *(b)* Mr. John Wilson, *(c)* Mr. Nigel Booth, *(d)* Mr. Gerry Murray and *(e)* Mr. Dave Bradley have served with (i) the Police Authority of Northern Ireland and (ii) the Police Service of Northern Ireland; what the duration of their service was in each case; what experience each has in (A) ballistic engineering and (B) vehicle armoury; and what professional qualifications each has. [27464]

Mr. Woodward: These questions deal with issues that are currently subject to an ongoing criminal investigation and no further information can be made available at this stage.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines apply to the suspension of Police Service of Northern Ireland officers and staff pending the formal investigation of irregularities; and in what circumstances staff are suspended. [27367]

Mr. Woodward: There are two distinct sets of guidelines which cover police officers and police staff. These are as follows:

1. Police Staff are covered by NICS code paragraph 1084, which states:

An individual may at any time be suspended from duty if, in the opinion of the person exercising disciplinary powers, that course is a necessary precaution in the public interest pending the outcome of criminal or disciplinary investigations or proceedings, and no alternative course eg transfer to other duties is appropriate. Suspension in these circumstances, as distinct from suspension as a disciplinary penalty (see paragraph 1093d), does not imply any decisions about the case, and this important distinction should be kept in mind whenever any record or report of the period of absence is necessary. Pay in respect of any period of suspension may be withheld wholly or in part so long as such suspension continues, if the person exercising disciplinary powers so decides. In such circumstances individuals may be told that they may be eligible to claim for National Insurance benefits such as unemployment or sickness or supplementary benefits. Where it is decided that pay, in the whole or in part, should continue, for the purposes of calculating the amount to be paid the person on suspension should be treated in the same way as staff treated during the first six months of sickness absence. This would entail, among other things, paying shift disturbance (SDA) for the first 30 days but not paying notional overtime. Any decision to withhold pay will be subject to early and regular review; among the factors taken into account will be the circumstances of the alleged offence and the person's dependents. If disciplinary proceedings result in a penalty any withheld pay in respect of the suspension will be forfeited wholly or in part if the person exercising disciplinary powers so determines after consideration of all the circumstances of the case. Any withheld pay which it is decided will not be forfeited will be paid. Someone cleared of all charges, will receive a net sum making up any shortfall in net pay that would have been received during the period of suspension. Where it is concluded that someone should be paid during the period of suspension including retrospective payment, the period, the period should reckon under the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the normal way. The procedures set out in this paragraph do not affect the practice whereby a line manager may send someone home if the circumstances seem to require this: unless this is for a very brief period, however, consideration should be given by the person exercising disciplinary powers to the need for formal suspension.

2. Police Officers

The PSNI has introduced a very robust, human rights compliant suspension policy which was crafted following a long and detailed consultation process with counsel, human rights etc. The policy takes into account 20 substantive considerations when deciding whether or not an officer should be suspended from duty (Code Section 9 App. 9 as attached). In practice the investigating officer, the District Commander, the Supervising Member and the Head of Internal Investigation Branch forward recommendations to the Deputy Chief Constable regarding the issue of suspension. These recommendations are based on the substantive considerations. The Deputy Chief Constable is the person responsible for deciding whether or not an officer should be suspended from duty. The circumstances of the suspension is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Head of Internal Investigation Branch and the Supervising Member.

Appendix 9(9)—Suspension: Substantive Considerations—(See RUC Code Section 9, paragraph 25)

Matters to be considered—Listed below are various factors which may be taken into account in considering whether to suspend a member from duty. These factors provide general guidance and are not exhaustive of the considerations which may be examined and weighed in any given case. Further, the weight, if any, to be accorded by the decision-maker to the factors which they consider will be a matter for them.

1. Whether continued duty by the member concerned would be conducive to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of discipline within the police service.

2. The nature and seriousness of the alleged misconduct and any apparent aggravating or mitigating factors.

3. Relevant medical reports on the member concerned.

4. The member's personal and family circumstances, including the impact which suspension from duty is likely to have on them.

5. The past performance and disciplinary record, if any, of the member concerned.

6. Consideration of the wishes and interests of the victim of the member's alleged offences, including any reparation they may have obtained in some other form of proceedings.

7. The strength of the case against the member concerned, including the member's defence to, or explanation of, the matters under investigation, (where known).

8. The range of penalties available, or likely to be available, in the event that the member s conduct was determined not to have met the appropriate standard.

9. The likelihood of getting a member to a discipline hearing, especially where medical considerations might militate against a discipline hearing. (See N1O Guidance paragraphs 3.67 and 3.68 and Annex T.

10. Recommendations from the member detecting the offence/ investigating officer, divisional commander(s) and 'G' Department. [Code Section 9, paragraph 25(2)].

11. The member's apparent role in the matter under investigation. Were they, for example, under the influence of a higher rank? Were they a victim of circumstances? Have they been adequately dealt with by the criminal courts? Was the member concerned in a supervisory position, which brings with it the necessity to provide an example to more junior members? etc.

12. The message required to be sent to the police service or wider community. Relevant considerations may include recent events which have impacted upon, or shaped the expectations of the public regarding the professionalism, probity and conduct of police officers.

13. Cognisance to be paid to the Chief Constable's policy on the circumstances surrounding the discipline incident, eg discrimination, harassment, equal opportunities policy, drink driving.

14. Any possible or actual legal proceedings—such as a civil action or employment tribunal proceedings.

15. The need to remove the member from an area, in order to protect witnesses, evidence or the integrity of the investigation.

16. In criminal cases, whether a prosecution has been initiated against the member concerned or the prospects of a direction to prosecute issuing.

17. The member's continued credibility to perform police duties, ie give evidence in court, interview suspects or witnesses, or deal with other police matters of a sensitive or delicate nature.

18. Whether temporary transfer of the member concerned from their normal duties during the formal investigation or pending the outcome of misconduct proceedings, is appropriate and proportionate.

19. The public interest generally.

20. The overall interests of the police service.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Police Service of Northern Ireland's arrangements for *(a)* tendering, *(b)* ordering,

(c) delivery, *(d)* invoicing and *(e)* payment for goods and services in relation to vehicle transactions; and if he will make a statement. [27465]

Mr. Woodward: A Project Board, chaired by a non-executive director, comprising members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Audit and Risk Committee and the Policing Board's Audit and Best Value Committee has been established to oversee a review of policies, procedures and responsibilities for *(a)* tendering, *(b)* ordering, *(c)* delivering, *(d)* invoicing and *(e)* payment for goods and services.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what assessment he has made of the level of *(a)* technical qualifications and *(b)* expertise in relation to ballistic and armouring protection matters of (i) managers and (ii) staff in the Police Service of Northern Ireland Transport Services Department; [27466]

(2) who took the decision to contest the civil proceedings brought by Northern Ireland Sheet Metal Works Ltd. in respect of steel contracts; what criteria were used to decide that the case should proceed; and who gave authority to settle the case; [27467]

(3) if he will list *(a)* corporate entertaining and *(b)* receipt of gifts declared by (i) Mr. David Graham and (ii) Mr. Joe Stewart of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; [27468]

(4) on whose authority Mr. David Graham declined to give evidence at the recent court proceedings involving Northern Ireland Sheet Metal Works Ltd. and the Police Service of Northern Ireland regarding contracts to supply steel; and for what reasons the decision was taken. [27469]

Mr. Woodward: These are management issues for the Chief Constable and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The Chief Constable will write to the hon. Member. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Schools (Employment of Offenders)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are in place to regulate the employment in a job working with children in Northern Ireland of *(a)* people with a conviction for a sexual offence and *(b)* people with a caution for a sexual offence; and if he will make a statement. [43556]

Mr. Woodward: With effect from 1 April 2005, the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA) introduced a statutory requirement for childcare organisations to carry out a vetting check on prospective employees wishing to work with children in Northern Ireland. Vetting checks provide details of an individual's criminal record which includes all cautions, convictions and bind overs and whether the individual has been included on the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Disqualification from Working with Children List or the Department of Education's List 99. PSNI can also share non-conviction information where they consider it appropriate to do so applying the pressing needs test. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis but records are likely to be disclosed where it is clear that this is necessary to protect children.

POCVA also introduced disqualification orders, which may be issued by a court when an individual is convicted and sentenced to at least 12 months imprisonment for any offence listed in POCVA. These offences include sexual and violent offences against children. It is an offence for anyone who is subject to a disqualification order or whose name appears on any of the lists created under POCVA, to seek employment in a regulated position. It is also an offence for anyone to knowingly offer work in a regulated position to such a person, or fail to remove such a person from such work.

Further protection is provided through regulation of professionals e.g. doctors, nurses and social workers by their respective regulatory body.

The final decision to employ, or not to employ an individual rests with the prospective employer.

Sexual Violence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, when he will publish the consultation paper on sexual violence. [43859]

Mr Woodward: The development of a regional strategy to address sexual violence in Northern Ireland is being taken forward jointly by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Northern Ireland Office, in conjunction with other Departments and agencies whose responsibilities also have a bearing on matters relating to sexual violence. It is proposed to publish a consultation document by this summer and to publish the final strategy in April 2007.

Speed Cameras

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times mobile speed cameras were used in each of Northern Ireland's parliamentary constituencies in each of the last 24 months. [41110]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record statistics relating to mobile speed cameras by parliamentary constituency, but by district command unit. The closest available information is detailed in tables 1 and 2 and shows the number of occasions mobile safety cameras were deployed to DCU's over the period 2004–05.

Table 1: Roads policing unit monthly deployments per DCU—2004

District command unit	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
Rural region						
Armagh	0	1	2	0	0	0
Ballymena	1	8	0	6	12	3
Ballymoney	1	0	0	2	5	1
Banbridge	15	10	12	5	8	6
Coleraine	1	0	0	0	1	8

Table 1: Roads policing unit monthly deployments per DCU—2004

District command unit	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
Cookstown	1	0	0	0	1	1
Craigavon	5	3	3	0	0	0
Down	2	0	2	6	7	9
Dungannon and South Tyrone	3	0	1	1	1	1
Fermanagh	4	1	0	1	2	0
Foyle	5	1	2	0	0	10
Limavady	5	1	0	0	0	10
Magherafelt	1	2	2	0	1	10
Moyle	0	4	0	0	0	0
Newry and Mourne	8	7	5	13	6	9
Omagh	0	1	0	0	11	6
Urban region[1]						
Belfast South	—	—	—	26	30	28
Belfast East	—	—	—	31	32	29
Belfast West	—	—	—	16	28	24
Belfast North	—	—	—	19	21	21
Castlereagh	—	—	—	29	30	25
North Down	—	—	—	27	15	15
Carrickfergus	—	—	—	8	7	6
Newtownabbey	—	—	—	11	10	10
Lisburn	—	—	—	5	4	2
Ards	—	—	—	11	13	12
Antrim	—	—	—	4	5	5

District command unit	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Rural region						
Armagh	3	0	1	2	0	0
Ballymena	7	4	5	5	9	5
Ballymoney	1	0	2	3	3	0
Banbridge	7	11	3	6	7	9
Coleraine	7	6	4	11	3	0
Cookstown	0	0	0	0	0	0
Craigavon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Down	9	8	8	14	6	4
Dungannon and South Tyrone	1	0	1	1	1	0
Fermanagh	1	1	2	2	0	0
Foyle	5	9	7	6	7	5
Limavady	6	9	5	6	5	2
Magherafelt	6	9	5	6	5	2
Moyle	0	0	2	1	1	0
Newry and Mourne	7	8	6	13	10	11
Omagh	7	6	4	7	7	5
Urban region[1]						
Belfast South	36	21	23	35	36	26
Belfast East	26	24	20	23	23	15
Belfast West	24	8	12	16	12	8
Belfast North	20	35	24	27	26	19
Castlereagh	32	30	33	37	37	26
North Down	18	4	21	23	25	17
Carrickfergus	7	7	8	9	8	6
Newtownabbey	11	12	12	14	14	8
Lisburn	0	3	3	2	0	0
Ards	10	11	14	15	10	13
Antrim	3	5	3	3	5	2

[1] Urban region did not commence recording this type of data until April 2004.

Table 2: Roads policing unit monthly deployments per DCU—2005

District command unit	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
Rural region						
Armagh	0	0	0	1	1	0
Ballymena	5	0	6	2	5	4
Ballymoney	4	0	5	2	4	3
Banbridge	6	11	11	13	13	12
Coleraine	2	8	3	2	3	5
Cookstown	1	1	2	1	1	1
Craigavon	0	0	0	0	1	0

Table 2: Roads policing unit monthly deployments per DCU—2005

District command unit	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
Down	4	1	3	7	9	7
Dungannon and South Tyrone	1	1	1	1	1	3
Fermanagh	2	1	1	3	1	1
Foyle	6	5	5	0	3	7
Limavady	6	4	2	0	4	7
Magherafelt	3	5	5	1	4	7
Moyle	2	0	1	0	0	0
Newry and Mourne	11	7	6	7	10	6
Omagh	9	7	3	5	6	3
Urban region						
Belfast South	24	24	29	36	28	29
Belfast East	19	20	23	23	33	23
Belfast West	20	24	20	20	8	35
Belfast North	21	21	28	26	25	26
Castlereagh	39	39	50	35	25	37
North Down	20	19	26	23	26	24
Carrickfergus	8	6	9	9	10	11
Newtownabbey	12	10	10	13	12	15
Lisburn	0	0	0	0	0	7
Ards	14	15	14	14	17	15
Antrim	3	2	2	3	4	4

District command unit	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Rural region						
Armagh	0	0	1	0	1	0
Ballymena	2	3	0	5	1	2
Ballymoney	0	3	1	4	2	3
Banbridge	8	7	14	10	10	7
Coleraine	3	3	4	5	3	2
Cookstown	0	1	1	1	1	0
Craigavon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Down	3	4	5	1	0	0
Dungannon and South Tyrone	1	0	1	2	5	1
Fermanagh	1	6	2	2	5	1
Foyle	8	9	8	7	5	4
Limavady	5	8	11	6	3	2
Magherafelt	3	4	3	5	2	2
Moyle	0	1	0	1	0	1
Newry and Mourne	4	2	9	6	3	3
Omagh	7	3	5	10	10	5
Urban region						
Belfast South	25	28	26	25	27	24
Belfast East	21	21	21	20	21	20
Belfast West	45	50	45	45	40	30
Belfast North	16	24	26	24	25	24
Castlereagh	34	46	35	40	46	30
North Down	28	23	27	22	28	24
Carrickfergus	9	7	9	7	8	7
Newtownabbey	8	10	11	9	9	9
Lisburn	9	10	9	9	8	6
Ards	14	11	17	12	14	11
Antrim	2	3	4	2	2	3

Note

Larne and Strabane do not currently have any identified camera locations for mobile safety cameras.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* seriously injured in the three years prior to the establishment of camera sites in (i) East Belfast and (ii) Castlereagh District Command Unit; and how many have been (A) killed and (B) seriously injured in each year since their establishment. [24151]

Mr. Woodward: The fixed safety camera sites at the Upper Newtownards Road (East Belfast DCU) and at the Saintfield Road (Castlereagh DCU) were introduced on 1 July 2003. The number of people (i) killed and (ii) seriously injured at each site for three years prior to their establishment and for each year since are provided in the following tables:

1. East Belfast DCU Fixed Camera: Upper Newtownards Road

	Killed	Seriously injured
Before		
1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001	0	3
1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002	0	3
1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003	0	1
After		
1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004	0	2
1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005	0	1

2. Castlereagh DCU Fixed Camera: Saintfield Road

	Killed	Seriously injured
Before		
1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001	0	1
1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002	0	3
1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003	0	1
After		
1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004	0	1
1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005	0	0

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Agency Regulation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to reform the regulation of all agencies that supply *(a)* teachers and *(b)* non-teaching staff for schools and colleges. [43741]

Ruth Kelly: We plan to introduce a new mandatory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check for all newly appointed school employees. This will in effect require agencies to carry out such checks in order to meet the requirements of the employer. We will also consider the case for taking further steps, including introducing a formal requirement on all supply agencies to have a CRB disclosure for all staff who work in schools, FE institutions and local authority education services.

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets she has set for increasing the number of people working in child care; and what progress has been made towards meeting these targets. [43809]

Beverley Hughes: There are no set targets for increasing the number of people working in child care, but work force growth is needed to support the continuing expansion of the child care sector. Recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of good quality staff to support this expansion is essential and we are helping child care employers to do so. Our 2002/03 Childcare and Early Years Workforce Survey shows that the child care work force overall has grown from 238,500 in 1998 to 279,100 in 2002/03, an increase of 17 per cent.

Child Protection

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria Ministers have been using to assess teachers' appeals against appearing on List 99; who drew up the criteria; and when they were last revised. [43779]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many individuals who have worked with children through employment by an agency have been *(a)* on List 99 and *(b)* on the sex offenders' register since the establishment of each. [44470]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and accompanying report explain the work underway to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools in England and Wales. We are carrying out work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department imposes a legal obligation on agencies employing those who work with children to carry out a check on an applicant's previous history of sexual offences before *(a)* allowing them to join the agency and *(b)* offering them work. [44471]

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many people on List 99 have limited permission to work *(a)* with some types of children and *(b)* in certain types of school; [43773]

(2) if she will publish the guidelines used by the Children's Safeguard Unit in advising her on cases in which she has discretion in relation to List 99. [43769]

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will ensure that, as part of her review on safeguarding children, measures are taken to ensure that nobody will be allowed to be a teacher who *(a)* has been convicted of and *(b)* has accepted a caution for downloading child pornography, and has been placed on the Sex Offenders Register. [42958]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the sex offenders' register have *(a)* been registered as a foster parent and *(b)* worked as a foster parent in each of the last eight years. [44474]

Ruth Kelly: Details of individual foster carers are not recorded centrally. However, in deciding whether to approve a prospective foster carer, fostering service providers are required under the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 to consider a range of information about that individual. This includes: an enhanced criminal record certificate (or, where this is not available, details of any criminal offences of which the

person has been convicted, including spent convictions and cautions); particulars of any previous approval or refusal of approval to foster or adopt, or to register for childminding or day care, relating either to that individual or to any other members of the household; and details of any criminal offences in respect of which other adult members of the household have been convicted or cautioned.

The regulations require that in cases where an individual, or any other adult member of the household, has committed a specified offence—including an offence against a child—that individual shall not be considered suitable to act as a foster carer, unless the provider is satisfied that the welfare of a particular child requires it and either: the individual (or a member of the household) is a relative of the child; or the individual is already acting as a foster carer for the child.

Fostering service providers are also required under the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 to maintain a register of their foster carers, including carers' details and the terms of their approval.

Children's Centres

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children's centres have been established in each year for which figures are available; and how many places have been available at each centre. [43795]

Beverley Hughes: Local authorities were asked to start planning the development of children's centres in February 2003 and 67 centres were designated in 2003–04. An additional 163 centres were designated in 2004–05, and we expect a further 600 centres to be designated in 2005–06. Local authorities are still developing plans for children centre delivery for 2006–08, and a breakdown of numbers of centres to be opened in these years is not centrally available. However, by the end of this period we expect 2,500 to be designated.

Children's centres are expected to reach 650,000 children under the age of five by March 2006. Local authorities should ensure that all families are aware of the services that the children's centre can provide for them. All children's centres will deliver integrated childcare and early learning as part of the core offer.

The Government intends to develop 3,500 Sure Start children's centres by 2010. This will mean every community in England will have a children centre coordinating a range of integrated services for pre-school children and their parents.

Children's Trusts

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children's trusts were established in each year for which figures are available; [43940]

(2) how many local authorities have established children's trusts; and if she will make a statement. [43941]

Beverley Hughes: All local authorities, primary care trusts and their partners are setting up a children's trust in their local area—they are on target to meet the Government's expectation that most areas will have a children's trust by April 2006, and all by 2008. 35 pathfinders and many other local areas have already established their children's trust arrangements, and some 135 local authorities say that their directors of children's services have been or are being appointed.

Criminal Records Bureau

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how the Government decide whether someone is eligible for the Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure checks; and if she will make a statement. [44413]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is necessary to request a criminal record check from the Criminal Records Bureau before employing a new teacher. [42575]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones her Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41267]

Phil Hope: The number and cost of laptops and mobile phones purchased in each complete year since 1999/2000 is shown as follows. Figures in respect of 1997/98 and 1998/99 could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	Mobile phones		*Laptops*	
	Quantity	*Cost (incl. VAT)*	*Quantity*	*Cost (incl. VAT)*
1999/2000	47	9431.73	745	1,255,243.35
2000/01	487	67,647.10	624	1,063,000.76
2001/02	342	34,870.48	639	1,054,995.39
2002/03	439	36,989.00	360	540,455.28
2003/04	401	41,908.26	721	953,492.51
2004/05	361	23,872.48	482	558,598.16

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41326]

Phil Hope: The information as requested is not readily available centrally within the Department for Education and Skills. To respond fully would involve an extensive

internal and external information collection exercise which would exceed the recommended disproportionate cost threshold.

However, to be helpful, I refer the hon. Member to the answers given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children Young People and Families on 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1314W; and 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 192W.

Early Support Pilot Programme

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Early Support Pilot Programme; and if she will make a statement. [43949]

Beverley Hughes: An independent evaluation of the Early Support Pilot Programme began in July 2004 and is being undertaken by the University of Manchester, in association with the University of Central Lancashire. A report on the outcomes and cost effectiveness of the programme will be available towards the end of June 2006. To date, feedback about the programme and its materials from parents and professionals working with disabled children has been extremely positive.

Employment Training Pilots

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what policy options will be considered following the Institute of Fiscal Studies evaluation of the work of employment training pilots up to 2004. [43738]

Phil Hope: The IFS report covers the first phase of the Employer Training Pilots (ETP) and has highlighted that we need to do more to attract the harder to reach employers. The subsequent phases of the pilots have shown us better how to do this, which has been one of the many real values of the pilots and their evaluation. ETP has also been the subject of an ongoing evaluation by the Institute of Employment Studies (IES). The development of the new national programme, Train to Gain, was based on the lessons learned from these evaluations. The final IES evaluation report is due in the spring, and we will consider the findings of that report alongside the IFS report.

Skills brokers in Train to Gain will have a target of at least half the employers they engage being "hard to reach", additional employers. We are making £15 million available in 2005–06 and £20 million in 2006–07 to develop the capacity of the brokerage network and implement a performance management system that focuses services on this priority and rewards achievement accordingly.

A number of evaluations, including the IFS report, have shown that employers identify many benefits from ETP including productivity improvement, changed attitudes to learning, improved motivation and provided employers and employees with a platform for progression. Participating employers were more likely to train their low-skilled staff to the benefit of their business and say that ETP has allowed them to train more people over a shorter period of time. So we are confident that we are already involving more hard-to-reach learners.

We expect Train to Gain to deliver over 40,000 additional level 2 qualifications in 2006–07; over 140,000 in 2007–08 and, by the time the programme reaches full capacity, 175,000 in 2008–09 and in each year thereafter.

Extended Schools Programme

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults have made use of the extended schools programme in each year for which figures are available; and how many schools have used the programme in each year. [43938]

Beverley Hughes: We do not currently hold data on the number of children and adults that have made use of extended services accessed through schools and it could only be provided at disproportionate cost. However we do have data on the number of schools offering access to extended services from a baseline survey of maintained schools published in September 2005. This survey showed that 87 per cent. of primary and 95 per cent. of secondary schools provide some form of childcare or activities outside of normal school hours; 69 per cent. of primary and 66 per cent. of secondary schools provide some form of parenting support; and 75 per cent. of primary schools and 97 per cent. of secondary schools provide wider community access to their facilities such as sports, arts and ICT facilities. This is a good baseline to build on and we will continue to monitor progress.

Higher Education

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she will undertake on the effects on willingness to study the 50 per cent. threshold requirement for financial support for part-time higher education students. [43739]

Bill Rammell: We have no current plans for undertaking research on this issue, but will keep the need for further research under review, as we assess the impact of the improved funding package for part-time students which will be introduced in 2006.

For 2006–07 the support package available for eligible part-time English-domiciled students studying in England will include: an increase in the grant for fees of 27 per cent. to a maximum of £1,125 alongside a course grant of £250; an additional £40 million in institutional funding—provided jointly with the Higher Education Funding Council for England—to encourage participation from, and improve provision for, the most under-represented groups; and an increase in the Access to Learning Fund allocation available to part-time students from £3 million to £12 million. Welsh-domiciled students will, from 2006, be funded according to the decisions of the National Assembly for Wales.

Information Sharing and Assessment Index Project

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's estimate is of the cost of *(a)* setting up and *(b)* running the Information Sharing and Assessment Index Project; and how much her Department has (i) spent to date and (ii) plans to spend on consultants and other specialist staff associated with the project. [43447]

Beverley Hughes: As announced on 8 December, the estimated set-up costs are £224 million over the next three years. This includes the costs of adapting existing systems that will supply the data to the index and ensuring that data are accurate; adapting the day-to-day systems used by practitioners so they can access the index from those systems; introducing robust arrangements to ensure security, and training staff to use the index properly.

Estimated operating costs, thereafter, will be £41 million per year. Most of this will pay for the additional staff needed to ensure the ongoing security, accuracy and audit of the index.

Since the start of the feasibility phase of the index project in February 2004 we have spent around £5 million on consultants and other specialist staff. We expect to spend around a further £15 million on such support between now and the completion of index roll-out in 2008. Developing and implementing large IT-enabled systems is not an area where DfES can rely on employing permanent civil servants to deliver, since we cannot offer the career structure or range of projects that people with the necessary specialist skills will be seeking. There is no alternative approach which will deliver to Government at lower cost the expert people with the skills we need to deliver this project.

Keith Hudson

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which *(a)* Minister and *(b)* official (i) advised on and (ii) signed the letter in relation to the decision on the List 99 determination in the case of Keith Hudson. [43409]

Ruth Kelly: The powers under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 whether or not to make a direction that an individual should be added to List 99 are exercised by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The Department for Education and Skills does not disclose the names of individual officials or Ministers, advising or exercising those power as a matter of policy.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the budget for learners with learning needs and disabilities is in each learning and skills council in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [42782]

Bill Rammell: My Department does not allocate separate budgets to meet the needs of most learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of learners access mainstream programmes where their needs are met through core funding or through additional funding support where required. In the most recent year for which information is available the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) supported 579,000 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at a cost of around £1.3 billion. The figures for 2005/06 are not yet available. We do make available a separate budget for specialist colleges for learners with the most severe needs. We are providing £158 million for this purpose in 2006–07. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a key priority identified in our grant letter to the LSC and is in turn reflected in the LSC's annual statement of priorities.

List 99

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on List 99 have been given permission to teach GCSE courses only in the last 10 years. [43659]

Ruth Kelly: No one on List 99 has been given permission to teach GCSE courses specifically.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females are on List 99. [43921]

Ruth Kelly: There were 449 females and 3,596 males on list 99 on 18 January 2006.

Local Education Authorities

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her most recent advice to local education authorities is on the employment of individuals before all *(a)* Criminal Records Bureau and *(b)* other character checks are completed; and if she will make a statement. [43919]

Ruth Kelly: Our guidance note 'Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service' gives comprehensive advice on the full range of pre-employment checks that local authorities ought to make before employing and individual. Supplementary advice relating to Criminal Records Bureau disclosures is provided in the guidance note 'Criminal Records Bureau:Managing the Demand for Disclosures'. Both documents can be found on the DfES website at http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=2172 and http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?ID=3334

New Schools (Cumbria)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been awarded to Cumbria County Council for new buildings in schools in Cumbria in each of the last three years; how much was awarded to each school in each case; and if she will make a statement. [42395]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Cumbria county council and its schools have been awarded the following capital allocations in the last three years: £21.2 million (2003–04); £23.7 million (2004–05); and £19 million (2005–06).

The Department does not hold information on the amounts allocated for new buildings or at individual school level. We expect these decisions to be made locally by the County Council in accordance with its Assets Management Plan.

Overseas Trained Teacher Programme

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers are placed in each local authority under the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme. [43604]

Jacqui Smith: In 2004/05, 116 local authorities in England had 1,544 overseas trained teachers on programmes, the majority in London and the South East. A breakdown of the numbers by local authority is shown in the following table:

Local authority	*OTTs*	*Percentage*
Surrey	66	4
Southwark	62	4
Essex	58	4
Brent	51	3
Kent	50	3
Hertfordshire	44	3
Hackney	42	3
Hillingdon	42	3
Baling	41	3
Birmingham	38	2
Newham	38	2
Greenwich	33	2
Lambeth	32	2
Buckinghamshire	31	2
Croydon	31	2
Tower Hamlets	31	2
Haringey	29	2
Hounslow	29	2
Barking and Dagenham	28	2
Barnet	28	2
Waltham Forest	28	2
Enfield	27	2
Wandsworth	27	2
Slough	26	2
Lewisham	24	2
Redbridge	24	2
Westminster	24	2
Luton	23	1
Bexley	21	1
Medway	21	1
Islington	20	1
Hammersmith and Fulham	19	1
Harrow	19	1
Hampshire	18	1
Bedfordshire	17	1
Merton	17	1
Havering	16	1
Button	16	1
Thurrock	15	1
Suffolk	14	1
Northamptonshire	13	1
Cambridgeshire	12	1
Reading	12	1
Windsor and Maidenhead	12	1
Bromley	11	1
Lincolnshire	11	1
Norfolk	11	1
Doncaster	10	1
West Sussex	9	1
East Sussex	8	1
Nottingham	8	1
Richmond upon Thames	8	1
Warwickshire	8	1
West Berkshire	8	1
Camden	7	[1]
Oxfordshire	7	[1]
Peterborough	7	[1]
Southend-on-Sea	7	[1]
Wokingham	7	[1]
Bradford	6	[1]
Bristol City of	6	[1]
Kensington and Chelsea	6	[1]
Kirklees	6	[1]
Milton Keynes	6	[1]
Bracknell Forest	5	[1]
Kingston upon Thames	5	[1]
Leeds	5	[1]
Leicester	5	[1]
Leicestershire	5	[1]
Solihull	5	[1]
Staffordshire	5	[1]
Wiltshire	5	[1]
Southampton	4	[1]
Brighton and Hove	3	[1]
Isle of Wight	3	[1]
Lancashire	3	[1]
Manchester	3	[1]
Nottinghamshire	3	[1]
Sandwell	3	[1]
Somerset	3	[1]
Sunderland	3	[1]
Walsall	3	[1]
Worcestershire	3	[1]
Cornwall	2	[1]
Dudley	2	[1]
Durham	2	[1]
North Somerset	2	[1]
North Tyneside	2	[1]
North Yorkshire	2	[1]
Poole	2	[1]
Portsmouth	2	[1]
Salford	2	[1]
Swindon	2	[1]
Wakefield	2	[1]
Bath and North East Somerset	1	[1]
Bournemouth	1	[1]
Cheshire	1	[1]
Coventry	1	[1]
Cumbria	1	[1]
Darlington	1	[1]
Derbyshire	1	[1]
Devon	1	[1]
Gloucestershire	1	[1]
Halton	1	[1]
Hartlepool	1	[1]
Rochdale	1	[1]
Sefton	1	[1]
Sheffield	1	[1]
South Gloucestershire	1	[1]
Stockton-on-Tees	1	[1]
Stoke-on-Trent	1	[1]
Telford and Wrekin	1	[1]
Torbay	1	[1]
Trafford	1	[1]
Wigan	1	[1]
Wirral	1	[1]
Grand total	1,544	100

[1] Indicates the percentage is below 1 per cent.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what procedures are in place for background checks on teachers taken on under the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme. [43606]

Ruth Kelly: Overseas teachers are subject to the same vetting procedures as UK teachers. The Department provides detailed guidance on the necessary checks which must be carried out before engaging any teacher, including a supply teacher. The guidance requires that employers conduct checks to confirm that a teacher has declared their true identity, that supply teachers have the necessary qualifications and experience and that foreign nationals have permission to work in the UK.

In the future we will require mandatory CRB checks as part of any appointment process on anyone selected for appointment who is or has been resident in the UK. However, it will not be possible to check someone who has never lived in this country because he/she will not

have a criminal record here and will not be on List 99. We already advise employers to take extra care in other checks on overseas candidates and to seek information about the person's criminal history from their country of origin wherever possible. The CRB provides advice to employers about countries from which it is possible to obtain such information and how to obtain it.

We will be reviewing the process for vetting overseas teachers.

Parent Support Advisers

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the cost of each Parent Support Adviser; and if she will make a statement. [43943]

Beverley Hughes: The Government have set aside 20m to support the piloting of Parent Support Advisers in over 600 primary and secondary schools in the most deprived areas. These advisers will offer early preventative support for children and families where there are signs that they could benefit from additional help. Parent Support Advisers will work with families to identify the most effective support for them.

We are in the process of working up delivery proposals for Parent Support Advisers which build on good practice in early intervention with children and families and provide for a range of approaches across the pilot areas.

Pre-school Provision

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what comparative analysis of the effects of pre-school provision on educational attainment in other countries *(a)* has been and *(b)* will be undertaken by the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project. [43665]

Beverley Hughes: The Department's Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) study has reported that the EPPE findings are similar to those of research studies in other countries, including the US, Canada, Norway, Germany and New Zealand. The EPPE study uses the same quality measures as in key US studies to facilitate comparisons. It will continue to follow children's development to the end of Key Stage 2, looking at comparisons with international research. Additionally, in 2003, my Department's Early Years and Childcare International Evidence project reported on the relationship of early years programmes to child outcomes.

This international body of literature shows that early education is especially important for the educational attainment of disadvantaged children, but has positive impacts for all children. Another consistent finding is that integrated early years settings, quality provision and higher staff qualifications are associated with more positive child outcomes.

Public Sector (Graduates)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in what academic disciplines the Government have identified a need for more graduates in the public sector work force; and if she will make a statement. [43075]

Bill Rammell: Almost 14 million jobs will need to be filled by 2012 across the economy of which nearly 7 million will demand graduates. Historically we have not precisely identified the balance of provision between different disciplines or the public and private sectors. However, in our response to HEFCE's advice on subjects of strategic importance (a copy of which is being placed in the Library), we indicated that demand and supply side trends in those subjects would be monitored in future.

School Intakes

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether she plans to enable schools to extend the age range of children they teach. [43153]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The Department has no immediate plans to change the existing arrangements whereby local authorities and school governing bodies may publish statutory proposals to change the age range of a school. Proposals are decided locally or by the Schools Adjudicator.

Governing bodies may use their discretionary powers under Section 27 of the EA 2002 to provide directly, or in partnership with others, facilities or services for the benefit of pupils, their families or the wider community. This may include childcare for children aged five and under. Subject to parliamentary approval of the provisions set out in the Childcare Bill, any such provision from 2008, would be based on, and consistent with, the Early Years Foundation Stage. This will ensure that learning and development activities are age appropriate and contribute to improved outcomes for children.

Senior Medical Officer

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have held the position of Senior Medical Officer in her Department over the past 10 years. [43846]

Ruth Kelly: One person has held the post of Senior Medical Officer in this Department over the past 10 years. In 2003 the post ceased to exist, as the activities performed by the Senior Medical Officer were contracted out.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* qualifications and *(b)* experience are required of candidates for the post of her Senior Medical Officer. [43848]

Ruth Kelly: This post no longer exists. Our medical services contractor retains the services of specialist consultants in forensic psychiatry to consider cases that involve child protection issues, including those where an individual may be placed on List 99, and also advises whether assessments and reports should be commissioned by specialists with other professional qualifications and experience.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements her Department has in place to ensure that registered sex offenders seeking employment in schools are considered for being placed on List 99. [41420]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who advises her on who should be placed on List 99; and how such people are *(a)* chosen and *(b)* trained. [42090]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether being placed on the sex offenders' register is a criterion for being placed on List 99; [42092]

(2) what criteria she uses when deciding who should be placed on List 99. [42091]

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether she has approved any person on the register of sex offenders to work at a school in her period as Secretary of State; [41419]

(2) how many people are on the list of registered sex offenders but not on List 99; [41418]

(3) how many people are on List 99; and how many of these are on the list of registered sex offenders. [41417]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people are on List 99; and how many people were on List 99 in each of the last 10 years. [42105]

Ruth Kelly: The number of people on List 99 is included in the report which accompanied my statement earlier today. The list is continuously updated and data are not collected on an annual basis. Therefore we do not have the information requested about the total number of people on List 99 in each of the last 10 years.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* criteria and *(b)* procedures are used when it is decided to take someone off List 99. [42107]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether anyone with a conviction for a sexual offence is working in a school. [42556]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons someone on the register of sexual offenders might be allowed to work in a school. [42557]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of earlier today set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department issues to schools on the employment of ex-offenders. [42574]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not issue specific advice in respect of the employment of ex-offenders. The DfES Circular "Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People From Working With Children and Young Persons in the Education Service" sets out the procedures schools should follow in deciding whether to appoint staff. It emphasises that decisions must be made on after considering a range of pre-employment checks. It points out that a criminal record does not automatically make an individual unsuitable to work with children.

The guidance advises prospective employers to consider several factors, including the nature of any offence(s); the length of time since the offence was committed; and the frequency of offending. It emphasises that sexual, violent, or drugs related offences are likely to indicate that someone is unsuitable to work with children, and that recent offences and/or a history of repeated offending are of much more concern than an isolated minor conviction many years ago.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the Register of Sexual Offenders are working in schools; and in what capacities. [42765]

Ruth Kelly [holding answer 16 January 2006]: My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools, which will also establish the capacity of each individual. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the Sex Offenders Register are employed by schools in *(a)* Blackpool and *(b)* Lancashire. [42801]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and accompanying report explain the work underway to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are

currently employed in schools in England and Wales. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Essex have staff who are on the Sex Offenders Register. [42922]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list local education authorities which have schools with staff who are on the Sex Offenders Register. [42923]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Sex Offenders Register

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people employed in schools on a *(a)* temporary, *(b)* permanent and *(c)* contracted basis in the Leeds metropolitan area in each year since 1997 (i) are and (ii) have been on the sex offenders register. [43524]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and the accompanying report explain the work underway to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools in England and Wales. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Special Education Needs

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on the provision of special education needs *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a percentage of total education spending in each region of England. [43090]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is contained within the following table and is for the financial year 2005–06:

Region	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN[1] (£) (a)*	*Total planned expenditure on SEN transport (£) (b)*	*Total planned educational revenue expenditure (£) (c)*	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (excluding SEN transport)[1] as a percentage of total education spending [a/c]*	*Total planned expenditure on the education of children with SEN (including SEN transport) as a percentage of total education spending [(a+b)/c]*
England	4,120,353,000	499,593,000	31,157,614,000	13.2	14.8
of which:					
North East	210,457,000	20,739,000	1,588,695,000	13.2	14.6
North West and Merseyside	569,293,000	70,800,000	4,392,054,000	13.0	14.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	382,531,000	42,858,000	3,173,505,000	12.1	13.4
East Midlands	314,149,000	37,814,000	2,619,375,000	12.0	13.4
West Midlands	475,781,000	50,417,000	3,460,564,000	13.7	15.2
Eastern	393,061,000	55,799,000	3,316,037,000	11.9	13.5
South East	676,225,000	96,236,000	4,680,733,000	14.4	16.5
London	749,993,000	90,415,000	5,105,297,000	14.7	16.5
South West	348,864,000	34,515,000	2,821,354,000	12.4	13.6

[1] Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at

Notes:

1. Figures are in cash terms as reported by LEAs at 13 January 2006 and rounded to the nearest thousand pounds and may not sum due to rounding. independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, LA functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to local authority maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget for special schools. The figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might by spent by schools on SEN. Not included is any budgeted SEN transport expenditure.
2. The data are taken from local authorities' 2005–06 Section 52 Budget Statements submitted to the DfES.

Staying-on Rates (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average staying-on rate in post-16 education was in Tamworth constituency in each of the past 10 years. [43467]

Bill Rammell: The percentage of 16-year-olds in full-time education in England at the end of 2004 was estimated to be 74.2 per cent.—the highest ever rate. Percentage figures on participation in education by young people are not available for parliamentary constituencies, but are available for local authorities—including Staffordshire LEA. These were published in the Statistical First Release "Participation in education and training by 16 and 17-year-olds in each local area in England"—SFR11/2005 on 31 March 2005.

The publication is accessible on the DfES website via the link, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/index.shtml.

The specific figures are available through the following link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/SFR11-2005tables_lea.xls.

Sure Start

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are participating in the Sure Start programme in Easington constituency; and how many have done so since the programme commenced. [42702]

Beverley Hughes: One Sure Start children's centre has been designated so far in Easington constituency—Sure Start Peterlee, designated in September 2003. There are two Sure Start local programmes (Seaham, and Hornden and Easington Colliery) and a mini-programme operational, all of which are working towards children's centre status. Together this Sure Start provision is serving approximately 2,500 children under five and their families. Figures for the number of children actually supported by Sure Start since the programme began are not collated centrally. However there are a total of 10 children's centres planned for this constituency by March 2008. By March 2010 all children under five in the area will have access to a range of high quality integrated services.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has *(a)* made and *(b)* plans to make of the effectiveness of (i) Sure Start and (ii) Mini Sure Start; and if she will make a statement. [43841]

Beverley Hughes: There is a comprehensive national level evaluation of Sure Start local programmes in place which began in January 2001, which will run until 2008. It examines the implementation, cost-effectiveness and impact of Sure Start on children, families and communities, in the short, medium and long term. There have been 14 reports published to date.

An evaluation of the Mini Sure Start programme was published in January 2005. Research reports related to Sure Start and early years policy can be found at www.surestart.gov.uk/research.

Subsidised School Milk

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the evidential basis was on which the decision was taken to remove subsidised milk from schools. [42256]

Jim Knight: I have been asked to reply.

The evaluation of the national top-up to the EU school milk subsidy scheme in England was published on 4 January. The report contained a number of recommendations which included ending the top-up and spending the £1.5 million released as a result on other programmes to promote milk consumption by young people. The Government have, however, decided that the subsidy scheme has a valuable role to play and should remain unchanged.

Teachers

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching posts were vacant in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each year since 1997; and what the average vacancy rate for a local education authority in England was in each year. [43384]

Jacqui Smith: Information on teacher vacancies is collected at local authority level and is not available for individual parliamentary constituencies.

The following table provides the number of full-time teacher vacancies in maintained nursery, primary, and secondary schools in Cumbria local authority and vacancy rates for Cumbria and England in each January since 1997.

Full-time teacher vacancy numbers[1] and rates[2] in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools in Cumbria and England, January 1997 to 2005

	Cumbria				*England*	
	Nursery/primary		*Secondary*		*Percentage*	
	Vacancy numbers	*Vacancy rates (percentage)*	*Vacancy numbers*	*Vacancy rates (percentage)*	*Nursery/primary vacancy rates*	*Secondary vacancy rates*
1997	0	0.0	4	0.2	0.6	0.4
1998	1	0.1	1	0.1	0.8	0.6
1999	0	0.0	2	0.1	0.8	0.5
2000	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.8	0.7
2001	4	0.2	2	0.1	1.2	1.4
2002	8	0.4	8	0.4	1.0	1.3
2003	3	0.2	6	0.3	0.6	1.1
2004	5	0.3	2	0.1	0.5	0.9
2005	1	0.1	9	0.4	0.4	0.8

[1] Advertised vacancies for full-time permanent appointments (or appointments of at least one terms duration). Includes vacancies being filled on a temporary basis of less than one term.

[2] Vacancies as a percentage of teachers in post i.e. full-time regular teachers in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, plus full-time regular divided service, peripatetic, advisory and miscellaneous teachers.

Source:

DfES annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies (Form 618G)

Teachers (Convictions)

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers have *(a)* convictions, including spent convictions and *(b)* police cautions. [42576]

Ruth Kelly: The information is not available. There is no central record of convictions and cautions incurred by teachers.

Truanting

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils truanted for at least one day from secondary school in each academic year since 2001/02; and if she will make a statement. [40435]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Figures are only available for pupils missing at least one half day through unauthorised absence. The information requested can be found as follows.

Number of pupils absent for at least one half day due to 'unauthorised'[1] absence in maintained mainstream secondary schools

	Number of pupils absent
2001/02	566,644
2002/03	631,669
2003/04	696,600
2004/05	774,347

[1] Unauthorised absence is absence without leave from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences, such as lateness, holidays during term time not authorised by the school, absence where reason is not yet established and truancy. Truancy forms only one part of the unauthorised figures.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 20 January 2006

TRANSPORT

Aircraft (Contaminated Air)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking in relation to contaminated air events on commercial aircraft. [41983]

Ms Buck: The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology report dated November 2000 (paragraph 4.41) found concerns about contaminated air events to be unsubstantiated. Nevertheless, we have requested an evidence review of documentation submitted by BALPA on this matter by the independent Committee on Toxicity; and this is in hand.

Hard Shoulder Running

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 495W, what the timetable for the decision-making process on the introduction of hard shoulder running is; and what the schedule is for rolling out the programme. [42975]

Dr. Ladyman: There is little I can add to my previous answer.

Controlled use of the hard shoulder during peak periods of traffic congestion is due to be implemented on the M42 in the West Midlands by March 2007 as part of the Highways Agency's Active Traffic Management pilot. In order to establish fully the effectiveness of these measures, the project will be monitored over a three-year period. Initial conclusions from operation of the scheme will be reviewed in 2008, but in the meantime it would be premature to develop a programme for the wider use of further hard shoulder running.

M3

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate he has made of the peak flow of traffic at the southern roundabout of junction 6 on the M3. [43112]

Dr. Ladyman: A traffic count was carried out at junction 6 of the M3 on 27 September 2005. The results of the peak period vehicle count was as follows:

	Peak	
	8 am to 9 am	*5 am to 6 pm*
M3 southbound off slip	1,600	1,440
M3 southbound on slip	530	1,210
M3 northbound off slip	1,680	550
M3 northbound on slip	1,400	1,420
Total	5,210	4,620

The survey was undertaken as part of a study to investigate and identify possible improvements in relation to congestion and safety issues at M3 junction 6.

Night-flight Restrictions

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost was of conducting the stage *(a)* one and *(b)* two consultation on night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports; and if he will make a statement. [44545]

Ms Buck: Preparation and publication of the stage one consultation paper cost approximately £12,500 and stage two approximately £11,000. These figures do not include departmental staff costs and overheads and do not include the cost of Civil Aviation Authority staff who prepared the noise contours and other technical data.

In addition, to increase awareness of the consultation exercise among the local community, advertisements were taken out in local newspapers explaining where the consultation paper could be obtained. This cost approximately £6,500 (stage one) and £4,000 (stage two).

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Protection

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what checks are carried out on workers subcontracted to carry out work on school premises, including cleaners and maintenance workers. [43523]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of 19 January set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

The Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings guidance issued in June 2005 states that:

> "Local authorities, schools, and Further Education institutions should ensure that the terms of any contract they let that requires the contractor to employ staff to work with, or provide services for, children for whom the LA, school or FE institution is responsible also requires the contractor to adopt and implement the measures described in this guidance. They should also monitor the contractor's compliance."

Among other things the measures described include pre appointment checks of List 99 and CRB disclosures—copy at www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department has given permission for an individual whose name appears on *(a)* the sex offenders register, *(b)* List 99 and *(c)* the Protection of Children Act List to work in (i) the provision of child care in all settings from birth to entry to school and (ii) the provision of youth services in each of the last four years. [43768]

Ruth Kelly: The Department does not give permission for people to work in specific settings. Employment decisions are a matter for individual employers. Any individual who appears on List 99 or the POCA List (other than provisionally) on the grounds of

unsuitability to work with children is barred from working in a "regulated position" within the meaning of section 36 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 which includes, for example, a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the register of sex offenders have been permitted to work in schools and have subsequently committed a sexual offence. [43772]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which offences lead to an automatic ban from working in schools. [43770]

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what duty is placed on local authorities to report to her Department incidents of individuals with a record of sex offending working with children. [44473]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of 19 January set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Criminal Records Bureau

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions her Department has had with the Home Office about making Criminal Records Bureau searches more effective in respect of school staff. [43928]

Ruth Kelly: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) searches several different databases before issuing a disclosure. We are not aware of any instances where the CRB has failed to perform a fully effective search of its databases. My Department is involved in discussions with the Home Office about further improving the information flows for the purpose of establishing the new vetting and barring scheme arising from Sir Michael Bichard's report.

Home Tutors

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Government have a list of all home tutors working in England. [44284]

Ruth Kelly: The Government do not maintain a list of all home tutors working in England.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department plans to review the regulation of home tutors within the education system; and if she will make a statement. [44546]

Ruth Kelly: Individuals working as self-employed home tutors are not able to independently obtain a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure as the application must be signed by a person who is entitled to ask an exempted question in relation to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

The Department strongly advises parents to check the background of home tutors by requesting references and checking a tutor's registration with the relevant General Teaching Council. Parents are also advised to make appropriate arrangements for a child who is receiving home tuition, for example having an adult present.

The Department is fully aware that parents have limited access to information. The new scheme to be implemented as part of the Bichard Inquiry recommendations is giving consideration to how parents can access information on people they wish to employ as home tutors.

List 99

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills by whom the case of Keith Hudson was referred to her Department for a List 99 determination. [43407]

Ruth Kelly: The case of Keith Hudson was referred by More House School, Farnham, Surrey.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to which Ministers power to decide List 99 determinations has been devolved since 1997. [43655]

Ruth Kelly: It is Departmental policy not to identify anyone below the Secretary of State.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cases heard by the Care Standards Tribunal in each year since it was established relate to List 99. [43657]

Ruth Kelly: The number of cases heard by the Care Standards Tribunal in each year since it was established that relate to List 99 are as follows:

	Number
2002	2
2003	3
2004	4
2005	3

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people included on List 99 have been given permission to teach in an establishment which does not admit *(a)* male pupils and *(b)* female pupils. [43658]

Ruth Kelly: It is not possible to provide this information in the format requested.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions have been held between her Department and the Home Office on List 99 in the past 12 months; and whether discussions were initiated by her Department. [43845]

Ruth Kelly: My Department has an ongoing dialogue with both the Home Office and the Criminal Records Bureau, to improve safeguarding. Recently this dialogue, along with discussions between the CRB and others of its stakeholders, has led to improvements including: an interim Police Local Cross Checking (i-PLX) system pending implementation of the full system; revised guidance; consolidation of CRB's two websites into one; and an electronic application route. Other discussions have focused on improving the information flows for the purpose of establishing the new vetting and barring scheme arising from Sir Michael Bichard's report.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which offences require her to determine whether a person should be included on List 99. [43660]

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what action she has taken to ensure that schools *(a)* employing and *(b)* considering employing people who are on (i) List 99 and (ii) the Sex Offenders Register are made aware of their status; [43924]

(2) what criteria she uses when deciding whether to give someone on List 99 permission to work with children. [43925]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of 19 January set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what schools have employed people on List 99 in the last five years. [43927]

Ruth Kelly: There are 210 people on List 99 with restrictions, so they are able to teach children provided they observe the terms of their restriction. Schools will be aware of those restricted as a result of their List 99 checks.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what date the case of Paul Reeve was referred to her Department for a List 99 determination; and on what date it was decided. [43394]

Ruth Kelly: The case of Paul Reeve was referred to this Department on 23 October 2003 and determined on 5 May 2005.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills by whom the case of Paul Reeve was referred to her Department for a List 99 determination. [43395]

Ruth Kelly: Norfolk Constabulary referred the case of Paul Reeve to this Department on 23 October 2003.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which official *(a)* advised and *(b)* signed the letter in relation to the decision on the List 99 determination in the case of Paul Reeve. [43396]

Ruth Kelly: This decision, as with all such cases, was a decision taken in the name of the Secretary of State. The Department does not disclose the names of officials who advise the Secretary of State or who sign letters to individuals on her behalf.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the individuals and organisations consulted in helping her reach a decision in the case of the Paul Reeve List 99 determination. [43397]

Ruth Kelly: The organisations consulted in reaching a decision were:

National Identification Service, New Scotland Yard

Norfolk Constabulary

Norfolk County Council

The Department does not release the names of individuals who supply information or evidence.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the *(a)* head teacher and *(b)* governing body of the Hewett School in Norwich knew that Paul Reeve (i) had received a caution for accessing a paedophile website and (ii) was on the Sex Offenders Register before his appointment. [43398]

Ruth Kelly: We understand that the head teacher of Hewett School in Norwich knew that Paul Reeve had received a caution in respect of an offence under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1978 and was on the Sex Offenders Register before his appointment. We do not know whether the governing body was aware of these circumstances.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what date Paul Reeve was interviewed at her Department in connection with the decision of his List 99 determination and who conducted the interview. [43399]

Ruth Kelly: Mr. Reeve was interviewed on 25 January 2005 by Departmental officials and on 18 February by a consultant forensic psychiatrist. The identity of officials and the doctor conducting the interview in these cases is not disclosed by the Department.

Postgraduate Research

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what are the 10 subject areas which received the most funding for postgraduate research in each of the last five years. [43080]

Barry Gardiner: I have been asked to reply.

The Department provides funds to the Research Councils to support postgraduate training in the UK. Figures are shown for each Research Council as follows. The cost of producing figures providing a breakdown of individual subject areas would incur disproportionate costs.

Research Council spend on postgraduate training (£ million, non-indexed)

Research Council	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)[1]	—	15.4	26.5	27.7	30.5
Biotechnology and Biological Research Council (BBSRC)	21.9	25.2	27.7	28.0	29.9
Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils (CCLRC)[2]	—	—	0.5	0.5	0.5
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)	72.3	83.8	87.3	94.8	119.8
Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)	22.1	22.8	22.2	23.1	28.3
Medical Research Council (MRC)[3]	38.4	44.8	45.0	52.2	50.4
Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)	13.7	15.4	15.8	17.6	19.1
Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC)	6.9	7.5	8.4	9.0	9.4

[1] AHRC became a Research Council on 1 April 2005. The figures presented are from the predecessor body AHRB (which received its funding from the UK Funding Councils not OST). Figures are not available for 2001/01.
[2] CCLRC does not directly fund any PhD or Masters students. CCLRC does fund training for postgraduates through Research Network, facility development grants and CCLRC facility access provision (figures are an approximation). Figures are not available for 2001/02 or 2000/01.
[3] This figure includes all MRC personal career awards (spend on Masters and Doctoral studentships, clinical and non-clinical fellowships, research readerships and professorships plus other funds for postgraduate training e.g. Roberts skills training).

Sex Offenders

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the list of registered sex offenders have been employed in schools in each year since 1997. [41416]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools. We are carrying out follow up work with local Multi-Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on the register of sexual offenders have been allowed to work in schools under each successive Secretary of State since 1997. [42558]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools. We are carrying out follow-up work with local Multi-Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people who *(a)* are working for and *(b)* have worked for her Department in the Leeds Metropolitan area in the last 10 years (i) are on and (ii) have been on the sex offenders register. [43931]

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have been employed in schools on a *(a)* temporary, *(b)* permanent and *(c)* contracted basis in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency who are, or have at any time in the past, been on the Sex Offenders Register in each year since 1997. [44267]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and the accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools in England and Wales.

It is not the Government's policy to reveal publicly information that may lead to the identification and whereabouts of any individual on the Sex Offenders Register. Identifying individuals in this way does not enhance child protection.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list people working in schools in Chipping Barnet who are on the Sex Offenders Register, broken down by school. [44500]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and the accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools in England and Wales. We are carrying out follow-up work with local Multi Agency Protection Panels, which include the police.

Subcontractors (Checks)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what checks are carried out on workers sub-contracted to carry out work on school premises in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency. [44257]

Ruth Kelly: We do not collect information about the precise arrangements for checking sub-contractors in Westmorland and Lonsdale.

Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings guidance issued in June 2005 states that:

> "Local authorities, schools, and further education institutions should ensure that the terms of any contract they let that requires the contractor to employ staff to work with, or provide services for, children for whom the LA, school or FE institution is responsible also requires the contractor to adopt and implement the measures described in this guidance. They should also monitor the contractor's compliance."

Among other things the measures described include pre-appointment checks of List 99 and CRB disclosures—copy at www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection

Teaching Staff (Checks)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what background checks *(a)* community schools, *(b)* voluntary-aided schools, *(c)* foundation schools, *(d)* city technology colleges and *(e)* academies are (i) legally required and (ii) recommended to make when recruiting teaching staff. [44544]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of 19 January set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

My Department's guidance on safer recruitment, published in June 2005, aims to assist all schools, further education institutions and local education authorities to review and, where appropriate, modify their practice and procedures to strengthen safeguards for children, by helping to deter and prevent abuse.

William Gibson

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the *(a)* head teacher and *(b)* governing body of Hebburn Comprehensive School on Tyneside knew that before his appointment William Gibson had a conviction for indecently assaulting a girl of 15 years of age and a conviction for fraud, forgery and theft. [43402]

Ruth Kelly: We understand that the head teacher at St. Joseph's school in Hebburn was not aware of Mr. Gibson's convictions when he started work as a supply teacher, but that a subsequent Criminal Records Bureau check provided information about all his convictions, which led to Mr. Gibson leaving the school. We do not know whether the governing body was aware of Mr. Gibson's convictions before his appointment.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which *(a)* Minister and *(b)* official (i) advised and (ii) signed the letter in relation to the decision on the List 99 determination in the case of William Gibson. [43404]

Ruth Kelly: This decision, as with all such cases, was a decision taken in the name of the Secretary of State. In such cases, the Department does not disclose the identity of any Minister involved or the names of officials who advise the Secretary of State or who sign letters to individuals on her behalf.

WALES

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42868]

Nick Ainger: All rooms/areas occupied by the Wales Office are fitted with audible fire alarms.

Council Tax Revaluation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he expects the next council tax revaluation in Wales will take place. [42592]

Nick Ainger: The timing of council tax revaluation's in Wales is a matter for the National Assembly to determine, subject to the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether *(a)* aerial and *(b)* satellite photography was used as part of the council tax revaluation in Wales. [42957]

Nick Ainger: Neither aerial nor satellite photography were used by the Valuation Office Agency in conducting the revaluation exercise in Wales.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from Welsh Office buildings in the past 12 months. [43443]

Nick Ainger: The Wales Office have had no items stolen in the past 12 months.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40322]

Nick Ainger: In financial year 2004–05, the Wales Office spent £35.19 on bottled water for meetings or receptions.

EU Funding

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the agreement at the European Council on 17 December 2005 on the EU financial perspective 2007–13 on the economic regeneration of the South East Welsh Valleys. [41539]

Nick Ainger: As part of the agreement reached by member states on the EU budget for 2007–13, the West Wales and the Valleys region will remain eligible for full Objective One funding (re-branded "Convergence" for the period 2007–13). It is expected that West Wales and the Valleys will receive funding similar in size to the current Objective One programme.

The South East Welsh Valleys therefore stand to gain significantly from this new deal, which will build on the economic regeneration in the area currently under way.

The Welsh Assembly Government are responsible for distributing the funding to different programmes and monitoring and evaluating them. Work is already well under way to prepare the new round of programmes, which are due to commence in January 2007.

Railways

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on development of passenger train links between Cardiff and Ebbw Vale. [41534]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend discusses transport matters in Wales regularly with the Secretary of State for Transport. The Welsh Assembly Government is providing almost £28 million for the Ebbw Valley railway project to accommodate passenger services between Ebbw Vale, Cardiff and Newport. I understand that an hourly service from Ebbw Vale to Cardiff will start in 2007.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make representations within Government in support of a direct rail link between London and Shrewsbury. [41558]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport is examining the possibility of direct rail passenger services linking Shrewsbury with London, as part of the 2008 timetable changes being

delivered with completion of the West Coast Route Modernisation Project. This proposal is dependent upon the business case and is being considered in conjunction with the railway industry, local authorities and other interested bodies.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Transport and *(b)* the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Economic Development and Transport on the economic and environmental benefits of increasing the railway network in (i) Wales and (ii) Blaenau Gwent. [39756]

Nick Ainger: I have regular discussions with both ministerial and Assembly Government colleagues about matters affecting transport in Wales. In June of last year, rail passenger services returned to the Vale of Glamorgan line for the first time in over 40 years.

The new Arriva Trains Wales timetable launched in December offers further service improvements. Passengers will benefit from an additional 950 services a week across the network; a 28 per cent. increase in Sunday services; more seats on peak-time trains and new two-hourly direct services from Holyhead to Cardiff and from Milford Haven to Manchester.

The Assembly Government is providing almost £28 million for the Ebbw Valley railway project to accommodate passenger services between Ebbw Vale, Cardiff and Newport. I understand that an hourly service from Ebbw Vale to Cardiff will start in 2007 and that the Newport service is likely to begin in 2009.

Wales Office

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many invoices rendered to the Wales Office have failed to be paid within 30 days. [40729]

Nick Ainger: During financial year 2004–05, 98 per cent. of all Wales Office invoices were paid within 30 days, 19 invoices, or 2 per cent. were not paid within the 30 days.

Full breakdown of statistical information can be found in Wales Office Annual Report 2005 Cm6545. Copies are posted on the Wales Office website: www.walesoffice.gov.uk

Payment data for current financial year 2005–06 will be available in spring 2006.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with *(a)* the National Assembly for Wales and *(b)* the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the effects of offshore wind farm construction on porpoises. [40812]

Nick Ainger: Offshore wind farms play a vital role in meeting our renewable energy targets and tackling the threat of climate change. I therefore have regular discussions with my counterparts at the Assembly and DEFRA about offshore wind and other technologies. Wales is set to continue its role as a centre of excellence in the construction of wind farms.

I am aware that the Countryside Council for Wales, the Government's statutory advisor on nature conservation and countryside matters, has been working with Offshore Windfarm Developers to ensure that the best option for a high standard of protection to all marine mammals is in place during construction.

TREASURY

Birth Abnormalities

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* babies and *(b)* stillborn babies were reported as having birth abnormalities in each year since 1995. [40793]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 20 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many *(a)* babies and *(b)* stillborn babies were reported as having birth abnormalities in each year since 1995. (40793)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for maintaining the National Congenital Anomaly System (NCAS) notifications in England and Wales. These notifications are provided by NHS Trusts on a voluntary basis either directly to ONS on form SD56 or via local congenital anomaly registers that exchange data with ONS.

The scheme was introduced to monitor short term changes in notification levels. These registers cover only 42 percent of births in England and the number of registers joining the system increases every year. As a result increasing numbers notified are not necessarily an indication of an increased trend in abnormalities.

Figures for live and stillborn babies with congenital abnormalities that were reported to NCAS from 1995 to 2004 are given in the attached table.

Number of (a) live and (b) stillborn babies with a congenital anomaly notified to the National Congenital Anomaly System, England and Wales 1995–2004

	Live birth	*Stillbirth*	*Total*[1]
1995	5,671	171	5,861
1996	5,794	175	5,998
1997	5,771	171	5,966
1998	6,334	204	6,555
1999	7,488	238	7,750
2000	7,820	308	8,152
2001	7,380	315	7,715
2002	6,978	344	7,347
2003	6,624	332	6,983
2004	6,023	322	6,358

[1] Includes cases where information was not available to NCAS on whether the baby was live or still born.

Child Trust Fund

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people eligible for the child trust fund have applied for and taken up the fund in each month since the scheme was introduced. [44333]

Dawn Primarolo: Child trust fund statistics are produced quarterly. The latest set were published on 30 November 2005 at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_trust_funds/child-trust-funds.htm. The next set will be published in February 2006.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the faxed letter of 6 December 2005 from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire. [44144]

Dawn Primarolo: I hope to be in a position to reply to the hon. Member shortly.

Employment (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of Tamworth residents were in *(a)* the top 10 per cent. and *(b)* the bottom 10 per cent. of income earners in (i) 1994 and (ii) 2004. [43473]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available at constituency level.

Equal Tax Treatment

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to ensure that there is equal tax treatment for *(a)* UK-resident building subcontractors and *(b)* those working in the UK who are resident in other EU countries. [44197]

Dawn Primarolo: Any subcontractor working in the construction industry in the United Kingdom, whether a resident here or not, needs to register under the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS). Without a CIS tax certificate or registration card the subcontractor cannot be paid.

The United Kingdom charges income tax on the profits of all trades carried on by UK residents whether wholly or partly in the United Kingdom. So that where a subcontractor is resident in the UK the profits of their trade whether carried on in the UK or abroad will be charged to income tax in the UK.

Where a subcontractor is not resident in the UK but carries on a trade either wholly in the UK or partly in the UK and partly elsewhere, the profits from the trade carried on in the UK will be charged to income tax in the UK. This is subject to any relief provided by a relevant double taxation agreement between the United Kingdom and the country of residence of the subcontractor. Such an agreement will in most cases ensure that just one country has taxing rights over the relevant trade income so avoiding economic double taxation of the income.

Where a subcontractor is trading in the UK through a non-resident company, that company will be liable to UK corporation tax on all profits that are attributable to its permanent establishment (i.e. a fixed place of business or an agency) in the UK. Again this is subject to any relief from UK tax provided by a relevant double taxation agreement. If the company does not have a permanent establishment in the UK it will not be within the charge to corporation tax.

For income tax there is therefore under existing UK law equal tax treatment between a UK resident and a resident of another EU member state in respect of the profits of a trade carried on in the United Kingdom and chargeable to tax here.

For corporation tax the requirement that the non-resident company has a permanent establishment in the UK before it becomes chargeable is not present for UK resident companies. This mirrors the restriction in double taxation agreements through which UK companies get reciprocal relief in other EU states.

National Insurance Contributions

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much has been collected in each of the past five years in employer national insurance contributions for *(a)* males and *(b)* females over the state retirement age; and what additional revenue in each category would have been collected if employee contributions were also payable; [42658]

(2) what estimate he has made of the extra revenue from national insurance contributions that will accrue annually on account of the progressive raising of the state retirement age to 65 years for females. [43058]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the amount of secondary contributions paid for males and females in work and above state retirement age for the past five years is not available except at a disproportionate cost.

Similarly, the amount of extra revenue from national insurance contributions that will accrue annually on account of raising the pension age on a phased basis between 2010 and 2020 for females to 65 years is not available except at a disproportionate cost.

Tax Relief

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax relief was received by persons in the top tax bracket in the last year for which figures are available. [44511]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the amount of all tax reliefs received by higher rate taxpayers is not available, except at a disproportionate cost.

Thames Gateway Organisation

Bob Spink: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer how many paid directors there are in each branch of the Thames Gateway organisation; and what the total employment cost of each has been to date. [42914]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Until 13 January, the senior staff of the Thames Gateway Directorate comprised one director (grade SCS 1A) and two divisional managers (grade SCSI). A further director has now been appointed on secondment reflecting increasing workload in preparation for the London Olympics. The total administrative costs of the Directorate are expected to be £2,474,000 in the current financial year, which includes the rental of the Thames Gateway office in Docklands.

Unemployment Statistics

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth unemployment were in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each year since 1997. [44294]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 20 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (44294)

The Office for National Statistics (OHS) compiles statistics of unemployment for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions.

However, for the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency sample numbers are insufficient to provide estimates of the levels of long-term adult and youth unemployment.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). The attached table shows the annual average number of JSA claimants claiming for over 12 months and those aged 18 to 24 claiming for over 12 months, resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency since 1997.

JSA claimants, claiming for over 12 months, resident in the Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency

	Long-term (claiming over 12 months) [1]	
Annual averages	*All*	*Youth (aged 18 to 24)*
1997	165	20
1998	90	5
1999	75	5
2000	55	0
2001	20	0
2002	15	5
2003	20	0
2004	15	0
2005	15	0

[1] Computerised claims only.

Note:

Data rounded to nearest 5 for disclosure control.

Source:

Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what staffing reductions have occurred in the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council funded institutes in each of the last five years; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the reductions on the scientific skills base; [41362]

(2) what plans he has under the Shared Service Policy to merge Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council funded institutes; and if he will make a statement. [41363]

Barry Gardiner: The BBSRC received an increased level of funding from the Science Budget following the 2004 Spending Review. Its initial allocation was £336.186 million in 2005–06, £371.644 million in 2006–07 and £381.829 million in 2007–08. An increased proportion of BBSRC's total budget over this period will support research in Higher Education Institutions. In the period 2000 to 2003 (the latest date statistics are available) the total number of staff employed in Biological Sciences in Higher Education Institutions increased by approximately 500 from 6,900 to 7,400.

The following table gives details of the net reduction in the number of posts in BBSRC Institutes in each of the past five years.

	Net reduction in posts
2000–01	0
2001–02	An increase of 39 posts
2002–03	84
2003–04	84
2004–05	61
Total	190

BBSRC has sought to ensure that past staff reductions do not have a material effect on the overall skills base in the UK. In the case of land based research, BBSRC is in active discussion with relevant Government Departments about the impact of staffing reductions.

BBSRC has no current plans to merge institutes but is considering the establishment of an Edinburgh BioScience Research Centre (EBRC) which would include researchers from the Roslin Institute and some from the Institute for Animal Health (those currently based in the Edinburgh Neuropathogenisis Unit). The EBRC would also involve closer collaboration with other research organisations in the area.

A number of BBSRC institutes are reviewing their administrative services to identify efficiency savings, including through the sharing of services between institutes, so as to enable additional funding to go into scientific research.

Herbal Medicines

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assist small and medium-sized enterprises with the costs of compliance with the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive; and if he will make a statement. [42005]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 724W to my hon. Friend, the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell).

Natural Environment Research Council

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations the National Environment Research Council made to the Government concerning additional funding for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in the past two years; what amounts were requested; and whether they were granted. [42553]

Barry Gardiner: The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) indicated, during the allocation process following the Spending Review 2004, that providing the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) with a sustainable future was a high priority and that it intended to examine options to achieve this. NERC's original allocation from the Department was £359.4 million and £367.2 million for the financial years

2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively. The Department has indicated subsequently that it would be willing to increase NERC's allocation by £2.7 million and £11.5 million in these years so as to support the delivery of its core programmes in the event that the restructuring of CEH goes ahead.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* letters, *(b)* emails and *(c)* telephone calls (i) the Government, (ii) the Natural Environment Research Council and (iii) the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology received regarding the proposed closure of sites in the last two years; and how many in each case concerned Monks Wood in Cambridgeshire. [42554]

Barry Gardiner: Following the December 2005 announcement by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) to consult the public and staff on its proposed changes to the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), the number of communications received by 16 January 2006 is as follows:

	(i) Government[1]	*(ii) NERC*	*(iii) CEH*	*Concerning Monks Wood*[2]
(a) Letters[3]	37	55	0	17
(b) E-mails[3]	29	207	0	43
(c) Telephone calls	8	43	0[4]	0

[1] Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).
[2] Specifically relating, or referring, to Monks Wood.
[3] Figures may contain duplications as some letters and e-mails have been copied to more than one recipient, and some individuals have written more than one letter or e-mail.
[4] CEH received 20 calls but these were passed on to NERC and are therefore included in the NERC figure.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by her Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41351]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows.

(a) DCMS does not own any cars,

(b) DCMS lease five cars from the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA). For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the GCDA my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport has asked the Chief Executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Free Television Licences

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many households in Ribble Valley are in receipt of a free television licence. [43147]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in the Ribble Valley constituency in 2004–05 was 6,010, according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

Green Ministers

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what meetings her Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in an official capacity; and if she will list the meetings at which her Department has been represented in the last 12 months on the delivery of sustainable development across government which have been co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. [44255]

James Purnell: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers. It is established practice not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees or any activities co-ordinated by them. My right hon. Friend Baroness Morris of Yardley (Estelle Morris) represented the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on ENV(G) committee until May 2005. After that date I was appointed to represent DCMS on EE(SD). I attended an informal breakfast seminar organised by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs last July in that capacity. Since then I have had a bi-lateral meeting in the same capacity with the Minister for Energy and Environment.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adult Dependency Benefit

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he intends to bring forward legislation to amend the law so that the adult dependency benefit can be claimed by married women. [41952]

Mr. Timms: Married women in receipt of state pension are in certain limited cases entitled to an adult dependency increase.

We have no plans currently to widen the scope of the rules for entitlement.

Allied Steel and Wire

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the oral answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 12, on ASW Sheerness (pension scheme), what the basis is of the estimate of 15,000 pensioners qualifying for assistance under the Financial Assistance Scheme. [44271]

Mr. Timms: Based on the limited data we have been able to obtain from affected pension schemes, this is our best estimate of the number of members of eligible schemes likely to be within three years of scheme pension age in May 2004 and have less than 80 per cent. of their core pension rights covered by the scheme.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many prosecutions have been brought by the Child Support Agency under section 14A of the 1991 Act in each year since 31 January 2001; how many convictions have been obtained in relation to those prosecutions; and what the average fine imposed by the courts was for such offences in each year. [31208]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 9 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many prosecutions have been brought by the Child Support Agency under section 14A of the 1991 Act in each year since 31 January 2001 to date; how many convictions have been obtained in relation to those prosecutions; and what the averaged fine imposed by the courts was for such offences in each year.

I have provided the relevant information in the attached table.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Numbers of prosecutions and convictions under Section 14A

£

Section 14 Prosecutions	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*January–31 October 2005*	*Total*
Prosecutions	0	16	233	196	313	758
Found guilty	0	16	231	195	306	748
Total amount of fines issued	0	4,080	42,735	32,275	70,288	149,378
Conditional discharges	0	5	22	25	28	80
Absolute discharge	0	0	0	1	5	6
Deferred sentence	0	0	0	1	0	1
Average fine	0	370.91	204.47	192.11	257.47	225.99

Notes:

1. The average fines have been calculated using the total fines imposed divided by the number of convictions (excluding the conditional and absolute discharges).
2. The maximum fine that can be imposed upon a person found guilty of an offence under Sections 14A(2) and 14A(3) of the Child Support Act 1991 is £1,000.

HM Treasury

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what responsibilities of his Department have been transferred to HM Treasury since 1 May 1997; and if he will make a statement. [41335]

Margaret Hodge: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) was established in June 2001. The Tax Credits Act 2002 transferred to HM Treasury responsibility for policy relating to child benefit and guardian's allowance, with the setting of the levels of those benefits and the rules of entitlement and this transfer took place on 1 April 2003. The Secretary of State's remaining functions relating to child benefit and guardian's allowance were transferred at the same time to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. Additionally family credit, disability working allowance and certain payments for children in other benefits have been superseded by tax credits, administered by HMRC as a consequence of the Tax Credits Acts of 1999 and 2002.

The Social Security Contributions (Transfer of Functions, etc.) Act 1999 effected the transfer of the Contributions Agency and national insurance contributions policy from what is now the Department for Work and Pensions to the Inland Revenue now HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) from 1 April 1999.

Housing Benefit

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of housing benefit was in each of the past three years for which records are available. [44049]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

£

	Total housing benefit
2002–03	12,672,020,416
2003–04	12,349,634,512
2004–05	13,170,618,972

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain.
2. Final figures for 2004–05 are not yet available and are subject to change.

Source:

Subsidy claims data.

Race Relations

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of staff in his Department have received training on the general and specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, broken down by *(a)* ethnicity and *(b)* grade. [3557]

Mrs. McGuire: All staff are required to undertake training on the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 awareness is also part of the induction package for all new employees.

Race relations training has been delivered in a variety of ways throughout the Department, for example through trainer-led events in classrooms, team workshops, roadshows and the DWP Diversity Toolkit which is an e-learning and development tool with modules covering all areas of equality.

We do not currently have a system to monitor all the training undertaken and we are therefore unable to specify how many and what percentage of staff have received training. We are in the process of developing a new resource management system, due for implementation during 2006. One of the features of the new system will enable us to address our need to monitor and will collect data on training applications, broken down by ethnicity, age, gender, disability and grade.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Department for Rural Development

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will break down the Department for Rural Development's Roads Service Budget for 2006–07 by main budget heading. [44059]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 19 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a parliamentary question regarding the break down of the Department for Rural Development's Roads Service Budget for 2006–07 by main budget heading. I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service, an agency within the Department for Regional Development.

The following table gives the analysis of the Roads Service budget for 2006–07.

Budget 2006–07

£ million

	Amount
Admin	76.0
Other resource	93.9
Capital	107.9

It should be noted however, that these amounts are subject to amendment as a result of the in-year budget monitoring rounds, which form part of the public expenditure process.

I hope this information is helpful.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41349]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Four owned:

Model	*Petrol*	*Fuel efficiency mpg*
Ford Mondeo	Unleaded	36.4
Vauxhall Vectra	Unleaded	37.2
Vauxhall Omega	Unleaded	23.2
Vauxhall Combo Van	Diesel	53.4

(b) 16 leased:

Model	*Petrol*	*Fuel efficiency mpg*
6—Volvo s.80	Unleaded	30.7
Fiat Punto	Unleaded	42.6
Peugeot 307	Unleaded	46.4
Ford Focus	Diesel	58.9
Ford Transit Van	Diesel	45.6
Renault Kangoo Van	Diesel	54.6
Ford Focus	Unleaded	35.3
Kia Sedona	Unleaded	26.6
Toyota Rav 4	Unleaded	30.4
Ford Mondeo	Unleaded	36.4
Peugeot 406	Unleaded	38.6

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coercive Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government have taken during its G8 and EU presidencies to tackle coercive abortion; and if he will make a statement. [41762]

Mr. Thomas: Our presidencies of the G8 and the EU delivered significant results for development and for increasing assistance for health. We did not focus on tackling coercive abortion. Our policies and work on reproductive health, and our support to organisations such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF), are about promoting choice and challenging coercive abortion. UK officials have raised the issue bilaterally in appropriate circumstances.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40000]

Mr. Thomas: For details of expenditure on Ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

One other vehicle is leased by DFID in London, for which the costs (including the driver) are as follows:

	£
2002–03	0
2003–04	0
2004–05	48,000
2005–06	[1]48,000

[1] estimated

Information on expenditure on vehicles overseas is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

There are no non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)s or agencies for which DFID is responsible. Our one other public body, CDC Group PLC, based in London, incurred no expenditure on vehicles over this period.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41245]

Mr. Thomas: The amounts spent by DFID on refreshments (including working lunches, and refreshments at meetings) is as follows:

	£
1996–97	10,000
1997–98	24,000
1998–99	43,000
1999–2000	62,000
2000–01	48,000
2001–02	55,000
2002–03	82,000
2003–04	219,000
2004–05	303,000
2005–06	253,000

Expenditure is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in "Government Accounting".

In 2003–04, DFID introduced new procedures to draw together administration costs, including those entertainment costs which had previously been recorded on country programme budgets. These changes have improved transparency and management of administration costs, but mean that figures from 2003–04 now include entertainment costs that were previously funded by country programmes and as a result are not comparable with earlier years.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41266]

Mr. Thomas: The numbers and cost of laptops and UK mobile phones purchased by DFID in each financial year since 1997 was as follows:

	Number of laptops	*Cost of laptops*	*Number of UK mobile phones*	*Cost of UK mobile phones*
1997–98	121	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998–99	125	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	148	207,200	7	800
2000–01	265	424,000	55	3,500
2001–02	251	376,500	95	7,900
2002–03	734	1,027,000	149	11,200
2003–04	900	930,000	165	13,100
2004–05	270	297,000	258	19,350

The cost of laptops, and the number and cost of mobile phones, in the year before 1999 could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Mobile phones are purchased locally at each DFID office. The figures in the table show the number of mobile phones on the UK contracts. The numbers at each overseas office cannot be provided without incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID has made a substantial investment in laptop computers and mobile phones in the last three years as part of a structured move to new ways of working. Over half of DFID's staff now use a laptop instead of a desktop computer. This enables staff to work while travelling, and from DFID offices and other locations away from their normal base.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41325]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has let three major IT contracts since 1997.

The Human Resources (HR) system had a projected supplier cost at tender of £1.18 million and was due to be implemented in 30 months. The first four modules were implemented in 36 months at a total supplier cost of £1.22 million. The HR system project was superseded by an HR Transformation project which aims to radically change the way HR services are delivered and improve people management. The HR Transformation project is primarily a business change project but includes the remaining modules of the HR system project and a number of small IT components. This project is currently on track to deliver to time and budget.

The Quest Electronic Document and Record Management system had a projected supplier base cost at tender of £8.98 million and was due to be implemented in 24 months. The Quest project is currently on track to deliver in 27 months. The projected total supplier cost is £10.76 million. This includes a number of additional cost options available under the original contract.

The Aries Finance, Procurement and Reporting System, had a projected base supplier cost at tender of £11 million and is due to be implemented in 36 months. A number of additional cost options are available under the contract. The Aries project is currently on track to deliver to time and budget.

DFID has also let a number of small IT related contracts. However, our central records do not distinguish IT contracts, so provision of details for these contracts would incur disproportionate costs.

CABINET OFFICE

Buncefield Depot Fire

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment the Civil Contingency Secretariat has made of the responses to the Buncefield Depot fire; and if he will make a statement. [42411]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Health and Safety Executive is leading the investigation into the cause of the accident and the implications for operations at similar sites elsewhere. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has been in close contact with other Government Departments, and through the Government Office for the East of England with local responders—both during the response and the ongoing recovery phase—to ensure wider issues with applicability to national disaster response arrangements are captured. The results of this work will feed into the on-going process for assessing issues arising from major emergencies and exercises so that lessons are identified, addressed and applied in the future.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41271]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Statistics on the quantities and costs of laptops and mobile phones bought in each year since 1997 are available only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the outturn time for implementation against planned time was. [41312]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41578]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The table shows Cabinet Office expenditure on civil servants' salaries each year since 1997–98 to 2004–05.

	National pay (£000)	*National pay as a percentage of total expenditure*
1997–98	25,779	33
1998–99	30,119	29
1999–2000	35,116	33
2000–01	39,956	34
2001–02	48,573	28
2002–03	58,563	36
2003–04	56,776	36
2004–05	58,709	37

Public Appointments

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many people on renewable public appointments since 1997 did not have their contract renewed. [44199]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Precise figures are not available for the number of people whose appointments have not been renewed. Statistics on the number of new appointments and re-appointments to public bodies within the Commissioner for Public Appointments' remit are published in her annual report. Summary details of appointments made each year since 1997 are shown in the table. During this time, the number of bodies within the Commissioner's remit has changed and explanations are given where this has had a significant impact on the figures.

	New appointments	*Re-appointments*	*Total*
1997–98	1,186	744	1,930
1998–99[1]	1,696	1,549	3,245
1999–2000	2,117	723	2,840
2000–2001[2]	2,793	1,063	3,856
2001–2002	1,849	1,657	3,506
2002–2003[3]	2,510	970	3,480
2003–2004	1,765	1,113	2,878
2004–2005	1,959	1,363	3,322

[1] On 1 October 1998, the Commissioner's remit was extended to advisory bodies, public corporations, nationalised industries and the utility regulators.
[2] Increase in appointments largely due to new primary care trusts.
[3] Increase in appointments largely due to new primary care trusts and new strategic health authorities.

Source:
Commissioner for Public Appointments Annual Reports

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people claiming asylum have requested that their case be referred to judicial review in each of the last eight years; and what proportion of those cases were found in favour of the asylum seeker in each year. [42796]

Mr. McNulty: Information on applications for judicial review and outcomes is published in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long Tirth Singh Malhi (reference number S835998) has been waiting for the outcome of his application for leave to remain in the United Kingdom; what the reasons are for the length of wait; and when he expects a decision to be made. [43339]

Mr. McNulty: Mr. Tirth Singh Malhi has been waiting for the outcome of his application for leave to remain in the United Kingdom for approximately three years and ten months. The reason for this length of wait is administrative error. The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to Mr. Tirth Singh Malhi's solicitors on 17 January 2006 and refused his application. However, Mr. Tirth Singh Malhi has been granted a right of appeal.

Bicester Accommodation Centre

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the subcontractors instructed by GSL UK Ltd. on the project to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester. [43505]

Mr. McNulty: Carillion is the subcontractor named in the contract between immigration and nationality directorate (IND) and GSL (UK) Ltd.

Control Orders

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the nationalities are of the non-British subjects of control orders. [41339]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I cannot comment on individual cases.

There are anonymity orders in place protecting the identity of the individuals subject to control orders. The anonymity orders do not in themselves prevent disclosure of nationality, but in certain cases this may allow their identity to be determined. The Home Secretary has therefore made the decision not to reveal the nationalities of foreign nationals who have been made the subject of control orders.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of jobs in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which his Department is responsible are located in (A) Scotland, (B) England, excluding Greater London, (C) Greater London, (D) Wales, (E) Northern Ireland and (F) overseas. [39933]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number and percentage of jobs in *(a)* Home Office, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which the Home Office is responsible are located in (A) Scotland, (B) England, excluding Greater London, *(c)* Greater England, (D) Wales, (E) Northern Ireland and (F) overseas, are listed in the following table:

	(A) Scotland	*(B) England Excluding GL*	*(C) Greater London*	*(D) Wales*	*(E) Northern Ireland*	*(F) Overseas*	*No location*[1]
(a) Department							
CORE Home Office	0	681.06	3,781.30	2.8	0	2	14
Percentage	—	15.20	84.40	0.05	—	0.04	0.31
Prison Service	0	40,418	5,725	980	0	0	0
Percentage	0	86	12	2	—	—	—
UKPS	289	1,581	673	370	153	0	0
Percentage	9	52	22	12	5	—	—
IND	277.05	6,484.70	10,369.08	90.31	16	75.12	218.64
Percentage	2	37	59	0.50	0.10	0.40	1
(b)(i) NDPBs							
Criminal Case Review Commission (CCRC)	0	97	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage	—	100	—	—	—	—	—
Community Development Foundation (CDF)	17	14	29	2	0	0	0
Percentage	27	23	47	3	—	—	—
Central Police Training and Development (CENREX)	0	1,139	55	72	0	0	0
Percentage	—	90	4	6	—	—	—
Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)	360	0	155	0	0	0	0
Percentage	70	—	30	—	—	—	—
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel (CICAP)	29	0	35	0	0	0	0
Percentage	45	—	55	—	—	—	—
Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)	11	32	175	11	0	0	0
Percentage	5	14	76	5	—	—	—
Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)	0	120	224	41	0	0	0
Percentage	—	31	58	11	—	—	—
National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS)	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]1,087
National Crime Squad (NCS)	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]1,850
Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)	0	0	62	0	0	0	0
Percentage	—	—	100	—	—	—	—
Parole Board	0	0	69	0	0	0	0
Percentage	—	—	100	—	—	—	—

	(A) Scotland	(B) England Excluding GL	(C) Greater London	(D) Wales	(E) Northern Ireland	(F) Overseas	No location[1]
Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO)	20	63	754	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0.30	7.70	92	—	—	—	—
Security Industry Authority (SIA)	0	26	70	3	0	0	0
Percentage	—	26	71	3	—	—	—
Youth Justice Board (YJB)	0	38	170	4	0	0	0
Percentage	—	18	80	2	—	—	—
(ii) Executive agencies							
Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)	0	396	1	0	0	0	0
Percentage	—	99.70	0.30	—	—	—	—
(iii) Public Bodies							
Forensic Science Services (FSS)	0	1,886	455	212	0	0	0
Percentage	—	74	18	8	—	—	—

[1] Staff on long term leave, or in transit between posts where no location is centrally recorded, or where location is withheld for reasons of security, such as in respect of animal inspectorate.
[2] For operational reasons it would not be appropriate to disclose geographical allocation of staff in respect of NCS and NCIS.

Deportations

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department from which country each of those detained pending deportation originated; and to which country it is intended to deport them, subject to an acceptable Memorandum of Understanding. [41338]

Mr. McNulty: 10 persons from several countries including Algeria and Jordan are currently detained, under immigration powers, pending deportation to their country of origin for reasons of national security. In all cases eventual deportation is subject to the negotiation of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and specific assurances with the home country of the individuals concerned.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Aylesbury of 23 September 2005 to the immigration and nationality directorate about the case of Ms V.E.S. of Aylesbury (reference S1198241 and B22849/5). [44547]

Mr. McNulty: The director general of the immigration and nationality directorate wrote to my hon. Friend on 18 January.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much money the Government spent on counter-narcotics work in Afghanistan during 2004–05. [42987]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The UK spent £24,442,350.00 on counter-narcotics (CN) work in Afghanistan during 2004–05. The activity this funded included: the running of seven training courses on intelligence and investigation techniques for the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Police; support for over five major seizures of opiates; the provision of a mobile forensic laboratory; and help to establish regional law enforcement offices in seven provincial centres outside Kabul.

On 5 September, I announced new UK funding for Afghan CN in a joint press conference with Afghan CN Minister Qaderi. Details of this are available at http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c-Page&cid=1007029391638&a=KArticle&aid=1125559465083%20&year=2005&month=2005-09-01&date=2005-09-05. The UK is to provide more than £270 million over the next three years. £130 million of the funding will be provided by the Department for International Development with the rest coming from other Government Departments including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedures will govern the UK's handling of prisoners captured and detained by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces in Afghanistan when captured by UK contingents *(a)* as a part of NATO ISAF and *(b)* operating as a part of Operation Enduring Freedom. [44266]

Mr. Ingram: All personnel receive appropriate pre-deployment training in advance of commencing operations; for those to whom it is relevant, this includes specific training on the rules and principles involved in handling prisoners of war, internees and detainees; this can also include briefing by institutions such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

United Kingdom procedures governing the handling of prisoners are consistent with the principles of the Geneva Conventions whether detaining as part of an ISAF operation or Operation Enduring Freedom. Joint Warfare Publication 1–10 "Prisoners of War Handling" covers the principles, responsibilities, practices and procedures for the UK armed forces in handling prisoners of war. This publication is available on the Ministry of Defence website at www.mod.uk/jdcc.

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many mobilised reservists in each of the three services he expects to be required for deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan. [43286]

Mr. Ingram: No final decisions have been made on the possible deployment of British forces to Southern Afghanistan as part of the expansion of the international security assistance force. Consequently it would be premature to give details of the number of reservists that might be required.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42884]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not collected in this form and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Ministry of Defence is committed to ensuring compliance with fire safety law in premises it occupies. That includes provision of fire detection and warning systems that are appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

British Base, Cyprus

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost to public funds of the British base in Cyprus has been in each of the last five years. [42436]

Mr. Ingram: The costs of maintaining UK military facilities on Cyprus for each of the last five years are as follows:

	£ million
2004–05	223
2003–04	247
2002–03	240
2001–02	206
2000–01	213

C-130 Hercules

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the defensive aids fitted to the Hercules aircraft shot down in Iraq in 2005. [43370]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Hercules that was shot down was fully equipped with infra-red defensive counter measures, plus an enhanced defensive capability.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the disposal of departmental land in Livingston constituency. [44020]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has no current plans to dispose of any land or property in the Livingston constituency.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41353]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence currently leases in excess of 8,800 cars for non-operational use, the overwhelming majority of which are powered by diesel engines. The requirement for vehicles is specified in output terms rather than by vehicle model. Information on the total number and fuel efficiency of each model leased is not therefore held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

In addition there are a small quantity of cars owned by the Ministry of Defence for use on operations. Information on these is being withheld on the basis that disclosure could prejudice operational capability.

Iraq

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 223W, on Iraq, in what month in 2002–03 operations commenced for the purposes of the calculation of total expenditure on operations in Iraq. [43138]

John Reid: Operation Telic commenced on the 20 March 2003 at which time the Ministry of Defence was allowed to claim the additional cost of the operation from the Treasury Reserve.

Ministry of Defence Stores

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total gross replacement value of Ministry of Defence stores lodged with its contractors and subsequently found to be either lost or otherwise not available for use for Ministry of Defence purposes was in each quarter since January 1999; and what costs have been recovered by his Department in respect of such stores. [43202]

Mr. Ingram: *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, detailed as follows are the financial recoveries notified to the Department's Asset Accounting Centre (AAC) during the period April 2000 to December 2005.

Financial year	*Financial recoveries*
2000–01	
Qtr 1	[—]
Qtr 2	[—]
Qtr 3	4,349
Qtr 4	350,365
2001–02	
Qtr 1	550,101
Qtr 2	110,745
Qtr 3	79,449
Qtr 4	259,171
2002–03	
Qtr 1	1,252,077
Qtr 2	1,523,927
Qtr3	50,022
Qtr4	501,329
2003–04	
Qtr 1	249,250
Qtr 2	133,322
Qtr 3	149,011
Qtr 4	146,153

Financial year	Financial recoveries
2004–05	
Qtr 1	536,727
Qtr2	28,390
Qtr 3	171,071
Qtr 4	799,193
2005–06	
Qtr 1	74,497
Qtr 2	727,390
Qtr 3	457,096

[1] No recoveries notified

Nuclear Operations (RAF Lakenheath)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what procedures are in place to ensure that US aircraft based at RAF Lakenheath only carry out nuclear operations with the consent of the British Government; [43790]

(2) whether he has had any discussions with the US Administration following the leaking of the draft Joint Doctrine for Nuclear Operations concerning US strategies for using US nuclear weapons stored at RAF Lakenheath; [43792]

(3) whether he has power of veto over the operational use of US nuclear weapons based at RAF Lakenheath; [43836]

(4) what procedures are in place to monitor US activity involving the *(a)* nuclear weapons and *(b)* aircraft based at RAF Lakenheath. [43843]

Mr. Ingram: It is Government policy to neither confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at any particular location or any particular time.

I can confirm that HMG has to be fully consulted and agree before any UK-based US forces are deployed operationally. The Joint Churchill-Truman Communiqué of January 1952 stated:

> "Under arrangements made for the common defence, the United States has the use of certain bases in the United Kingdom. We reaffirm the understanding that the use of these bases in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by HM Government and the US Government in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time."

There have not been any discussions with the US Administration following the leaking of a draft of a revised US Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations.

QinetiQ

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library the information upon which the decision to sell off the remaining Government stake in QinetiQ was taken. [41555]

John Reid: The decision to float Qinetiq was taken by the Government, Carlyle and Qinetiq, informed by the advice from our joint financial advisers. This advice was given under contractually committed confidentiality agreements, and I am therefore unable to release it. It remains the Government's intention to retain a stake in Qinetiq after the flotation.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are in place to safeguard the terms and conditions of current employees of QinetiQ after privatisation. [42421]

John Reid: QinetiQ became a company in July 2001. Employees who were transferred to the company were protected under TUPE regulations. This position will not change as a result of the Initial Public Offering.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are in place to protect QinetiQ sites from closure after privatisation. [42423]

John Reid: The position regarding site closures will not change as a result of an Initial Private Offering. When QinetiQ vested as a company in 2001, MOD put arrangements in place to protect assets or capabilities that are of strategic importance to UK defence and security. These are enforced through the retention of a Government special share in QinetiQ, as well as through provisions in specific contracts such as the Long Term Partnering Agreement for test and evaluation.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether receipts from the sale of QinetiQ assets and estates after privatisation will be *(a)* kept by the new owners and *(b)* paid to the Government. [42424]

John Reid: The position regarding receipts from the sale of assets and estates will not change as a result of an IPO. When QinetiQ vested as a company in 2001, it was required to purchase the assets from the Government. This transaction was fully audited by the National Audit Office. Consequently, the receipts from the sale of assets go directly to the company. In relation to land sales, the Ministry of Defence put clawback arrangements in place to ensure that the taxpayer would benefit directly from any substantial subsequent increase in value.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to float QinetiQ as a single entity. [42426]

John Reid: The intention is to float QinetiQ as a single entity.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will list sites in the UK occupied by Qinetiq; and how much land is owned in each case; [42494]

(2) if he will list sites owned by Qinetiq in the UK that have planning permission for *(a)* greenfield and *(b)* brownfield developments. [42495]

John Reid: This is an operational matter for the company; questions should be referred to the Chief Executive at the following address:

Graham Love
Chief Executive
QinetiQ Limited
Cody Technology Park
Building Al
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 0LX

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value is of the land owned by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* QinetiQ in Rochford and Southend East constituency. [42496]

Mr. Touhig: The value of the land owned by the Ministry of Defence in the Rochford and Southend East has been recorded as £11.5 million in existing use (that is depreciated replacement costs) terms. Land owned by QinetiQ, is an operational matter for the company; questions should be referred to the Chief Executive at the following address:

Graham Love
Chief Executive
QinetiQ Limited
Cody Technology Park
Building Al
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 0LX

Royal Navy

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether UK naval vessels have recently been prevented from going to sea due to a shortage of fuel or the resources to pay for fuel; and if he will make a statement. [44018]

Mr. Ingram: No Royal Navy vessels have recently been prevented from going to sea due to a shortage of fuel or the resources to pay for fuel.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the financial package remains the same for Territorial Army personnel who volunteer for a second deployment within a three-year period, having fulfilled their compulsory deployment. [43675]

Mr. Touhig: The financial package remains the same for both periods of mobilised service should a member of the Territorial Army volunteer for an additional period of service after completing a compulsory commitment. In April of last year, the Department introduced statutory instrument 859, which improves considerably the financial assistance available to reservists on call-out.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Territorial Army commitment is to the civil contingency reaction force; and if he will make a statement. [43681]

Mr. Touhig: Civil contingency reaction forces (CCRFs) are based on the 14 Territorial Army (TA) infantry battalions spread across the country. Each CCRF comprises a pool of around 500 personnel drawn from the volunteer reserve forces, mainly the TA, who have volunteered for the CCRF commitment in addition to their normal role.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what circumstances the 12-month Territorial Army compulsory mobilisation within a three-year period can be extended. [43682]

Mr. Touhig: Operational requirements may necessitate the extension of the 12-month period of compulsory mobilisation for members of the reserve forces to two years but this would only occur under exceptional circumstances. There are no plans to extend the duration of the maximum period of obligatory service permitted under part VI of the Reserve Forces Act 1996. Reservists may voluntarily agree to extend their period of service.

Veterans' Badges

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many veterans' badges have been issued since the badge was introduced. [44492]

Mr. Touhig: The veterans' badge scheme was launched in May 2004 and, to date, some 182,000 ex-Service personnel have applied for and received the badge.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department plans to take to reduce the number of abortions in each of the next five years; and if she will make a statement. [41634]

Caroline Flint: For information on action being taken to reduce the number of abortions, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2142W.

Improving access to contraception was identified as a priority area in the Choosing Health White Paper. An extra £40 million for primary care trusts has been provided for the next two years. We are currently carrying out a national audit of contraceptive services, which we aim to publish in the spring. We are also working with the Healthcare Commission to see what further steps might be taken to improve the local delivery of teenage pregnancy prevention, contraceptive and abortion services as part of a wider programme of improvement of sexual health services.

Acute Trusts

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether each acute trust which is in deficit has engaged in self-commissioning activity above the value of £10,000 over the last five years. [34914]

Mr. Byrne: Acute trusts do not self-commission.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of stay was for patients in *(a)* acute trusts, *(b)* Surrey and Sussex health authority area and *(c)* England in the last year for which figures are available. [35154]

Mr. Byrne: The data requested are shown in the table.

Mean length of spell in days national health service hospitals in England 2004-05	*Mean length of stay in days*
(a) Acute Trusts	5.3
(b1) Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) of Residence	7.6
(b2) Surrey and Sussex SHA of Treatment	7.9
(c) England	7.1

Notes:

1. The mean length of stay in *(b1)* is based on the patients that were resident in Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area and *(b2)* is based on the patients that were treated in Surrey and Sussex SHA area.

2. A length of spell is defined as a period of in-patient care within one health care provider that commences with the patient's admission and ends on the date of discharge. It may comprise of one or more finished consultant episodes.

3. A length of stay (LOS) is calculated as the difference in days between the admission date and the discharge date, where both are given. LOS is based on hospital spells and only applies to ordinary admissions, i.e. day cases are excluded. Information relating to LOS figures, including discharge method or destination, diagnoses and any operative procedures, is based only on the final episode of the spell.

4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is, the data is ungrossed.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Alcohol Data

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2600W, on alcohol, (1) for what reasons data for 2004–05 were omitted; and if she will publish the data for 2004–05 on counts of finished consultant episodes; [41956]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2603W, on alcohol, for what reasons data for 2004–05 were omitted; and if she will publish the data for 2004–05 on counts of finished admission episodes. [41957]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table. I regret that my previous reply was incomplete.

Counts of finished consultant episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected alcohol-related diseases[1]

Strategic health authority of residence	*Aged under 18*	*Aged 18 and over*	*Age not known*	*Total*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic HA	169	2,730	3	2,902
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic HA	123	1,154	—	1,277
Essex Strategic HA	73	1,476	—	1,549
North West London Strategic HA	83	2,068	5	2,156
North Central London Strategic HA	70	1,465	3	1,538
North East London Strategic HA	53	1,571	2	1,626
South East London Strategic HA	89	2,231	2	2,322
South West London Strategic HA	135	1,523	4	1,662
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic HA	151	2,260	2	2,413
County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic HA	164	1,589	—	1,753
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic HA	229	1,747	—	1,976
West Yorkshire Strategic HA	168	2,051	—	2,219
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	293	2,987	1	3,281
Greater Manchester Strategic HA	408	4548	1	4,957
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	352	5,959	—	6,311
Thames Valley Strategic HA	148	1,556	—	1,704
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic HA	193	2,240	1	2,434
Kent and Medway Strategic HA	170	1,240	—	1,410
Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	271	2,323	—	2,594
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic HA	158	2,242	3	2,403
South West Peninsula Strategic HA	185	1,982	14	2,181
Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	95	1,150	—	1,245
South Yorkshire Strategic HA	129	1,725	—	1,854
Trent Strategic HA	233	3,436	—	3,669
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic HA	86	1,621	—	1,707
Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic HA	170	1,610	—	1,780
Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic HA	246	2,991	—	3,237
West Midlands South Strategic HA	163	1,773	—	1,936
Scotland	3	62	—	65
England—not otherwise specified	28	1,224	40	1,292
Wales	21	190	—	211
Foreign (including Isle of Man and Channel Islands)	14	133	1	148
Unknown	33	753	40	826
Northern Ireland	—	32	—	32
Total	4,906	63,642	122	68,670

[1] Alcohol related diseases defined as following ICD-10 codes recorded in primary diagnosis:

F10: Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol

K70: Alcoholic liver disease

T51: Toxic effect of alcohol

NHS Hospitals, England 2004–05

Alcohol Licensing

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the exemption under Part 1, Clause 3, sub-section (2)*(b)* of the proposed Health Bill will apply to bingo club premises holding a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 allowing the consumption of alcohol on the premises, providing that food is not supplied. [28148]

Caroline Flint: The very specific circumstances of a bingo club as described in the question are not detailed on the face of the Bill.

We will give this point due consideration in drafting regulations.

Alzheimer's Disease

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects to receive the recommendation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence relating to *(a)* Donepezil, *(b)* Rivastigmine, *(c)* Galantamine and *(d)* Memantine; and if she will make a statement; [42203]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 398W, on Alzheimer's disease, what discussions she has had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence since her meeting of 9 June regarding appraisal of drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease; [42204]

(3) what estimate she has made of the annual cost of treating a patient suffering from Alzheimer's disease with *(a)* Donepezil, *(b)* Rivastigmine, *(c)* Galantamine and *(d)* Memantine. [42205]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) communicated the decision of its appraisal committee to consultees, including the Department, under NICE's normal rules of confidentiality on 16 January 2006. This communication will be published on its website on 23 January, at www.nice.org.uk.

Since 9 June 2005, I have had no further meetings with NICE regarding its appraisal of drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. However, I received a brief factual update from the chairman of NICE when I met him at the NICE annual conference on 7 December 2005.

NICE'S Appraisal "Consultation Document on drugs for Alzheimer's disease" (March 2005) suggested that the cost of a year's supply of each of these four drugs is:

	£
Donepezil	[1]828.30 to 1,160.96
Rivastigmine	886.95
Galantamine	[1]890.60 to £1,095
Memantine	899.54

[1] Depending on dose

These costs are based on prices published in the British National Formulary and exclude value added tax. Costs may vary in different settings because of negotiated procurement discounts.

Ambulance Response Times

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the ambulance response times are for *(a)* Bridlington, *(b)* Driffield and *(c)* England for the past 12 months for which figures are available. [42333]

Mr. Byrne: The Department collects ambulance response time data by ambulance trust rather than by geographical area. Therefore, the information for parts *(a)* and *(b)* of the question is not centrally collected in the requested format.

The data that the Department does collect on ambulance response times are published in tables 5a, 5b, 6 and 7 of the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2004–05", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/36/79/04113679.pdf.

This publication includes ambulance response time data for the Tees, East and North Yorkshire Ambulance Trust, which covers Bridlington and Driffield (East Yorkshire), and for the whole of England for 2004–05.

Ambulance Staff (Assaults)

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many private prosecutions for assault of ambulance staff while on duty were brought in conjunction with the Legal Protection Unit in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and how many of these resulted in convictions. [25510]

Jane Kennedy: The NHS Security Management Service Legal Protection Unit (NHS SMS LPU) became fully operational from March 2004, and provides for the first-time ever the national health service with nationally consistent legal advice on what can be done to deal with those who abuse and assault NHS staff.

Since its creation, the NHS LPU has provided advice to 12 ambulance trusts on a number of cases involving violence and abuse against NHS staff. It has also undertaken a successful civil action on behalf of Mersey regional ambulance service involving an individual who had abused NHS staff over a number of years.

The overall number of identified prosecutions involving physical assaults on ambulance staff in England for 2004–05 totalled 100.

Calcium (Children)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the impact on intake of calcium in children's diets of the proposed withdrawal of the provision of milk in schools, with particular reference to areas of social deprivation; [42039]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effect of the provision of milk in schools on children's health. [42040]

Caroline Flint: The Department recognises the nutritional value of milk within the context of a healthy balanced diet, particularly as a good source of calcium in children's diet. Indeed many low income families receive free milk as part of the welfare food scheme.

Although there is no statutory requirement for milk to be provided in schools, the Government encourages local education authorities and schools to make milk

available for those pupils who want it. The European Union school milk subsidy scheme and the national top-up scheme subsidise the provision of milk to children in those primary and nursery schools wishing to participate. Appropriate Government departments have considered the recommendations from the recent independent report on the national top-up and agreed that the subsidy for school milk should remain unchanged.

Cancer Services

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how payment by results will operate in respect of cancer services; and if she will make a statement. [42475]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 January 2006]*: Under payment by results (PbR), hospitals are paid according to the number and complexity of cases treated. PbR is being implemented incrementally over a four-year transition period and will cover 67 per cent. of commissioning expenditure by 2008–09.

From 2008–09, the intention is to expand the scope of PbR to include chemotherapy and radiotherapy through the introduction of revised casemix classifications known as Healthcare Resource Groups, that is, HRGs Version 4.0. In addition, HRGs are being developed for specialist palliative care. In the meantime, commissioning of these services remain outside the scope of PbR and prices for these services continue to be negotiated locally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 278W, on waiting times, what meetings her Department has held with stakeholders about the *(a)* resourcing, *(b)* implementation and *(c)* monitoring of the 2005 Labour party manifesto commitment that all women with breast symptoms should be seen within two weeks of referral by their general practitioner; which groups attended these meetings; what the content of these meetings was; what the timetable is for developing a framework determining the (i) resourcing, (ii) implementation and (iii) monitoring of this commitment; and if she will make a statement. [41954]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Breakthrough Breast Cancer was closely involved in the early thinking about this commitment and representatives from the Department met with the charity early in 2005 and will be meeting with the charity again shortly to further discuss this commitment. The Department has assessed the need for additional staff required to meet the commitment and we have commissioned Skills for Health, which is the Sector Skills Council for Health, to develop competencies in breast assessment. Once these competencies are agreed they could be used to develop training programmes to increase the number of breast assessment staff. Skills for Health are engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the development and piloting of the competencies including charities, Royal Colleges, professional groups and national health service organisations. The Department will also be engaging with further stakeholders to determine resourcing, implementation and monitoring arrangements.

Capital Schemes

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the capital cost was of each publicly funded capital scheme over £10 million for which her Department is responsible *(a)* at the outline business case stage, *(b)* as reported in the 2004–05 financial year and *(c)* in the 2005–06 financial year; and what the percentage change in capital costs (i) has been since the outline business case stage and (ii) is in the last 12 months. [35148]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not hold the information requested.

Care Homes

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1799W, on care homes, whether local authorities have *(a)* a duty and *(b)* discretion (i) to contract with a care home for an individual's accommodation and care and (ii) to charge the individual under the charging rules according to their financial circumstances. [41907]

Mr. Byrne: Section 21 of the National Assistance Act 1948 (NAA) provides for a local authority (LA) to make arrangements to provide residential accommodation where, as a result of their age, illness, disability or other circumstances, a person over 18 is in need of care and attention which is not otherwise available to them. LAs have a duty to arrange accommodation in such circumstances for persons who are ordinarily resident in their area or who are in urgent need of the accommodation concerned. They have a power to arrange it for persons with no settled residence or, with the agreement of that authority, for persons who are ordinarily resident in the area of another LA. Where the person is assessed as not needing care and attention or as having care and attention otherwise available to them, for example because they have both the resources and the ability to arrange their own care, there is no power or duty under the NAA for a LA to make arrangements for a person to be accommodated in a home. In this case, if requested, a LA may provide information and advice to help the person find an appropriate care home.

Where the LA arranges accommodation, it is required to charge the person to whom the accommodation is provided in accordance with a statutory scheme.

Cerebral Palsy

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the care offered to those with cerebral palsy. [31906]

Mr. Byrne: The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions, published in March 2005, specifically focuses on improving services for people with neurological conditions such as cerebral palsy. People with these conditions will get faster diagnosis, more rapid treatment and a comprehensive package of care under the NSF.

Services in the NSF include:

comprehensive assessment and regular review of people's problems;

joint health and social care plans that change over time (especially for people with rapidly progressing conditions) and take other needs into account such as housing, transport, benefits, education, careers advice, employment and leisure;

everyone having a single point of access to services via a named contact;

self-referral, allowing people to refer themselves quickly back to services as their care needs change;

access to a broad range of services including rehabilitation, equipment, accommodation, and personal care to help people live as independently as possible at home, and palliative care; and

support to help people to work or take up other vocational opportunities.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people suffering from cerebral palsy in each year since 1997. [31913]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of people living with cerebral palsy is not collected.

Community Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many service users of social services departments have been in receipt of direct payments in each year since 1997; and how many adults receiving community care services provided by social services departments there were in each year since 1997. [42021]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the number of people aged 18 and over receiving community based services as at 31 March for the years 2001 to 2005 in England and the number from these totals who received direct payments. Data are not available for the earlier years.

Number of adults[1] receiving community based services[2] and direct payments at 31 March, 2001–05—England

At 31 March:	*Total[5]*	*Of whom received direct payments*
2001	941,200	4,000
2002	968,400	5,300
2003[3]	982,100	8,600
2004[3]	994,400	14,000
2005[3,4]	980700	22,100

[1] Adults aged 18 and over.
[2] Community based services includes day care, meals, respite care, direct payments, professional support, transport and equipment as well as home care.
[3] Data includes clients formerly in receipt of preserved rights.
[4] Data for 2005 are provisional.
[5] Data on the number of people receiving community based services in 2005 is not comparable to data for previous years. In 2005 restated guidance was issued to exclude people receiving services from grant-funded organisations who had not had a community care assessment.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.
Source:
RAP proforma P2s, KS1

Co-terminous Boundaries

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to promote co-terminous boundaries for primary care trusts and unitary authorities. [26113]

Mr. Byrne: One of the key criteria from 'Commissioning a Patient Led NHS' was to

"improve co-ordination with social services through greater congruence of PCT and local authority boundaries".

Currently 44 per cent. of primary care trusts (PCTs) are co-terminous with local government boundaries, this will rise to a minimum of 77 per cent. as a result of the PCT reconfiguration exercise which is currently the subject of public consultation. The percentage co-terminous could be considerably higher depending on the outcome of that consultation.

However, 'Commissioning a Patient Led NHS' also identified seven other criteria which must be met when considering PCT reconfiguration. This may mean that co-terminosity with local authorities may not always be the optimum configuration, and in some cases it may be sensible for PCTs to contain more than one unitary authority within their boundaries or to have several PCTs in a large local government area in order to meet local health needs.

Dentistry

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on *(a)* NHS dentistry and *(b)* the NHS as a whole in (i) 1997 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [38911]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main elements of national health service dental services are the primary care services provided through the general dental services (GDS). In addition, a significant proportion of primary dental care is now provided by dentists working within the personal dental services (PDS) under new local commissioning arrangements agreed with primary care trusts. These elements, together with total NHS expenditure, are shown in the table. Net PDS expenditure is shown as an estimated range because the 2004–05 accounts format did not permit a precise identification of PCTs' net expenditure on PDS separate from other elements of discretionary health expenditure.

PCTs also commission community and hospital dental services to provide oral health programmes, or care to patients with special needs or more complex dental problems, but expenditure on these services is not separately identified in central returns.

NHS net expenditure: NHS, GDS, PDS

£ million

	1997–98[1]	*2004–05[2]*
Net NHS expenditure: England[3]	34,664	69,706
Net GDS expenditure: England	959	1,246
Estimated net PDS expenditure: England	0	225–250

[1] 1997–98 expenditure is on a cash basis.
[2] 2004–05 expenditure is on a stage two resource budgeting basis and is therefore not directly comparable with the 1997–98 data.
[3] Total NHS expenditure data are shown net of all sources of income. GDS and PDS data are shown net of dental charges paid by patients.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were admitting new NHS patients on 1 December 2005 in *(a)* England, *(b)* Northamptonshire and *(c)* Wellingborough. [40540]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data regarding the number of dentists admitting new national health service patients are not available centrally. Individual primary care trusts should be able to provide this information for their local areas.

Diabetes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the total cost to the NHS of providing care to those with diabetes for the most recent year for which figures are available. [41964]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's resource accounts shows gross expenditure on diabetes in 2004–05 was £687 million.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the total number of people with *(a)* type 1 and *(b)* type 2 diabetes in each year since 1997; how many finished episodes of care relating to the treatment of diabetes there have been in each year since 1997; what estimate she has made of the total number of patients who will have (i) type 1 and (ii) type 2 diabetes in 2010; and if she will make a statement. [41967]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of people with diabetes is not available in the exact form requested. The following information is available for diagnosed diabetes only.

Estimates of the number of people aged 16 and over with doctor-diagnosed diabetes can be derived for some earlier years from the Health Survey for England, collected every five years, and are shown in table one.

Table 1: People aged 16 and over with doctor-diagnosed diabetes in England

	Number
1998	1,070,000
2003	1,550,000

The Health Survey for England estimated that in 2003, around 90 per cent. of those with doctor-diagnosed diabetes had type two diabetes[1].

The number of patients diagnosed with diabetes identified by general practitioner practices in England in 2004–05 was 1,766,391[2]. This is the first year of data from this source. Figures are not available for type one and type two diabetes separately.

Table two shows all diagnoses count of finished consultant episodes for diabetes NHS Hospitals, England 1997–98 to 2004–05.

Table 2: All diagnoses count of finished consultant episodes

	Number
1997–98	413,340
1998–99	454,632
1999–2000	498,179
2000–01	543,867
2001–02	585,770
2002–03	667,352
2003–04	731,708
2004–05	829,160

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

Projections suggest that in England around 2.6 million people will have diabetes by 2010[3].

[1] Self-reported prevalence estimates published in 2003 Health Survey for England.
[2] 2004–05 Quality and Outcomes Framework data published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre.
[3] PBS Prevalence Model.

Family Planning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department offers to those bodies offering family planning concerning whether there is a minimum age for offering contraception *(a)* with and *(b)* without parental consent. [42224]

Caroline Flint: Health professionals provide contraception to young people under 16 within an established legal framework which involves assessing the young person's competence to understand the choices they are making and encouraging them to talk to their parents. A young person's request for confidentiality is respected unless there are child protection concerns. The Department's guidance "Best practice guidance for doctors and other health professionals on the provision of advice and treatment to young people under 16 on contraception, sexual and reproductive health", stresses that duty of confidentiality is not absolute. Where a health professional believes that there is a risk to the health, safety or welfare of a young person which is so serious as to outweigh the young person's right to privacy, they should follow locally agreed child protection protocols as outlined in the Government guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (1999).

The younger the teenager the greater concern about possible abuse or exploitation, but health professionals will assess risk on the facts of each individual case.

Fertility Treatment

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1568W, on fertility treatment, whether the Department has issued guidance to primary care trusts (PCTs) on how they should involve patient groups in decision-making on the prioritisation of funding for health services; what formal structures PCTs are expected to have in place to ensure that they involve patient groups in such decision-making; what monitoring is undertaken of PCTs' involvement of such groups; and who carries out that monitoring. [42724]

Caroline Flint: The Department's guidance, "Strengthening Accountability" (2003), provides details on how to deliver the legal requirement in section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 for all national health service organisations to involve and consult patients and the public on service development and provision on an on going basis. Compliance with Section 11 is assessed by the Healthcare Commission, and effectiveness in fulfilling the duty goes towards organisations' overall performance ratings. Primary care trusts are not required to have any formal structures but must show that they have arrangements in place to ensure that patients, the public and their representatives are involved in the planning and development of services.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Freedom of Information applications her Department has received; how many have taken more than 20 days to process; and how many of these gave rise to complaints about the time taken. [31230]

Jane Kennedy: The Department received 660 freedom of information (FOI) applications between the period 1 January 2005 and 30 June 2005. 271 FOI applications took more than 20 days to process. Of these, 20 were requests where the 20 days deadline for response was extended to allow for consideration of the balance of public interest. The Department has received one complaint about the time taken to respond.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) is committed to publishing quarterly updates in relation to departmental performance under FOI, including information on both the volume and outcomes of requests. The bulletin for the second quarter was published on 30 September 2005 and is available on the DCA's website at www.foi.gov.uk/statsapr-jun05.htm and is available in the Library. The next bulletin was published before Christmas, and an annual report will be published in early 2006.

Genito-urinary Medicine Clinics

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* Government target and *(b)* waiting times for an appointment at a genito-urinary medicine clinic within the Gravesham constituency were in the last period for which figures are available. [43262]

Caroline Flint: All primary care trusts' local delivery plans now include a target that the percentage of patients attending genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics who are offered an appointment to be seen within 48 hours of contacting a service reach 100 per cent. by 2008.

The report from the most recent survey of GUM clinic waiting times for August 2005 is published by the Health Protection Agency (HPA). This report provides details of the numbers of attendees seen within 48 hours of first contacting the clinic, and the number offered an appointment within 48 hours, including those who chose not to attend. This report which includes data for individual clinics, including those in the Gravesham area, is available on HPA's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/August_2005_waiting_times_report.pdf

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of attenders at genito-urinary medicine clinics were not given an appointment within two weeks in the most recent period for which figures are available. [41962]

Caroline Flint: The most recent audit of waiting times for genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics, for which data are available, was carried out in August 2005. This audit showed that 21 per cent. of attendees at GUM clinics were not seen within two weeks. However, some of these patients will have been offered an earlier appointment but been unable to attend.

A summary of August 2005 data is published on the Health Protection Agency website at the following web address: www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/wtimes.htm.

Overall, the number of attendees at GUM clinics being offered an appointment within 48 hours in England increased from 45 per cent. in May 2005 to 48 per cent. in August 2005.

Gershon Review

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made, in terms of *(a)* headcount reductions and *(b)* cost savings, in achieving the efficiency objectives set for the Department by the Gershon review. [21306]

Mr. Byrne: Early 2004–05 gains were reported in Budget 2005 and the Department's annual report. Gains to quarter 2 2005–06 were in our autumn performance report.

Goldman Algorithm

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 January 2996 to Question 3775 on the Goldman algorithm, if she will list the algorithms used by the NHS in the assessment of acute myocardial infarction. [41557]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally. However, when the Department published the national service framework for coronary heart disease in 2000, chapter 3, "Heart attacks and other acute coronary syndromes" provided best practice guides and protocols regarding the assessment of suspected myocardial infarction. The algorithms used will vary according to the clinician's preference.

Health Budget

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence was used to inform the statement in her speech to the London School of Economics on 13 December that less of the country's health budget is spent on prevention than almost any other developed country. [39354]

Mr. Byrne: The evidence is in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's report, "A System of Health Accounts".

Health Expenditure

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list *(a)* the programmes funded from her Department's Centrally Funded Initiatives and Services and Special Allocations budget in each year since 1997–98 and *(b)* future expenditure commitments already announced by Ministers which will be financed from this budget in the 2005–06 financial year. [39350]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Health Services (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the number

of people in the West Lancashire constituency in at risk groups who have not received a seasonal influenza vaccination this winter. [38373]

Caroline Flint: This information is not collected centrally.

The flu programme is general practitioner (GP) led. It is the responsibility of the GP to order sufficient flu vaccine for those in at risk groups on his or her register.

Hearing Services

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps her Department has taken to increase the number of trained audiologists; [39257]

(2) how many audiologists were *(a)* employed by the NHS and *(b)* undergoing training in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [39258]

Mr. Byrne: As at 30 September 2004, there were 1,582 qualified health care scientists working in audiology in the national health service in England. Prior to 2004, it is not possible to separate staff recorded in the NHS work force census working in audiology from other health care scientists. The numbers undertaking audiology training is shown in the table (these are the only years for which figures are available):

	Grade A training for clinical scientists in audiology	*BSc in audiology*[1]	*Training for audiology technicians*	*Diploma in hearing therapy*
1998–99	10	—	0	0
1999–2000	10	—	0	0
2000–01	10	—	1	0
2001–02	21	—	49	1
2002–03	20	—	57	52
2003–04	89	—	51	0
2004–05	22	180	33	6

[1] Not separately identified in departmental training information.

Source:
Quarterly monitoring.

A range of initiatives are in place to increase the number of trained audiologists working in the NHS, including the introduction in 2003–04 of the new BSc in audiology. We are also exploring the introduction of a new assistant practitioner role in audiology, which will help to increase capacity further. Furthermore, we have implemented initiatives to improve recruitment and retention for all staff, including audiologists, by improving pay and conditions, encouraging the NHS to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, providing help with accessing child care, and running national and local recruitment campaigns.

HIV/AIDS

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS in *(a)* St Albans, *(b)* Hertfordshire and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. [43130]

Caroline Flint: Data on HIV diagnoses are not available by town or by county; they are available by strategic health authority (SHA). The data for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA and England can be found on the Health Protection Agency's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/hiv/epidemiology/hars_tables.htm.

Home Oxygen Service

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation took place with *(a)* general practitioners, *(b)* pharmacists and *(c)* patients regarding the quality of products and services supplied by Air Products Ltd and British Oxygen Cylinders before the contract for the new Home Oxygen Service for the South West was awarded in July 2005. [42730]

Jane Kennedy: Consultation took place with representatives of clinical staff, including pharmacists, and those representing patients using the home oxygen service to develop the new service specification, which was included with documents issued in October 2004 to all those tendering for the service. Among other things, those submitting tenders included details of the range of equipment offered to support delivery of the new service requirements. Those assessing tenders received for the South West included local clinical and other national health service staff involved in the provision of respiratory care services.

Hospitals (North-West)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings have taken place between the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority and *(a)* chief executives of trusts and *(b)* non-executive directors of trusts to discuss possible changes to hospital services in Warrington; and what the date was of each meeting. [42640]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The information requested is not held centrally and can instead be obtained direct from the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority.

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she last discussed funding for *(a)* Royal Liverpool University hospital and *(b)* Royal Liverpool children's hospital at Alder Hey; and if she will make a statement. [43559]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 17 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1449W. The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University hospitals national health service trust and the Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust are still developing their respective outline business cases before submitting them for approval to Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority and then the Department.

Independent Sector Treatment

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS-funded *(a)* operations and *(b)* imaging scans have been (i) funded and (ii) performed in the independent sector in each of the last seven years, broken down by health authority. [25717]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of procedures performed by centrally procured independent sector schemes from 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Information on other independent sector providers commissioned locally is not collected centrally.

Procedures and diagnostics, by strategic health authority (SHA), by financial year figures to 30 November 2005

	Procedures			Diagnostics		
SHA	*2003–04 Activity*	*2004–05 Activity*	*2005–06 Activity*	*2003–04 Diags*	*2004–05 Diags*	*2005–06 Diags*
Dorset and Somerset SHA	—	—	2,544	—	—	—
Greater Manchester SHA	—	—	2,366	—	—	—
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	—	—	861	—	—	—
Kent and Medway SHA	—	—	110	—	—	—
Leicestershire, Northampton and Rutland SHA	1,677	2,106	874	—	—	—
North East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	—	—	240	—	—	—
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	—	—	474	—	—	—
South West Peninsula SHA	—	—	1,856	—	—	—
Surrey and Sussex SHA	—	—	2,524	—	—	—
Thames Valley	—	—	454	—	—	2,303
Trent SHA	—	2,345	3,340	—	—	—
West Midlands South	—	183	909	—	—	—
West Yorkshire SHA	—	—	1,208	—	—	6,473
National:						
Ophthalmic Chain	1,986	10,305	6,989	—	—	—
FastTrack					34,027	56,494
Gen Supplementary 1	—	18,962	7,578	—	—	—
Gen Supplementary 2			16,804	—	—	—
Total	3,663	33,901	49,131	0	34,027	65,270
	—	—	86,695	—	—	99,297
Overall	—	—	185,992	—	—	—

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 271W, on independent sector treatment centres, what the equivalent figures were for 2004–05. [38945]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* In 2004–05, it is estimated that procedures purchased under the independent sector treatment centre programme cost an average 11.2 per cent. above the national health service equivalent cost, using NHS tariff as the base for the equivalent cost calculation. The range and complexity of procedure included in the 2004–05 calculation differs from those reflected in the 2003–04 calculation shown in the answer of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 271W, to my right hon. Friend.

Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the uptake rate for free influenza vaccine has been in each at-risk group in 2005–06; and what the rate was in each year since 1997–98. [33196]

Caroline Flint: Data on flu vaccine uptake in the over 65 age group were first collected from the start of the flu campaign in 2000 when we introduced the programme to vaccinate the over 65s. Uptake in this group over for the last five years is shown in the table.

Flu uptake, December 2000 to October 2005

Position at end December:	*Uptake (%)*
2000	65.3
2001	67.7
2002	68.5
2003	71.0
2004	71.5
October 2005	49

Data on vaccine uptake in those under 65 years of age in a medical risk group have only been collected since 2004. Vaccine uptake data in these groups was 43 per cent. by the end of December 2004.

Data on vaccine uptake by individual medical risk group were started this year. By the end of October 2005, 25 per cent. of at-risk people under 65 years of age had been vaccinated.

Vaccine uptake in those under 65 years of age within each risk group was:

	Percentage
Chronic respiratory disease, including asthma	12
Chronic heart disease	29
Chronic renal disease	21
Chronic liver disease	10
Diabetes	37
Immunosuppression	18

Intensive Care

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 6 December 2005, what data on intensive care units are available to the emergency beds service. [36410]

Mr. Byrne: The national intensive care bed information service holds information about whether a hospital has facilities to support general intensive

and high dependency care. The service also holds information on whether a hospital can provide specialist critical care to treat, for example, serious burn injuries, neurological conditions, serious head injuries, adverse reactions to drugs and poisons, renal failure, liver failure, spinal injuries and other critical conditions. The service holds unvalidated, snapshot management information on the number of intensive care beds reported as staffed; open; occupied and available.

IT Projects

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has spent on cost overruns on information technology projects in the NHS since 1997. [27501]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 11 November 2005]:* Funding of information technology projects in the national health service has historically been the responsibility of individual NHS bodies. Before the advent of the national programme for information technology at the beginning of 2003, any funding provided by the Department was given as a contribution to local initiatives, for which business responsibility and overall expenditure control rested with the NHS bodies concerned.

All the systems being funded and deployed by the Department as part of the national programme are proceeding on budget. No additional costs have been incurred.

Late Payments

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many suppliers have waited longer than 30 days for payment in each year since NHS Professionals was established; and what the amounts of the payments were. [38870]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Professionals was established on 1 April 2004. In 2004–05, NHS Professionals paid 97 per cent. of its bills within 30 days or contract terms. 1,092 bills were not paid on time out of a total of 35,698; these bills amounted to a value of £1.9 million in comparison to a total value of £36.6 million.

Mental Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1565W, on antidepressants, if she will provide the information broken down by the following age groups: *(a)* 0 to 15 years, *(b)* 16 to 18 years and in full-time education and *(c)* people aged 60 years and over. [38892]

Mr. Byrne: Aged-based prescription data is available only for the exemption categories as shown in the following tables. The data refers to the quantity prescribed and the cost to the national health service in England for each antidepressant in 2004–05. Data is not available for other years.

Table 1: Antidepressant quantities prescribed on the NHS in England 2004–05 for charge-exempt age categories

	Number of NHS prescriptions in England 2004–05		
Name of antidepressant	*0–15 years*	*16 to 18 years and in full-time education*	*60 years and over*
Amitriptyline Embonate	0	0	18
Amitriptyline Hydrochloride	18,284	15,912	2,737,111
Amoxapine	0	0	1,441
Citalopram Hydrobromide	9,627	25,861	1,783,585
Clomipramine Hydrochloride	1,356	945	157,195
Desipramine Hydrochloride	0	0	10
Dosulepin Hydrochloride	2,672	5,607	1,239,658
Doxepin	144	371	77,104
Escitalopram	1,751	6,341	250,768
Fluoxetine Hydrochloride	26,422	40,991	1,163,009
Flupentixol Hydrochloride	480	739	109,057
Fluvoxamine Maleate	533	445	8,703
Imipramine Hydrochloride	10,896	1,392	131,384
Iproniazid	0	0	0
Isocarboxazid	0	0	2,840
Lofepramine Hydrochloride	1,075	2,576	235,138
Maprotiline Hydrochloride	20	81	7,472
Mianserin Hydrochloride	0	0	16,244
Mirtazapine	1,596	3,072	461,135
Moclobemide	20	79	10,426
Nefazodone Hydrochloride	0	0	1,295
Nortriptyline	564	343	85,906
Other Preparations	0	0	0
Oxitriptan	2	0	0
Paroxetine Hydrochloride	2,601	4,290	699,456
Phenelzine Sulphate	20	20	15,556
Protriptyline Hydrochloride	0	0	0
Reboxetine	2	8	539
Sertraline Hydrochloride	10,457	12,395	696,421
Tranylcypromine Sulphate	40	20	11,095
Trazodone Hydrochloride	943	1,373	280,134
Trimipramine Maleate	382	241	100,877
Tryptophan	20	20	1,774
Venlafaxine	2,913	8,037	1,007,590
Total	92,820	131,159	11,292,941

Table 2: Costs for antidepressants prescribed in England 2004–05 for charge-exempt age categories

	Cost of NHS prescriptions in England 2004–05 (£)		
Name of antidepressant	*0 to 15 years*	*16 to 18 years and in full-time education*	*60 years and over*
Amitriptyline Embonate	0.00	0.00	79.53
Amitriptyline Hydrochloride	6,473.63	29,724.31	5,043,584.32
Amoxapine	0.00	0.00	19,026.28
Citalopram Hydrobromide	171,030.39	433,873.22	27,890,019.25
Clomipramine Hydrochloride	5,347.53	4,430.61	804,550.83
Desipramine Hydrochloride	0.00	0.00	433.18
Dosulepin Hydrochloride	8,833.79	17,562.96	4,522,827.49
Doxepin	286.83	506.97	158,515.61
Escitalopram	37,252.23	122,835.24	4,608,998.31
Fluoxetine Hydrochloride	204,598.43	202,509.17	4,484,031.00
Flupentixol Hydrochloride	1,027.75	2,036.23	330,810.78
Fluvoxamine Maleate	8,634.24	8,405.73	195,849.62
Imipramine Hydrochloride	29,999.15	4,049.12	378,914.75
Iproniazid	0.00	0.00	0.00
Isocarboxazid	0.00	0.00	123,693.77
Lofepramine Hydrochloride	11,012.53	24,204.80	2,386,055.58
Maprotiline Hydrochloride	539.72	910.48	56,736.44
Mianserin Hydrochloride	0.00	0.00	121,053.08
Mirtazapine	34,075.57	63,365.45	9,498,218.88
Moclobemide	137.72	959.88	209,039.98
Nefazodone Hydrochloride	0.00	0.00	30,432.85
Nortriptyline	4,779.73	2,964.45	691,438.62
Other Preparations	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxitriptan	999.33	0.00	0.00
Paroxetine Hydrochloride	49,834.47	82,321.27	10,282,366.48
Phenelzine Sulphate	717.92	394.89	277,699.67
Protriptyline Hydrochloride	0.00	0.00	0.00
Reboxetine	47.28	138.06	8,880.03

Table 2: Costs for antidepressants prescribed in England 2004–05 for charge-exempt age categories

	Cost of NHS prescriptions in England 2004–05 (£)		
Name of antidepressant	*0 to 15 years*	*16 to 18 years and in full-time education*	*60 years and over*
Sertraline Hydrochloride	271,203.71	300,393.36	14,950,213.87
Tranylcypromine Sulphate	921.88	438.96	148,245.40
Trazodone Hydrochloride	7,587.43	13,773.85	3,311,005.90
Trimipramine Maleate	3,900.29	1,967.10	1,373,059.80
Tryptophan	521.79	4.60	43,975.80
Venlafaxine	99,938.48	264,447.15	33,149,022.21

Methylphenidate

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will commission research into whether methylphenidate affects children's growth. [23993]

Jane Kennedy: It is recognised that stimulants such as methylphenidate can affect weight gain and growth in children following long-term use. The product information, for prescribers and patients or carers, and the British National Formulary contain warnings about this risk and advise that the child's weight and height should be regularly checked throughout treatment.

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate this issue and these inform current clinical guidance. It is unlikely that additional studies would impact on the current recommendations for regular monitoring and treatment breaks in children who are not gaining weight or growing as expected.

Midwife-led Birthing Centres

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwife-led birthing centres there are in Westmorland and Lonsdale. [42386]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has plans to visit Coventry, South. [39236]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The Secretary of State for Health has no current plans to visit Coventry, South.

Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she has received to support the decision that Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy is a valid syndrome. [30110]

Mr. Byrne: We no longer use the term Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy to refer to fabricated or induced illness. However, some adults do fabricate illness in their children, or exaggerate their symptoms, or sometimes even induce the illness, for example by poisoning. At least two mothers have received prison sentences after their children died because of illnesses induced by salt poisoning.

National Trauma Service

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the Royal College of Surgeons' proposals for a National Trauma Service in a Level 2 hospital with particular reference to proposals for *(a)* a 24-hour Accident and Emergency department, *(b)* a consultant-led resuscitate trauma team, *(c)* Intensive Care Unit and trauma beds and *(d)* helicopter landing access; and if she will make a statement. [27254]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not made any recent assessment of the Royal College of Surgeons' and the British Orthopaedic Association's joint proposals for a national trauma service, as set out in their July 2000 publication Better care for the severely injured.

NHS Direct

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has *(a)* to restructure NHS Direct and *(b)* to close NHS Direct call centres; and if she will make a statement. [31649]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Direct is within the ambit of the Department's review of arm's length bodies (ALBs), announced in July 2004 by the Secretary of State. As part of the review we are committed to work with NHS Direct to establish it as a body outside the ALB sector with an appropriate governance structure.

There are no plans to close or reconfigure NHS Direct call centres as part of that review. However, the NHS Direct Special Health Authority is responsible for delivering the best possible service for patients and value for money for commissioners. Discharging this duty may from time to time involve reconfiguring the call centre network. Where NHS Direct considers any such changes necessary, its proposals would be subject to the normal consultation with staff, trade unions, commissioners and other stakeholders. The Department does not routinely hold details of these operational matters and my hon. Friend may wish to contact the chair of the NHS Direct Special Health Authority for further information.

NHS Finance Data

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance data, what discussions she has had with Monitor regarding the publication of the year-end forecasts for NHS foundation trusts. [39314]

Mr. Byrne: National health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs) are required by statute to submit forward planning information to Monitor, the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of NHSFTs, who is accountable to Parliament. I have been advised by the chairman of Monitor that the annual plans for 2005–06 for each of the 32 NHSFTs were submitted to Monitor earlier this year and are publicly available on Monitor's website at: www.monitor-nhsft.gov.uk

NHS Sites

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the estimated 100 surplus NHS sites announced by her Department on 7 April 2004 have been transferred to the responsibility of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. [42429]

Jane Kennedy: As part of an agreement between the Department and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, ownership of 67 surplus properties owned by the Secretary of State for Health transferred to English Partnerships on 6 April 2005. A further 14 are programmed to transfer by 31 March 2006 with the balance in 2006–07.

NHS Trusts (Mergers)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she takes into account when deciding whether to approve mergers of NHS trusts; and by whom that information is provided. [42493]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for putting proposals to Ministers on merging national health service trusts. Before they do so, SHAs must be satisfied that any reconfiguration and resulting service integration proposals within an area fit with the longer-term viability of the NHS trust. This will include ensuring a robust risk analysis around activity, costs and income is consistent with the direction of modern health care delivery. This will incorporate the reduction of health inequalities, be clinically led and supported and be subject to full statutory public consultation.

NHS Turnaround Teams

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much her Department has spent to date on NHS turnaround teams in each NHS trust; and if she will make a statement; [43458]

(2) how much money contained in the departmental budget reflected by the latest departmental winter supplementary estimate 2005–06 will be allocated for financial turnaround teams working with NHS trusts; and if she will make a statement. [43459]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The winter supplementary estimates for the Department were presented to Parliament on 17 November 2005 as part of the central government supply estimates procedures. The estimate did not specifically refer to financial turnaround teams. Planned expenditure for these teams is part of this expenditure.

The contract for the initial assessment part of the turnaround teamwork was for the complete assessment and was not broken down by organisation. The amount of the contract is to be treated as commercial in confidence.

NHS-funded Operations

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS-funded operations have been commissioned from the private healthcare sector in the last five years for patients living in *(a)* Leeds, *(b)* each strategic health authority area and *(c)* England, broken down by specialty. [18915]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of operations commissioned centrally from the independent sector for national health service patients nationally and by strategic health authority is shown in the table. Information is not available by area of residence or relating to operations commissioned locally.

Program name	*Strategic health authority*	*Specialties*	*Total procedures over contract period*
East Cornwall	South West Peninsula	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, ENT, Oral surgery, General medicine, Gastroenterology, Cardiology, Dermatology, Thoracic medicine, Rheumatology, Paediatrics, Gynaecology, Dietetics, Physio assessment, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery	26,767
East Lincs	Trent	Ophthalmology, urology, hernias, varicose veins, colonoscopies and minor skin	7,263
West Lincs	Trent	Ophthalmology, gastroscopies, colonoscopies, orthopaedic, urology and minor skin	6,365
North Oxford (Horton)	Thames Valley	Orthopaedics	11,197
NEYNL	North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	General Surgery, Trauma and orthopaedics	9,964
Southampton	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Orthopaedics	11,468
Northumberland	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Upper scopes, hernias, varicose veins, minor skin	10,080
TV3500	Thames Valley	General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, Dermatology, Gynaecology	5,735
		Orthopaedics	3,345
		General Surgery, Urology, Trauma and orthopaedics, Dermatology, Gynaecology	8,337
GC4 West Surrey (tba)	Surrey and Sussex	Orthopaedics	0

Program name	Strategic health authority	Specialties	Total procedures over contract period
Kidderminster	West Midlands South	Orthopaedics	9,000
Cheshire and Merseyside	Cheshire and Merseyside	Orthopaedics	24,817
Nottingham	Trent	Orthopaedic, Gynaecology, General surgical, Dermatology, Endoscopies, Oral Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Chronic Pain	110,700
Maidstone	Kent and Medway	Chemotherapy, minor surgery and endoscopes	55,589
Outer North East London (BHRT)	North East London	Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, ENT, Oral, General Surgery, Urology	56,043
Brighton	Surrey and Sussex	Orthopaedics	26,451
Medway	Kent and Medway	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Orthopaedics, Urology, Diagnostics—endoscopy only	19,770
Portsmouth	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Walk in centre/minor injuries unit, day surgery, diagnostics, ophthalmology	34,155
Lister Surgical centre	Beds and Herts	Paed, paed ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	72,477
Hemel Hampstead Surgi centre	Beds and Herts	Paed, paed ENT, endoscope, urology, ophthalmology, gynaecology and other specialities	63,636
Bradford	West Yorkshire	General Surgery, Gastroenterology, ENT, Gynae, Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Ultrasound scans—general, Ultrasound scans—doppler, CT scans, MRI scans, Plain films and x-rays, Fluoroscopy	27,416
Burton	Shropshire and Staffordshire	General Surgery, ENT, Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, Plastics, Urology, Oral Surgery, Rheumatology, Pain procedures, Ophthalmology	64,814
Trent and South Yorkshire	Trent	Orthopaedics	22,000
Daventry	Leicestershire, Northampton and Rutland	Ophthalmology, Upper GI endoscopies, Sigmoidscopy, Orthopaedics, Dermatology, Urology	5,959
Shepton Mallet	Dorset and Somerset	Orthopaedics, ophthalmology, general surgery and endoscopy	56,242
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester	Orthopaedic, general surgery and ENT	44,863
Plymouth	South West Peninsula	Orthopaedics	16,512
Ophthalmic Chain	Cheshire and Merseyside; Cumbria and Lancashire; Dorset and Somerset; Hampshire and Isle of Wight; Kent and Medway; Northumberland, Tyne and Wear; South West Peninsula; Surrey and Sussex; Thames Valley	Ophthalmology	44,737
GSUP1	n/a	Orthopaedic, ophthalmic, general surgery, ENT, plastic surgery	26,698
GSUP2	n/a	Orthopaedic, general surgery	12,167
England total			894,567

NICE Guidance

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the consequences of a general review of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's Clinical Guideline on the management of schizophrenia on the availability of atypical anti-psychotics drugs. [40232]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No assessment has been made of the review by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on managing schizophrenia with atypical antipsychotic medicines.

Obesity (Westmorland and Lonsdale)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Westmorland and Lonsdale aged *(a)* under 20, *(b)* 20 to 29, *(c)* 30 to 39, *(d)* 40 to 50 and *(e)* over 50 years are estimated to be clinically obese. [43046]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 January 2006]*: The information is not available in the format requested. However, national data is shown in the table.

Prevalence of adults aged 16 and over who have a body mass index (BMI) over 30, by sex and age range (England, 2004)

Percentage

Sex	*Men*	*Women*
16–24	7.9	12.2
25–34	17.9	17.9
35–44	25.2	23.6
45–54	29.6	25.8
55–64	30.1	32.2
65–74	27.8	28.2
75+	19	20.3
Total	22.7	23.8

Notes:

1. The figures are based on weighted data.

2. The main source of data on the prevalence of obesity is the Health Survey for England (HSE). The sample size of the Health Survey does not allow figures to be produced to the level of parliamentary constituencies. For adults (aged 16 and over) figures are presented for England and Government office regions (GOR). Information is provided for the GOR which covers Westmorland and Lonsdale. For children (aged two to 15) national figures are presented using the national BMI percentile classification.

3. The data presented are the most recent available. The available information is presented in this table, using the results of the HSE for 2002, 2003 and 2004. The method in which overweight and obesity is calculated is different for adults and for children (see background notes 3 and 4 for details).

4. We are not able to identify how many people are estimated to be clinically obese, but are able to supply an estimate of the prevalence of obesity among children aged two to 15 and adults aged 16 and over.

Source:

Health Survey for England 2004: The Health of Minority Ethnic Groups, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Older Persons (Care Charges)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average percentage change in charges for older persons' care proposed for 2006–07, in each local authority is; and if she will make a statement; [43024]

(2) what the proposed changes in personnel employed in social services departments are for 2006–07, in each local authority; [43047]

(3) what plans she has to discuss *(a)* increases in care charges and *(b)* job reductions in social services with local authorities. [43054]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Residential care charges are governed by a statutory system, under the "National Assistance (Assessment of Resources) Regulations 1992" and the "Charges for Residential Accommodation Guide". Copies are available in the Library. Charges for non-residential social care are set by local councils, but councils must be guided by "Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and other non-residential social services-Guidance for Councils with Social Services Responsibilities". A copy is available in the Library.

The level of charges for non-residential care and the numbers of people employed are matters for local determination rather than by central Government. Information on the amount by which charges are increased and information on job reductions in social services departments is not held centrally.

Osteoporosis

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how her Department plans to monitor the implementation of the National Institute for Health and Clinic Excellence guidance on the secondary prevention of osteoporotic fractures. [19398]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 31 October 2005]:* The Department does not monitor implementation of guidance issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinic Excellence (NICE).

NICE will be tracking the implementation of the guidance once it is published and using the information obtained to inform the development of future tools and resources and ensure the guidance achieves positive and sustainable changes.

Outpatient Waiting Lists

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance her Department issues on the compilation of outpatient waiting lists. [41548]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* The Department issued Getting patients treated: the Waiting List Action Team Handbooks August 1999, which gives practical guidance on managing and recording waiting lists. It makes clear that clinical priority must be the main determinant of when patients are seen. The handbook is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/05/11/03/04051103.pdf.

Paediatric Continence Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with the Department for Education and Skills on providing hygienic and well maintained toilets for pupils. [43576]

Caroline Flint: The Department and the Department for Education and Skills meet regularly to discuss matters to do with the health and well-being of schoolchildren such as through the Healthy Schools Programme Board.

The provision of hygienic and well maintained toilets for pupils is a matter for individual heads of schools and local authorities.

Parliamentary Questions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to Questions *(a)* 23665 and *(b)* 21605, on independent sector treatment centres. [33622]

Mr. Byrne: I refer my hon. Friend to the replies I gave her on 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 404W, and on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 160W.

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Wakefield on 8 November, reference 27398, on NHS bursaries. [35723]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 December 2005]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave her on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 173W.

Pathology Departments

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of total sample processing time was spent on *(a)* administrative procedures and *(b)* chemical analysis in clinical biochemistry and haematology laboratories within pathology departments in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [27982]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect this information. However, we recognise the importance of pathology to patient care and we have asked Lord Carter of Coles to conduct an independent review of pathology services. Its terms of reference are

> "to advise Ministers, in the context of current resource constraints, on the timeliness, reliability, capacity and efficiency of current pathology services in England, benchmarked against international standards and the feasibility of and efficiency benefits arising from wide-scale service reconfiguration, innovation and modernisation and involvement of the private sector".

The review will consider the workings of pathology laboratories in all disciplines.

Patient and Public Involvement Resource Centre

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the performance and effectiveness of the patient and public involvement resource centre will be *(a)* managed and *(b)* evaluated; and who has operational responsibility for the resource centre. [42136]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Department is looking for a supplier to design, develop and have operational responsibility for a new centre to support the delivery of patient and public involvement in the health care delivery system. The procurement process is on-going and until it is complete we are unable to name the provider.

The NHS Institute for Improvement and Innovation will be responsible for managing and evaluating the performance and effectiveness of the centre.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the patient and public involvement resource centre cost to set up; and what the budget for the resource centre will be in each of the next three years. [42138]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Department is currently in the process of procuring a supplier to design, develop and deliver a new centre to support the delivery of patient and public involvement in health care.

As we are in the middle of this procurement process the budget is commercially sensitive.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether a policy paper on patient and public involvement in health has been produced by the Having Your Say taskforce chaired by Ed Mayo. [42196]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The "having my say" taskforce has submitted a report on improving public involvement in health and social care. We will set out our plans shortly in a White Paper on a new direction for community health and social care and publish the "having my say" taskforce report on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Practice-based Commissioning

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the transaction costs involved in allowing general practitioners to negotiate and hold individual contracts with providers under practice-based commissioning arrangements. [39282]

Mr. Byrne: Under the proposals for practice-based commissioning, negotiating and holding individual contracts with providers will remain the responsibility of primary care trusts. There will not, therefore, be an increase in transaction costs associated with contracting with providers under practice-based commissioning.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to permit general practitioners holding commissioning budgets under proposals for practice-based commissioning to pool their budgets for the purpose of collective commissioning of services. [39358]

Mr. Byrne: Under practice-based commissioning participating general practitioner practices will be permitted to pool their indicative budgets for the purpose of collective commissioning of services. This subject is covered in paragraph 25 of the publication "Practice Based Commissioning—promoting clinical engagement" which is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/09/85/65/04098565.pdf.

Pregnancy-related Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1199W, on pregnancy-related deaths, if she will break down the figures by primary care trust for each year for which this information is available. [42505]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not available centrally. The data provided previously were taken from the confidential inquiry into maternal deaths, which collects information relating to women dying from pregnancy-related conditions. The data are anonymised with no address details available.

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the development of prison health care services. [39404]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Prison health, the joint Home Office and Department of Health unit, has been working since 2000 to improve health care provision for prisoners. It has led and managed a work programme to modernise services, step up national health service engagement and improve performance monitoring. Key achievements include developing better mental health provision, including NHS-funded mental health in-reach teams. Nearly £20 million is being spent on mental health provision in 2005–06. 102 prisons have mental health in-reach teams with some 360 extra staff employed. Prison health has also supported

improvements in primary care services; developed the prison health workforce and improved the prison health estate.

Funding responsibility for primary healthcare services in the publicly run prisons in England and Wales was transferred in April 2003 from the Home Office to the Department. The NHS primary care trusts started to assume responsibility for the commissioning of prison health services in public prisons in England in April 2004 and will assume full responsibility in April 2006. £118 million was transferred for prison healthcare for 2002–03: the amount allocated for 2005–06 is nearly £176 million.

Prison health is now engaged in a further programme to improve health and social care for prisoners. This includes improving the transfer process so that those whose mental ill health means that they require hospital treatment can be moved more quickly. It also includes the development of an integrated drug treatment system; the inclusion of offenders in relevant departmental initiatives; further improving workforce provision, developing a modern prison information technology system which aids the flow of information about prisoners' healthcare on admission, transfer or release, and the further improvement of the healthcare estate.

All of these measures will help us to meet our aim that prisoners receive a similar level of service from the NHS as that received by the general public.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 988–99W, on the private finance initiative (PFI), what the amount of surcharges paid to PFI contractors was in each year to date. [30680]

Mr. Byrne: The payment mechanism in a private finance initiative contract contains a volume element under which the quantity of variable items such as meals or linen provided is directly related to the throughput of patients, so where the volume of services is above those initially stated in the private finance initiative contract, trusts will make additional payments.

Detailed information on service volumes from all of the private finance initiative contracts signed to date, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Private Sector Treatment Centres

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid from NHS funds to private sector treatment centres in 2004–05; and what the estimate is for *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08. [38054]

Mr. Byrne: *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* Expenditure on wave 1 of the centrally procured independent sector elective treatment programme for the year 2004–05 and estimates for the years to 2007–08 are shown in the table.

Expenditure on wave 1 of the centrally procured independent sector elective treatment programme

	£ million
2004–05	78.8
2005–06	103.5
2006–07	210
2007–08	263

Note:
Figures for 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08 are estimated.

In addition, the Department is currently in the process of procuring a second wave of independent sector elective provision.

Expenditure on locally procured independent sector elective provision is not separately identified from the annual financial returns of national health service trusts, primary care trusts and health authorities.

Rehabilitation Officers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rehabilitation officers for blind and partially-sighted people are employed by each London borough; and if she will make a statement. [42945]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not held centrally.

Severalls Hospital Site

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date the former Severalls hospital site in Colchester was transferred to the responsibility of the Deputy Prime Minister. [42457]

Jane Kennedy: As part of an agreement between the Department and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, ownership of that part of the Severalls hospital site owned by the Secretary of State for Health was transferred to the ownership of English Partnerships on 6 April 2005.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to ensure that the prevention, detection and treatment of *(a)* sexually transmitted diseases and *(b)* HIV/AIDS is a priority for commissioners in the NHS; [43320]

(2) what arrangements she has made to audit *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual spending on the prevention, detection and treatment of (i) sexually transmitted diseases and (ii) HIV/AIDS. [43321]

Caroline Flint: Sexual health was identified as a key priority in the public health White Paper, 'Choosing Health', backed by major new investment of £300 million over three years and improved performance management to ensure delivery at local level.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) will receive funding for implementing the targets in the 'Choosing Health' White Paper in their mainstream allocations. Rather than audit PCT spending, we will be monitoring the outcomes from this investment. In particular, the progress towards targets to reduce the level of new infections of gonorrhoea, as a marker for all sexually transmitted infections, to ensure patients have access to

genito-urinary medicine clinics within 48 hours by 2008 and numbers of screens undertaken in the chlamydia screening programme. These improved performance measures, should significantly strengthen the incentive for local investment and service modernisation.

In addition, a letter has been sent by the Department to strategic health authority chief executives highlighting that when considering any savings from implementing 'Commissioning a patient led NHS', savings should not be identified from those posts working on implementation of 'Choosing Health'. This includes posts in front-line services.

Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely effect on the numbers of people who smoke of banning the sale of tobacco in pubs and clubs. [42935]

Caroline Flint: The Government have not made an assessment of the likely effect on the numbers of people who smoke of banning the sale of tobacco in pubs and clubs.

Strategic Health Authorities (Consultants)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy that senior officers of strategic health authorities who *(a)* take voluntary redundancy and *(b)* retire from the authority may not subsequently return to the authority's employment as consultants. [42641]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The Department would not expect senior managers who are made redundant from strategic health authorities (SHAs) to return to the authority's employment as consultants. SHAs are responsible for local employment decisions.

Urosotomy Prescriptions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what improvements are being made to the provision of treatment for urosotomy patients. [41987]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions is concerned with improving health and social care services for people with long-term conditions. The Department also published "Supporting People with Long-Term Conditions-An NHS and Social Care Model to support innovation and integration" on 5 January 2005. The purpose of the model is to improve the health and quality of life of people with a long-term condition, such as urostomy, by providing personalised, yet systematic ongoing support.

vCJD Trust

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the vCJD Trust's budget has been allocated to legal and professional fees since the Trust was established; and how much has been allocated for such fees in the next financial year. [32945]

Caroline Flint: The variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) Trust's published annual report and accounts include full details of legal and professional costs.

The report and accounts are available on the vCJD Trust's website at: www.cjdtrust.co.uk/

The vCJD Trust has, to date, paid £7.4 million for legal and professional fees. These include legal fees for solicitors acting for the trust and for claimants, trustees' expenses and fees, medical experts and accountants' fees, taxation, and other disbursements.

The total sums managed by the vCJD Trust in its main and discretionary funds amount to £67.5 million.

The vCJD Trust does not allocate a proportion of the annual budget for fees or expenses in advance.

Waiting Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* mean and *(b)* median waiting time for a first out-patient appointment has been in each year since 1997–98. [39363]

Mr. Byrne: Estimated mean and median waiting times for a first out-patient appointment with a consultant following general practitioner referral are shown in the table.

Estimated mean and median out-patient waiting times (in weeks)

	Median	Mean
March 1998	6.4	9.5
March 1999	7.0	10.5
March 2000	7.7	11.7
March 2001	7.5	10.9
March 2002	7.6	11.1
March 2003	7.4	9.0
March 2004	7.1	8.5
March 2005	7.0	7.5
September 2005	6.8	7.2

Source:
Department of Health, QM08R return

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total number of patients admitted onto the in-patient waiting list has been in each year since 1997–98. [39364]

Mr. Byrne: The data is shown in the table. A key factor in the number of decisions to admit is the increase in the number of patients dealt with in an out-patient setting rather than through in-patient admission.

Number of decisions to admit, all specialties, England, 1997 to 2005

	Decisions to admit
1997–98	n/a
1998–99	4,189,323
1999–2000	4,159,078
2000–01	3,935,930
2001–02	3,781,437
2002–03	3,778,390
2003–04	3,802,744
2004–05	3,787,713

Note:
Data was not collected in 1997–98.
Source:
Department of Health form KH06

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people had been waiting more than six months for an NHS operation on 1 December. [38849]

Mr. Byrne: At the end of November 2005, 12,269 people had been waiting more than six months for a national health service operation according to monthly commissioner-based data. We remain confident that our year end target of a maximum waiting time of six months will have been met.

Women's Health Services

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts offer women suffering from *(a)* uterine fibroids and *(b)* menorrhagia alternative treatment options to hysterectomy which include (i) uterine fibroid embolisation, (ii) endometrial ablation, (iii) myomectomy and (iv) myolysis. [31504]

Mr. Byrne: Information broken down by primary care trusts is not available due to instances of small numbers for these gynaecological treatments. Data from hospital episode statistics (HES) giving counts of admissions to national health service hospitals are shown in the tables.

For women admitted into hospital in England in 2003–04 with a primary diagnosis of fibroids.

Treatment provided	*Numbers of women*
Hysterectomy	Less than 10
Uterine fibroid embolisation	350
Ablation	2,400
Myomectomy	1,500
Myolysis	Not available

For women admitted into hospital with a primary diagnosis of menorrhagia.

Treatment provided	*Numbers of women*
Hysterectomy	Less than 10
Uterine fibroid embolisation	15
Ablation	5,300
Myomectomy	60
Myolysis	Not available

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Bed-and-breakfast Accommodation (London)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many 16 to 18-year-olds are living in bed and breakfast accommodation in each London borough. [42920]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Carbon Emissions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which unit within his Department is responsible for reducing carbon emissions. [39903]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has a range of policy responsibilities—including planning, building regulations, housing and local government—that have a role to play in reducing carbon emissions. The ODPM's Corporate Strategy and Resources Group is responsible for co-ordinating the ODPM's contribution towards tackling climate change.

Commercial Planning

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will issue planning guidance for new commercial premises to ensure that the secure transfer of cash to and from cash-in-transit carriers at banks, shopping centres, supermarkets and cash machines is taken into account. [43036]

Yvette Cooper: "Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development" (PPS1), published in 2005, sets the planning policy context for England. It places strong emphasis on the role of planning in helping to reduce crime. Planning authorities are asked to have robust policies which address crime prevention issues in their development plans. Crime prevention is also capable of being a material planning consideration in the consideration of planning applications.

The Government have also published "Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention" which provides detailed advice on the layout of all buildings and spaces to reduce the risk of crime, including, where appropriate, the incorporation of target hardening measures such CCTV in new development. The guidance urges planners, designers and crime prevention practitioners/police to work together to develop solutions from an early stage in the design process.

Planning policy in Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Executive. I understand the Scottish Executive will be publishing a planning advisory note on designing safer places shortly.

Council Tax Revaluation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list representations the Government have received from retailers, including DIY stores, in relation to the council tax revaluation in the last two years. [42611]

Mr. Woolas: Two representations have been identified from retailers, both from B&Q plc, received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to council tax revaluation in the last two years.

Design for Manufacture Competition

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the location of each site in the Design for Manufacture competition, and the estimated number of *(a)* commercial and *(b)* affordable households to be constructed at each site in relation to the competition. [17446]

Yvette Cooper *[pursuant to the reply, 18 October 2005, Official Report, c. 876W]:* I regret that the answer contained incorrect information in relation to the number of affordable dwellings that are anticipated to be built at the former Rowan High School site in the London borough of Merton as a result of the Design for Manufacture competition. The correct answer to the question should be as follows.

There is no significant commercial property to be developed on the 10 Design for Manufacture Competition sites, other than incidental corner shops and community facilities that will be subject to detailed planning approval. These will be detailed during the next stage as the proposals for each individual site go through the planning process.

The number of homes on each site is as follows:

Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Phase 2 site. Total of 145 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Oxford Road, Former Territorial Army Centre, Aylesbury Vale. Total of 100 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Upton, Northampton, Site D2. Total of 165 homes, of which 36 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Allerton Bywater Millennium Community, Leeds, Yorkshire. Total of 150 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable.

School Road, Hastings. Total of 12 homes, with affordable housing level to be determined.

Horns Cross, Stone, Dartford. Total of 37 homes, of which 11 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Rowan High School site, Merton, London. Total of 180 homes, of which 54 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Renny Lodge Hospital, London Road, Newport Pagnell, Bucks. Total of 60 homes, of which 20 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Park Prewett Hospital, Kingsclere Road, Basingstoke. Total of 137 homes, of which 47 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Linton Hospital site, Maidstone. Total of 123 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with fire authorities about the provision of fire alarms in *(a)* park home properties, *(b)* residential homes and *(c)* homes in multiple occupation; and if he will make a statement. [42907]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There has been wide ranging consultation with relevant stakeholders, including fire and rescue authorities, on fire safety in park homes, residential care homes, and houses in multiple occupation. Formal consultation has taken place on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System which covers fire hazards in all dwellings, and requirements on fire safety in licensed houses in multiple occupation under the Housing Act 2004. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also consulted extensively on the Fire Safety Order 2005 and forthcoming guidance, which covers the common areas in which park homes are located, residential care homes, and the common parts of houses in multiple occupation. There has been similar consultation on the proposed revision to Approved Document B (Fire Safety) to the Building Regulations which covers all new buildings and material alterations to existing buildings.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42883]

Jim Fitzpatrick: With the exception of the Fire Experimental Unit Still-Air Testing Facility at Little Rissington, where such a system would be inappropriate, all of the premises occupied by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are fitted with audible fire alarms.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Fuel Storage Depots

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what guidelines exist for the siting of fuel storage depots near residential areas; [42789]

(2) what the minimum distance required is between fuel storage depots and housing; [42790]

(3) which Government agency is responsible for ensuring that fuel storage depots are operated and maintained safely. [42791]

Yvette Cooper: Decisions on proposals for development are taken by a local planning authority in accordance with its development plan. Essentially, this comprises the regional spatial strategy prepared by the regional planning body and local development documents prepared by the local planning authority.

The Town and Country Planning (Regional Planning) (England) Regulations 2004 (SI No 2203) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (SI No 2204) specify the form and content of regional spatial strategies and development plan documents. These make clear that in preparing their plans the planning bodies are required to have regard to the objectives of preventing major accidents and of limiting the consequences of such accidents; and to have regard to the need, in the long term, to maintain appropriate distances between establishments where dangerous substances are present and residential areas.

Guidance issued in Planning Policy Statement 12 on Local Development Frameworks makes clear that, in preparing or reviewing local development documents, local planning authorities need to ensure that they include a policy or policies relating to the location of establishments where hazardous substances are used or stored, and to the development of land within the vicinity of establishments where hazardous substances are present.

Article 10 of The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 requires local planning authorities to consult with the Health and Safety Executive when residential development is proposed within an area that has been notified to the local planning authority by the Health and Safety Executive because of the presence of hazardous substances within the vicinity. They must also consult with the Health and Safety Executive about development involving the siting of new establishments where hazardous substances will be present.

There is no specified minimum distance that has to be maintained between a fuel storage depot and housing. The decision on whether any proposed development should be permitted to take place within the vicinity of a fuel storage depot is a matter for the local planning authority, taking advice from the Health and Safety Executive on the suitability of the development with regard to the potential off-site risk so that those risks can be given due weight when balanced against other relevant planning considerations.

Primary responsibility for the safe operation and maintenance of fuel storage depots rests with those who operate the site. The relevant regulatory agency for such operators and sites will depend on the quantity of fuel stored. The Health and Safety and the relevant Environment Agency together form a joint competent authority for such regulation at large scale fuel storage depots within the scope of the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations 1999. For smaller sites not covered by COMAH, Health and Safety Executive is the relevant regulator.

High Hedges

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he has issued on the circumstances in which *(a)* Leyland cypress and *(b)* other evergreen species may be reduced by more than one-third under high hedges legislation; and if he will make a statement. [42774]

Yvette Cooper: The circumstances in which Leyland cypress and other evergreen species may be reduced by more than one-third will vary according to species, and also depends on the age and health of the trees or shrubs in question and how they have been maintained in the past. As a result, the guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to the high hedges legislation advises local authorities to obtain arboricultural advice when specifying action to be taken in relation to the hedge in order to remedy any adverse effect that it is causing.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will issue guidance to local authorities to clarify *(a)* how far a hedge can be reduced before it is destroyed and *(b)* that the example of reducing a hedge by one-third is not a stipulation that only one-third of a hedge can safely be trimmed. [42776]

Yvette Cooper: Guidance on how far a hedge can be reduced before it is destroyed is available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website under "Frequently Asked Questions on High Hedges" at: www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1127837#P155_26271. It indicates these are matters of professional judgment, to be made in the light of the particular circumstances.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will shortly be expanding the "Frequently Asked Questions on High Hedges" to clarify that the guidance document "High Hedges Complaints: Prevention and Cure" does not stipulate that only one-third of a hedge can be safely trimmed.

Housing

Tim Farron: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes have been provided by housing associations in Cumbria in each year since 1997. [42394]

Yvette Cooper: The number of affordable housing units completed in Cumbria by housing associations funded through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme for each year since 1997 are shown as follows:

	Units
1997–98	143
1998–99	251
1999–2000	207
2000–01	193
2001–02	116
2002–03	137
2003–04	114
2004–05	107

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what items of information about property will be contained in a home condition report. [42615]

Yvette Cooper: The home condition report is an objective report on the physical condition of a property, including an energy performance certificate complying with the European Union (EU) Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings. It is one of the documents required to be provided in a home information pack, which also contains local search information, including whether or not the property is on the local authority's contaminated land register. The pack will also contain legal information about the property, such as evidence of title and leasehold information, and forms relating to contents and terms of sale.

The purpose of the home condition report is to provide the buyer, seller and mortgage lender with reliable information about the condition and energy performance of a home.

A home condition report must comply with requirements to be set out in regulations. It is intended that a home condition report will contain the home inspector's record of the following information about a property, as set out in the draft Home Information Pack Regulations, published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website:

- The property address, the year of construction (or an estimate), and the number of storeys and rooms in the property.
- The provision of parking.
- The utility services connected to the property, and the condition of visible parts of these.
- For flats/maisonettes, the number of storeys and other flats within the building, whether there is a lift, and the condition of the building and common areas.
- Health and safety risks identified.
- The condition of the outside and inside parts of the property and any outbuildings.
- The energy performance of the property.
- Whether there were any parts of the property not accessible for inspection.

The draft regulations also provide that the home condition report must not include anything which would identify or express an opinion on an individual, or any information about security features of a property.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which organisations will have access to the register of home condition reports. [42616]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Act 2004 requires that access to the information stored in the register of home condition reports is controlled by regulations. The Government is currently considering which organisations and/or individuals should be given access to the information held in the home condition report register, and will take account of the views of stakeholders before making a final decision.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many house repossessions were made in each of the last five years in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* Kingston and Surbiton. [43190]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth (Mr. Jenkins) on 20 January 2006.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the change will be in the amount charged in rent under the housing subsidy determinations for 2006–07; and how much of this will be retained by the Government. [40348]

Yvette Cooper: Rent setting is a matter for individual landlords.

Actual rents are forecast to rise by an average 4.7 per cent. in England, with the average for any individual authority constrained by a 5 per cent. cap.

Rental income is not retained by the Government.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2836W, on mobile phone masts, if he will place in the Library the figures for the number of communication stations registered for business rates in England in each local authority area in the most recent year for which figures are available. [42602]

Mr. Woolas: A table with the break down, of the 20,930 hereditaments shown in the Rating List at 31 March 2005 has been made available in the Library of the House.

Official Residences (Council Tax)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 782–3W, on official residences (council tax), whether the sum he has repaid for outstanding council tax includes interest on the money owed; and if he will make a statement. [44067]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The payments that my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is making to Westminster City Council are entirely voluntary and he has no legal obligation to make them. There is no need for my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister to add interest to them.

Ordnance Survey

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many aerial photographs Ordnance Survey *(a)* took and *(b)* purchased from external suppliers in each of the last five years. [42655]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of aerial photographs captured by Ordnance Survey and purchased from external suppliers in each of the last five financial years is as follows.

	Ordnance survey	*External suppliers*
2001–02	29,420	0
2002–03	39,842	72,591
2003–04	54,678	103,616
2004–05	30,023	45,297
2005–06 to date	40,224	108,619

Overcrowding

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to consult on new standards for overcrowding in housing. [42569]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is still considering options for reviewing the statutory standards and will take a decision on the timing of consultation as soon as possible.

Overhead Power Lines (Kent)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* cost and *(b)* feasibility of undergrounding overhead power lines in Kent Thameside as part of the on-going regeneration of the area. [42201]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is taking forward its programme of regeneration with local partners, including private developers. To date, this issue has not emerged as a major barrier to regenerating the area. Therefore, there is no current feasibility work under way looking at undergrounding overhead power lines in North Kent.

Developers should work with local authorities and other relevant bodies at an early stage in the planning process to find sustainable and, where appropriate, innovative solutions towards creating positive and high quality environments.

Park Homes

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many park homes are registered in *(a)* Band A, *(b)* Band B, *(c)* Band C, *(d)* Band D, *(e)* Band E, *(f)* Band F, *(g)* Band G and *(h)* Band H for council tax purposes. [43182]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of park homes in England in each council tax band is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Council tax in Wales is the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Private Garden Development

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* total area of privately-owned gardens in each London borough that has been developed in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [42951]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Land Use Change Statistics record the amounts of residential land developed but do not record whether it was privately owned or how much of the land was occupied by any garden.

Repossessions

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many repossessions were made in each of the last 10 years in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency. [43463]

Yvette Cooper: Information on mortgage possessions is only available for the United Kingdom as a whole and is collected by the Council of Mortgage Lenders. The figures in the table include properties that are surrendered voluntarily.

	Mortgages at end of period	*Properties taken into possession*	
	Number	*Number*	*% all loans*
1995	10,521,000	49,410	0.47
1996	10,637,000	42,560	0.40
1997	10,738,000	32,770	0.31
1998	10,821,000	33,870	0.31
1999	10,982,000	29,990	0.27
2000	11,173,000	22,870	0.20
2001	11,247,000	18,280	0.16
2002	11,364,000	11,970	0.11
2003	11,452,000	7,830	0.07
2004	11,512,000	6,230	0.05
2005 January-June	11,550,000	4,640	0.04

Source:
Council of Mortgage Lenders

Right To Buy (Houghton and Washington)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of the council housing stock of *(a)* houses and *(b)* flats has been sold under the Right to Buy scheme in Houghton and Washington East constituency since 1980. [42445]

Yvette Cooper: Information is not collected for the Houghton and Washington East constituency. The following relates to Sunderland city council.

An estimated 30 per cent. of the housing stock formerly owned by Sunderland city council was sold through the Right to Buy scheme between the introduction of the scheme in 1980 and the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of the stock to Sunderland Housing Group in 2000–01.

Separate information on the number of flats sold through the Right to Buy scheme is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Right to Buy (Kent)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many right-to-buy completions there were in *(a)* Gravesham and *(b)* Kent in each year since 1996–97. [43278]

Yvette Cooper: The number of Right to Buy sales in Gravesham and Kent can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id:=1156373

Right to Buy (Lincolnshire)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council homes in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire were sold under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since its introduction; and what the average sale price was in each of those years. [42971]

Yvette Cooper: The number of council homes sold under the Right to Buy scheme and the average sale price per dwelling, as reported by North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire for each available financial year is tabulated as follows.

Due to boundary changes it is not possible to supply data for years prior to those shown.

Financial year	*Number of Right to Buy sales*	*Average price net of discount (£)*
North East Lincolnshire UA		
1996–97	48	15,813
1997–98	79	16,114
1998–99	72	16,014
1999–2000	90	16,189
2000–01	91	16,231
2001–02	86	15,291
2002–03	170	16,965
2003–04	289	20,931
2004–05	n/a	n/a
North Lincolnshire UA		
1996–97	n/a	n/a
1997–98	n/a	n/a
1998–99	143	16,077
1999–2000	150	16,313
2000–01	188	16,723
2001–02	186	17,247
2002–03	268	18,403
2003–04	263	25,293
2004–05	171	36,953

n/a = not available
Source:
P1AB returns from local authority to ODPM

Vacant Domestic Properties

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many vacant domestic properties there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency in each of the last five years, broken down by tenure. [43464]

Yvette Cooper: The following table contains the total number of vacant dwellings in England and in Tamworth, broken down by tenure for 2000 to 2004. This provides the latest available data:

	These figures include dwellings which have been empty for fewer than six months, some of which for less than 1 month				
	Local authority	*Registered social landlords*	*"Other" public sector*	*Private sector[2] (non-RSL)*	*Total[1]*
Count date	1 April	31 March	1 April	[2]—	April/November
England					
2000	87,200	37,500	12,600	623,200	760,500
2001	80,300	39,300	10,900	622,600	753,100
2002	78,100	39,700	9,000	631,200	758,100
2003	62,600	44,900	9,100	633,300	750,000
2004	57,500	43,300	7,400	608,600	716,800
Tamworth					
2000	37	11	0	522	570
2001	48	11	0	561	620
2002	41	16	0	423	480
2003	50	7	0	455	512
2004	453	17	0	29	499

[1] For the total tenure dwellings, Council Tax Base 1 Supplement CTB1(S) return is used. It is regarded as the most reliable source but it does not have the tenure breakdown. It has been collected from 2000 but is considered to be only reliable from 2002 onwards. Hence HSSA is used for 2000 and 2001 figures. CTB1(S) data are for a specified date in November, which is different from both the HSSA (1 April) and RSR (31 March). The total figure may not equal to the sum of individual tenures' figures if different sources were used or rounding has been applied. CTB1(S) data for 2005 are not yet available.

[2] For the private sector tenure figures, before 2002, 1 April figures from HSSA are used. For the years 2002 through to 2004, to obtain the number of private sector (non RSLs) vacant dwellings LA, RSL and "Other public sector" figures were subtracted from the total vacant dwellings figure from the council tax data. This residual method is considered to be better than the less reliable private sector figure supplied in the HSSA return. (In order to adopt the residual method, CTBl's November figure has been taken to represent the data at 1 April. This assumes that the effect caused by these different snap-shot dates is insignificant. This is considered reasonable as properties become vacant and re-occupied and vice versa all the time i.e. there is a balancing effect. Hence over such a small period of time there should be minimal difference in the overall numbers between the two dates. The minute difference between 1 April and 31 March (from RSR) can also simply be ignored.)

From April local authorities will have new powers to bring empty properties back into use.

Sources:

Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return for LA and 'Other' public sector tenures

Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR) for RSL tenure

Council Tax Base 1 (CTB1) return for the total tenure figures (see footnote 1)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many vacant domestic properties there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Houghton and Washington East constituency in each of the last five years, broken down by tenure. [42444]

Yvette Cooper: Figures on vacant dwellings at constituency level are not held centrally, but the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does hold relevant local authority level figures.

The following table contains the total number of vacant dwellings in England and in Sunderland, broken down by tenure for 2000 to 2004. This provides the latest available data:

	Local authority	*Registered social landlords*	*"Other" public sector*	*Private sector[1] (non-RSL)*	*Total[2]*
Count date	1 April	31 March	1 April	[1]—	April/November
England					
2000	87,200	37,500	12,600	623,200	760,500
2001	80,300	39,300	10,900	622,600	753,100
2002	78,100	39,700	9,000	631,200	758,100
2003	62,600	44,900	9,100	633,300	750,000
2004	57,500	43,300	7,400	608,600	716,800
Sunderland					
2000	1,102	116	0	2,562	3,780
2001	0	[3]1,009	0	3,925	4,934
2002	0	995	0	2,633	3,628
2003	0	1,198	0	2,942	4,140
2004	0	1,432	0	2,682	4,114

[1] For the private sector tenure figures, before 2002, 1 April figures from HSSA are used. For the years 2002 through to 2004, to obtain the number of private sector (non-RSLs) vacant dwellings LA, RSL and "Other public sector" figures were subtracted from the total vacant dwellings figure from the council tax data. This residual method is considered to be better than the less reliable private sector figure supplied in the HSSA return. (In order to adopt the residual method, CTBl's November figure has been taken to represent the data at 1 April. This assumes that the effect caused by these different snap-shot dates is insignificant. This is considered reasonable as properties become vacant and re-occupied and vice versa all the time i.e. there is a balancing effect. Hence over such a small period of time there should be minimal difference in the overall numbers between the two dates. The minute difference between 1 April and 31 March (from RSR) can also simply be ignored.)

[2] For the total tenure dwellings, Council Tax Base 1 Supplement CTB1(S)) return is used. It is regarded as the most reliable source but it does not have the tenure breakdown. It has been collected from 2000 but is considered to be reliable only from 2002 onwards. Hence HSSA is used for 2000 and 2001 figures. CTB1(S) data are for a specified date in November, which is different from both the HSSA (1 April) and RSR (31 March). The total figure may not equal to the sum of individual tenures' figures if different sources were used or rounding has been applied. CTB1(S) data for 2005 are not yet available.
[3] This figure is based on HSSA return because the reported RSR value missed out the transferred stock from LA to RSL.
Notes:
1. These figures include dwellings which have been empty for fewer than six months, some of which for less than one month.
2. Figures as at 1 April unless otherwise stated.
Sources:
Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return for LA and "Other" public sector tenures.
Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR) for RSL tenure.
Council Tax Base 1 (CTB1) return for the total tenure figures (see footnote 2).

From April, local authorities will have new powers to bring empty properties back into use.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many residential properties the Valuation Office Agency has inspected in each year since 1997 to determine whether the property is used in whole or part for business purposes. [42604]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what geographical information system *(a)* products, *(b)* data and *(c)* software the Valuation Office Agency has obtained in the last five years; and if he will list the suppliers. [42619]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency does not have a Geographic Information System. The Valuation Office Agency does use digital mapping systems (Master Map and Land Line) provided by Ordnance Survey.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Valuation Office Agency will have access to *(a)* the National Register of Social Housing and *(b)* information held in home information packs in carrying out its work. [42956]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has had access to data held in the National Register of Social Housing.

No decisions have yet been taken on which, if any, organisations should be given access to the information held in home information packs. The Government intend to consider the views of stakeholders before deciding whether third parties, including other Government Departments and agencies, should have access to this information.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to Council Tax Information Letter 1–2005, if he will place in the Library a copy of the letter from the Valuation Office Agency sent to local authorities in relation to the sharing of planning information. [43032]

Mr. Woolas: The letter referred to was a draft sent by the Valuation Office Agency's Chief Executive's Office to listing officers around the country for their use where appropriate, seeking cooperation in ensuring property attribute data was kept up to date. Whether or not this was sent to local authorities in their area was a decision taken by individual listing officers. A copy of the draft has been made available in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what types of data the Valuation Office Agency *(a)* supplies, *(b)* makes available and *(c)* sells to the public. [43034]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency is statutorily required to publish the valuation lists for council tax and the rating lists for non-domestic rating. The lists are made available in a variety of formats including the Agency's website at: www.voa.gov.uk and no charge are made for these.

Alternative formats are available—for which a charge is made—for compilations of the published entries in the non-domestic rating lists for England and Wales and the summary valuations supporting the valuations in those lists. No equivalent is available for the council tax lists.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the level of poppy cultivation was in Afghanistan in 2005; and what the latest estimate is for 2006. [42627]

Dr. Howells: The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) confirmed the poppy cultivation figures for 2004–05 from their annual survey in November 2005. UNODC reported a 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 (4,200 metric tonnes) to 104,000 hectares in 2004–05 (4,100 metric tonnes). Although cultivation decreased significantly, the rise in yield in 2004–05 was due to good weather and an absence of crop disease. These overall percentages, however, mask significant variations between provinces. For example, Nangarhar (-96 per cent.), Badakshan (-53 per cent.) and Helmand (-10 per cent.) saw the most significant decreases. But other provinces, such as Balkh and Farah, saw increases. The US Office of National Drug Control policy also publicly released its cultivation figures in November, which match those of UNODC

It seems likely that cultivation may increase again this year—initial reports suggest that farmers in some provinces are threatening to return to cultivation. Our goal is to ensure that the downward trend in cultivation is maintained in the long-term. We are working hard with the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and other international partners to ensure the GoA is able to deliver on this goal. An early indication of this year's

figures will be reflected in the UNODC's Rapid Assessment Survey, which will be published in the next few weeks.

Consular Procedures

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what the standard procedure followed by his Department's consular staff is in dealing with deaths of British nationals abroad; [43121]

(2) whether a date has been set for the introduction of a system of collecting detailed information on deaths of British nationals abroad; [43122]

(3) what steps are taken when consular guidelines for dealing with British nationals in difficulty abroad are not followed; [43123]

(4) what procedures are followed by consular staff when a British national is murdered abroad. [43124]

Dr. Howells: Consular staff deal with some 4,000 deaths of British nationals overseas each year. Not all such deaths abroad are reported to the local British mission. But when a death is reported, and their next of kin (NoK) is not present, we will ask the UK police to inform them. If they are not in the UK, we will ask our consular staff in the country where they are to perform this duty. In exceptional circumstances, we may inform the NoK by telephone. Following initial notification, consular staff in London will normally write to the NoK in the UK with further information on how deaths are dealt with in the country concerned and providing a point of contact in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

Consular staff in London can pass on to our staff overseas the NoK's wishes about dealing with the body. They will do their best to ensure that these are carried out. Responsibility for the treatment of bodies, including storage, post mortems and removal of organs, remains with the local authorities and practices may differ from the UK. Where this is the case, consular staff will inform the NoK.

Consular staff can advise on the cost of local burial or cremation, including providing a list of local funeral directors, or the transport of the body and personal property back to the UK. They can help transfer money from friends and relatives in the UK to pay any necessary costs. They cannot pay any burial, cremation or repatriation expenses or settle any debts.

Where there is evidence of suspicious circumstances, consular staff can suggest to the NoK the best way to raise concerns with the local authorities. However, they cannot investigate deaths themselves. Consular staff will monitor the progress of investigations and, where applicable, any resulting court case. Consular staff can provide a list of lawyers if the NoK wish to appoint one to look after their interests in court.

Consular staff in London are available to meet family representatives, and will maintain contact and inform them if they are told of any new developments by the investigating authorities.

From April 2006, a new consular database called Compass will be able to provide statistics of serious assistance casework. It breaks down causes of death into the following categories: accidental, execution, murder, natural and suicide.

Consular staff aim to follow the guidelines at all times within the constraints of local conditions. Where the guidelines have not been followed, without a good operational reason, and problems arise as a result, consular staff will aim to resolve them as quickly and effectively as possible. Consular Directorate takes all complaints very seriously and seeks feedback to ensure consular services are the best they can be.

Cuba

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the treatment of *(a)* dissidents and *(b)* pro-democracy campaigners in Cuba. [42437]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We regularly express our concern to the Cuban authorities about the treatment of dissidents and pro-democracy campaigners in Cuba. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister responsible for the Caribbean, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, raised this with the Cuban ambassador at the All Party Parliamentary Group Cuba meeting on 8 November 2005. During our EU presidency, we issued a number of statements expressing our concern at the Cuban authorities' harsh treatment of the opposition.

According to the main non-official Cuban human rights organisation, there are currently 333 political prisoners in Cuba. We consider the imprisonment of such figures to be a violation of articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantee the right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. We carefully monitor the situation of a number of political prisoners and the UK, along with EU partners, continues to urge the Cuban Government to release all political prisoners.

We are also increasingly concerned by a trend towards organised public attacks on the opposition and on the families of political prisoners. We continue to monitor this situation closely.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the prospects for the restoration of democracy in Cuba. [42440]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: UK and EU policy is to encourage a process of peaceful transition to pluralist democracy in Cuba as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. As part of this policy we maintain a dialogue with pro-democracy campaigners in Cuba, as well as with members of the current regime.

In December we invited Oswaldo Payá, a leading civil society figure, to speak at the EU-non-governmental organisations forum on 'Freedom of Expression'. He is the author of a citizens' petition calling for greater fundamental freedoms and the holding of free and fair democratic elections in Cuba. Unfortunately, the Cuban Government refused to grant him permission to travel to the UK. The fact that over 25,000 people

have already signed the citizens' petition, despite considerable state intimidation and lack of access to media, suggests that popular support for the restoration of democracy in Cuba is considerable.

European Union (Classified Documentation)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the procedure for vetting personnel employed by the European Union with access to classified documentation released from the UK. [43424]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Candidates for European Union positions are required to complete a standard vetting form that is submitted to the competent agency of the applicant's member state. That agency then carries out the vetting process. The relevant EU institution is then informed of the outcome of the vetting.

Responsibility for vetting UK nationals for positions within the European Union institutions rests with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what training his Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41277]

Dr. Howells: Entry Clearance Officers (ECOs) who work on the front desk undertake a three-week induction course, which includes a half-day at the National Documentation Forgery Unit for an overview of forgery detection techniques. ECOs who have previously worked for the Home Office as Immigration Officers (IOs) attend a shorter course, as they already have a basic forgery detection background. Once ECOs arrive at the overseas Visa Section, further forgery and fraud detection training is conducted on an ad hoc basis, either by an Airline Liaison Officer, a local visa forgery specialist or by a Risk Assessment Unit as applicable. Administrative staff provide support such as undertaking employment, bank and documentation checks. Some checks may require local language skills, which many of our administrative staff are able to offer. They do not, however, have any decision-making powers though they do, nevertheless, receive local training as appropriate.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office staff who work in consular sections abroad also deal with identity documentation. Those who have responsibility for issuing passports overseas are required to undertake a consular course, which includes a specific session, within the passport and nationality section, on detecting fraud. In posts where we are aware that applicants may try to obtain passports fraudulently, ad hoc, in-house, 'knowledge-sharing' sessions take place, which may also involve UKvisas and assistance from the local authorities.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2485–86W, on Israel, (1) why he has no plans to raise the Government's concern about the damage caused by Israeli Defence Force low-flying aircraft in the Occupied Territories with the United Nations; and what the outcome was when the ambassador in Tel Aviv *raised this issue with the Israeli Defence Force Chief of* General Staff on 8 December 2003; [40618]

(2) why he does not plan to raise with the UN his concerns regarding the damage caused by Israeli low-flying aircraft in Gaza. [42757]

Dr. Howells: Our voting record at the United Nations will continue to reflect our concerns about the damage caused by low-flying aircraft over Gaza. The United Nations are fully aware of our concerns relating to this issue. The British ambassador to the United Nations, Sir Emyr Jones-Parry, will raise this at his next monthly statement at the United Nations Security Council open consultations.

During the ambassador's meeting with the Israel Defence Force Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Halutz, on 8 December 2005, they discussed low-flying aircraft over Gaza. The ambassador expressed our concerns over these actions. Lt. Gen. Halutz said that these actions would continue to take place but that they had taken into consideration the effect that the low-flying aircraft is having on the Palestinian population.

Syria

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he was first informed of the information disclosed by Mr. Paul Bremer that President Assad of Syria encouraged Grand Ayatollah Ail al-Sistani to wage war on United States and United Kingdom forces; and what action he took. [42473]

Dr. Howells: It is the policy of the Government not to comment on the origin of information of this kind.

Uzbekistan

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the British ambassador to Tashkent on *(a)* human rights and *(b)* the treatment of political prisoners in Uzbekistan. [43603]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The British ambassador to Tashkent visited the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in December for meetings with officials on the political situation in Uzbekistan. In addition, an FCO official visited the country in December, including Andizhan.

Throughout 2005, the embassy has provided regular reports on human rights issues, including Andizhan-related trials, the detention of opposition figures and restrictions on non-governmental organisations. We continue to be concerned about Uzbekistan's human rights record and, together with the EU presidency and our other partners, have raised these concerns with the Uzbek authorities.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 23 January 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Byways

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many byways claims have been made by *(a)* the Trail Riders Federation, *(b)* motorway groups and *(c)* the Land Access and Recreation Association since December 2003. [43428]

Jim Knight: We do not have the particular data that you specify. This information is held by local highway authorities and could be gathered only at a disproportionate cost. I will write to you with information on the number of applications for byways open to all traffic.

Coastal Defence (Nuclear Power Plants)

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what coastal defence work *(a)* has recently been, *(b)* is being and *(c)* is planned to be undertaken as a result of the proximity of nuclear power plants. [40258]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The following coastal defence work is taking place, or is proposed, in the proximity of nuclear power plants:

At Berkeley, Gloucestershire, a proposed sea wall repair will provide erosion protection for 25 years.

At Dungeness, Kent, a beach feeding programme is routinely undertaken to protect the foreshore and is likely to be maintained until at least 2018 (when generation at Dungeness B is expected to end). Long-term management options for the area adjacent to the power stations is under consideration.

At Hartlepool, a proposal to extend a marine recycling facility navigation channel may require that the coastal defences of the power station be reinforced. Discussions with the developer are under way.

At Sizewell B, Suffolk, the frontage of the adjacent Minsmere Bird Reserve is not secure and long-term management options are being considered.

Dairy Processing

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the competitive position of the dairy processing industry in each EU member state. [41868]

Jim Knight: My noble Friend, the Lord Bach, announced in September 2005 that the Dairy Supply Chain Forum would fund a study benchmarking the technical efficiency of our farmers and of our processing plants against a number of their EU and international counterparts. The work is due to start shortly.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent by her Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41253]

Jim Knight: DEFRA came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally, the total value of expenditure by core-DEFRA on catering contracts in financial year 2004–05 was £281,413; on hospitality was £370,544; and on conference facilities was £1,105,762. The expenditure figures for catering contracts, hospitality and conference facilities for the first six months of financial year 2005–06 are £494,864, £208,394 and £354,162 respectively. The specific costs of working breakfasts or lunches, official entertainment and refreshments at meetings or conferences could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with the principles set out in Government Accounting.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what training her Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41410]

Jim Knight: Guidance on identity verification is available to staff via our intranet. The Department carries out identity checks on all recruits including casuals, consultants and agency temps and also on contractors working in our London buildings. Training is given to staff carrying out these identity checks.

National Parks

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been allocated to each national park for each year since 1997. [43705]

Jim Knight: Defra has provided the following National Park Grants (figures prior to 2000–01 are estimates):

Authority	£
Broads Authority	
1996–97	2,133,333
1997–98	2,070,667
1998–99	2,000,000
1999–2000	2,224,000
2000–01	2,212,000
2001–02	2,411,261
2002–03	2,801,437
2003–04	3,196,877
2004–05	3,065,680
2005–06	3,933,182
Dartmoor National Park Authority	
1996–97	2,433,333
1997–98	2,789,333
1998–99	2,589,333
1999–2000	2,858,667
2000–01	2,863,000
2001–02	3,127,480
2002–03	3,721,705
2003–04	4,177,323
2004–05	3,965,325
2005–06	4,308,058

Authority	£
Exmoor National Park Authority	
1996–97	2,032,000
1997–98	2,224,000
1998–99	2,142,667
1999–2000	2,377,333
2000–01	2,369,000
2001–02	2,582,842
2002–03	3,059,763
2003–04	3,518,950
2004–05	3,290,756
2005–06	3,616,422
Lake District National Park Authority	
1996–97	3,700,000
1997–98	3,897,333
1998–99	3,781,333
1999–2000	4,144,000
2000–01	4,180,000
2001–02	4,640,000
2002–03	5,460,856
2003–04	6,107,102
2004–05	6,050,672
2005–06	6,290,679
New Forest National Park Authority[1]	
2005–06	3,517,297
Northumberland National Park Authority	
1996–97	1,448,000
1997–98	1,732,000
1998–99	1,578,667
1999–2000	1,769,333
2000–01	1,745,000
2001–02	1,928,560
2002–03	2,419,922
2003–04	2,882,555
2004–05	2,702,191
2005–06	3,010,044
North York Moors National Park Authority	
1996–97	2,706,667
1997–98	2,906,667
1998–99	2,905,333
1999–2000	3,380,000
2000–01	3,212,000
2001–02	3,565,239
2002–03	4,224,936
2003–04	4,677,842
2004–05	4,678,157
2005–06	4,933,864
Peak District National Park Authority	
1996–97	5,294,667
1997–98	5,414,667
1998–99	5,413,333
1999–2000	5,904,000
2000–01	5,984,000
2001–02	6,223,073
2002–03	6,721,617
2003–04	7,361,069
2004–05	7,422,471
2005–06	7,542,550
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	
1996–97	2,605,333
1997–98	2,805,333
1998–99	2,912,000
1999–2000	3,092,000
2000–01	3,101,000
2001–02	3,442,378
2002–03	[2]4,583,616
2003–04	[2]5,237,283
2004–05	4,580,902
2005–06	4,906,870

[1] National Park created 1 March 2005.

[2] Includes £500,000 capital grant towards new office accommodation.

School Milk

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the proposed withdrawal of the subsidy for the provision of milk in nursery and primary schools. [42041]

Jim Knight: The evaluation of the national top-up to the EU school milk subsidy scheme in England was published on 4 January 2006. The report contained a number of recommendations which included ending the top-up and spending the £1.5 million released as a result on other programmes to promote milk consumption by young people. The Government have, however, decided that the subsidy scheme has a valuable role to play and should remain unchanged.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* she has had and *(b)* officials within her Department have had with (i) representatives from Milk for Schools, (ii) local education authorities, (iii) headteachers and (iv) Dairy UK about the proposed withdrawal of subsidy for the provision of milk in nursery and primary schools. [42042]

Jim Knight: Ministers and officials from the Department and its agencies are in regular contact with stakeholders in the dairy sector, and other interested parties, on a range of issues. We have no plans to change the school milk subsidy scheme.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the free milk to schools scheme. [43137]

Jim Knight: An evaluation of the national top-up to the EU school milk subsidy scheme in England was published on 4 January. The report contained a number of recommendations which included ending the top-up and spending the £1.5 million released as a result on other programmes to promote milk consumption by young people. The Government have, however, decided that the subsidy scheme has a valuable role to play and should remain unchanged.

Decisions on the implementation of the EU school milk subsidy scheme and the national top-up scheme in Wales are the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly Government.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Solicitor-General how many people were employed by the Crown Prosecution Service on *(a)* 1 January 1997 and *(b)* 1 January 2005. [41184]

The Solicitor-General: The number of people who were employed by the Crown Prosecution Service on *(a)* 1 January 1997 and *(b)* 1 January 2005 are as follows.

Staff in post FTE (full-time equivalent)

	Number
1 January 1997	5,853
1 January 2005	8,056

The increase in staff reflects additional responsibilities given to the CPS through, for example, the introduction of the charging programme, provision of better support to victims and witnesses and more advocacy undertaken by CPS prosecutors, as well as the demands of other initiatives to improve the effectiveness of the CPS.

Suspicious Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what account the Crown Prosecution Service takes of the judgment of a coroner's inquest in deciding whether to bring charges in the case of a suspicious death where no charges have previously been made; and if he will make a statement. [44399]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will decide whether or not to prosecute in accordance with the principles set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors: it will prosecute cases when there is a realistic prospect of conviction and it is in the public interest to do so. The CPS will have regard to the verdict of a coroner's court and will take into consideration evidence that emerges at a coroner's inquest which affects the decision whether or not to bring a prosecution. Each case will be considered on its own particular facts.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Disclosure of Documents

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners for what reasons the Commissioners will not disclose the documents relating to claims against them for damages to the housing units in Ufford street, Mitre road and Webber street without a court order. [43411]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Commissioners have been notified, by solicitors acting for a number of residents, of potential claims against them for damages arising from the improvements carried out by the Commissioners to premises in Ufford street, Mitre road and Webber street. This matter is the subject of potential litigation and it is therefore inappropriate for the Commissioners to make disclosure of documents outside the legal process. The Commissioners would not rule out making disclosure without a court order and without any admission of liability if the solicitors for the residents properly formulate their claims.

PRIME MINISTER

"A Day in the Life"

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Prime Minister whether the costs of A Day in the Life were met from Labour party or from Government funds. [44273]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 742W.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Prime Minister whether his office sought guidance from *(a)* the Cabinet Secretary and *(b)* others as to whether A Day in the Life complied with (i) the Ministerial Code of Conduct and (ii) Government Communications Network guidance. [44274]

The Prime Minister: The film complies with Government Communications guidance, copies of which are available at http: //www.comms.gov.uk/guidance/propriety/default.htm.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what proportion of the premises occupied by his office is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42874]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1414W.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Prime Minister what the annual expenditure on vehicles by his office has been in each of the last three years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40267]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Diary Commitments

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his diary commitments for *(a)* Monday 2 January and *(b)* Tuesday 3 January. [44275]

The Prime Minister: As my office made public at the time, I was on a short holiday over the Christmas recess. On Tuesday 3 January I met with ministerial colleagues and others.

Political Honours

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister why he abolished the political honours scrutiny committee. [44550]

The Prime Minister: I refer my right hon. Friend to recommendation 10 of "Reform of the Honours System" (cm 6479). Copies are available in the Libraries of the House.

Working Hours

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister what EU regulations govern his working hours; what opt outs exist to provide for him to surpass working hour

regulations; what court cases are currently before the European courts reviewing the legality of these opt outs; and if he will make a statement. [43426]

The Prime Minister: Holders of political offices in the UK are not defined as "workers" under the terms of European working time legislation, and are therefore not subject to the working time limits: as such, they do not need to opt out.

DEFENCE

Security

10. **Mr. Randall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the security situation in the Balkans. [44077]

Mr. Ingram: The security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains stable; the EU led operation continues to deter, to reassure and to provide a safe and secure environment. In Kosovo the security situation remains stable following the commencement of the final status process; NATO's Kosovo Force continues to provide a safe and secure environment.

Visits (RAF Cosford)

11. **Rob Marris:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how often he has visited RAF Cosford to assess training facilities during the last 12 months. [44078]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend the former Secretary of State for Defence, Geoff Hoon, was the last Defence Minister to visit the Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering at Cosford, on 24 February 2005.

Security (Afghanistan)

12. **Mr. Simon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the security situation in Afghanistan. [44079]

John Reid: The international community, including the UK, is in Afghanistan: to support the Government of Afghanistan as it extends its authority across the entire country; to facilitate reconstruction and development; to improve security; and to counter the narcotics trade. We have made progress on all these things but much remains for us to do. The security situation remains fragile, which is why we remain committed to the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force across Afghanistan.

Veterans Awareness Week

13. **Laura Moffatt:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what representations has he received from the ex-service community about the Veterans Awareness Week in July 2005. [44080]

Mr. Touhig: I have received many positive comments from the ex-Service community during and after Veterans Awareness Week, and I am sure hon. Members will agree that the events, which culminated with the parade of standards along the Mall, were truly memorable.

British Infantry

14. **Stephen Hammond:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the adequacy and availability of British infantry to fulfil additional urgent deployments. [44081]

Mr. Ingram: Our plans ensure that we have forces of appropriately high readiness, including the Infantry, in place to meet urgent contingent operations.

Military Equipment (Complaints)

15. **Andrew Rosindell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the complaints by troops concerning military equipment in Iraq and Afghanistan. [44082]

Mr. Ingram: Our troops are among the best in the world at what they do and I am determined that they should continue to receive the equipment they need to carry out the tasks they are given.

In general, our equipment continues to perform well in extremely demanding environments and the number of complaints we receive from troops reflects this. Learning from experience is a vital element in achieving this aim. This is why there is an established system for collating information about the performance of military equipment on operations. This provides valuable feedback from the front line enabling rapid action to be taken to correct defects and to improve reliability.

Iraq

16. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the training the UK is giving to Iraqi security forces. [44083]

John Reid: The United Kingdom is engaged in a number of training initiatives with the Iraqi security forces in Multi National Division (South East) and in Baghdad to enable the Iraqi Government to progressively take on responsibility for security.

18. **Mr. Rob Wilson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many mobilised reservists are deployed in Iraq in each of the three services. [44085]

John Reid: There are currently around 700 reservists deployed in Iraq. This figure comprises: over 650 Army reserves; 28 Royal Air Force reserves; and 20 Royal Marine reserves.

19. **Mr. Ingram:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the location of new regimental headquarters. [44086]

Mr. Ingram: As the hon. Member may be aware, there is an ongoing study into the future of infantry regimental headquarters. It is too early to speculate on what the outcomes of this review will be, but we expect to make a decision in the spring.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2342W, on Iraq, what are the names of the individuals suspected of being responsible for the deaths of the six members of the Royal military police. [44128]

Mr. Ingram: It would be inappropriate to provide this information. The release of such information could prejudice the central criminal court of Iraq's ongoing investigation.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many neurologists were employed by his Department in 2003; and how many were deployed with Operation Telic. [44218]

Mr. Touhig: In 2003, two neurologists were members of our Reserve Forces, one of whom was deployed as part of a neurosurgical team from 1 March to 18 May 2003.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies have been undertaken by his Department of the effects of depleted uranium on *(a)* Coalition forces, *(b)* Iraqi forces and *(c)* civilians in Iraq since May 2003; and if he will make a statement. [44461]

Mr. Ingram: Information on the Ministry of Defence Depleted Uranium research programme was announced to the House on 14 March 2002, *Official Report*, columns 1179–80W. A more detailed description of the research has been published on the Departmental website (http://www.mod.uk/issues/depleted_uranium/index.htm). In addition to this, in June 2003, MOD scientists completed a preliminary technical assessment of a number of Iraqi tanks thought to have been struck by DU rounds. Very low levels of DU were found in the vicinity of and on the tanks. I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given in another place by my noble Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Defence (Lord Bach) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 196WA. Biological monitoring has also been carried out on several hundred UK troops and civilians involved in operations in Iraq. No DU was detected in anyone other than a small number of personnel who received shrapnel injuries in an incident involving friendly fire.

This research is not specifically directed at examining the effects on Iraqis as the health of the Iraqi people is primarily the responsibility of their Government. However, as announced in the House on 29 January 2001, *Official Report*, column 61W, in relation to operations in the Balkans, the UK will provide help and advice to assist the relevant authorities to decide what action, if any, is needed. This also applies to Iraq. As part of this commitment, MOD has provided United Nations Environment Programme with information on its use of DU munitions in Iraq in 2003 and with a report of its monitoring activities in June 2003.

Defence Training

20. **Mr. McFadden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent representations he has received on the future of defence training; and if he will make a statement. (44087)

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review is a complex programme with many stakeholders and interested parties. I have received many representations but as I have said in previous replies, a rigorous evaluation of bid proposals is currently under way.

Landing Ships Dock (Auxiliary) Project

21. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent progress there has been on the Landing Ships Dock (Auxiliary) project; and if he will make a statement. [44088]

Mr. Ingram: The Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) project continues to make progress towards the completion of the four bay class vessels. RFA Mounts Bay, the first ship built by BAE Systems in Glasgow, was accepted off contract on 15 December 2005 and is now undergoing her capability trials in readiness for meeting her in-service date in late 2006. Build and testing continues on the remaining three ships.

Joint Combat Aircraft Project

22. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he last discussed the UK's participation in the joint combat aircraft project with his US counterpart. [44089]

Mr. Ingram: Regular discussions take place at all levels with the US Administration on all aspects of the joint combat aircraft project. Ministry of Defence and other Ministers continue to raise project issues during their discussions with key members of the US Administration.

Future Aircraft Carriers

23. **Mr. Quentin Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the new aircraft carrier programme. [44090]

Mr. Ingram: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced on 14 December, we have taken major steps forward in our plans for the Future Aircraft Carriers.

We have completed the detailed assessment work and have committed to the £300 million demonstration phase.

An innovative shipbuilding strategy has been agreed which is central to our Defence Industrial Strategy with separate "super blocks" built at four yards and final assembly at Rosyth.

This will create and sustain some 10,000 jobs in the United Kingdom.

We are on course to provide the UK armed forces with the largest and most powerful warships ever constructed in the UK, and an expeditionary capability unparalleled outside of the US.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects orders to be placed for the two CVF aircraft carriers; and if he will make a statement. [43632]

Mr. Ingram: Plans to acquire two new future aircraft carriers (CVF) are progressing well following the transition into the Demonstration Phase announced on 14 December 2005. The Demonstration Phase will deliver a mature design, provide more detailed cost definition, reduce risk and produce a contractual framework that will allow a decision to be made to commit to manufacture.

Surplus Equipment

24. **Mr. Quentin Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on controls over the end use of surplus military equipment sold by his Department. [44091]

Mr. Ingram: Surplus equipment that is considered to have potential further use in a military application is subject to inter-departmental clearance procedures on security, political, industrial and technological grounds including consideration of the end use where sold to other Governments. All sales agreements with other Governments make specific provision for Her Majesty's Government to approve any subsequent transfer or sale.

For sales into the commercial market, once title has transferred, there is no restriction placed upon subsequent transfer or sale provided the buyer complies with all the requirements of the export licensing regime should it be decided to export from the UK.

We routinely demilitarise the most sensitive military equipment and dispose as waste or recycle equipment that cannot be sold for further use.

Falklands Campaign (Commemoration)

25. **Mr. Hoyle:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans the Government have to mark the anniversary of the Falklands war. [44092]

Mr. Touhig: Officials are working with the South Atlantic Medal Association 1982 and other representatives of the veterans of the Falklands campaign to develop plans for commemoration of the 25th anniversary. The main event will be in London on Sunday 17 June 2007. I will announce details in the near future.

Cadet Forces

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department gives to cadet forces. [44491]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence provides direct funding to the individual services to allow their respective cadet forces to offer a vast range of personal development and educational opportunities for youngsters and, with their nationwide reach, acts as a genuine force for good both for the youngsters who join as well as for the communities in which they live. In addition the services provide significant benefit in kind to support cadet training activities; primarily the use of training facilities but also material and limited manpower resources.

Co-operative Engagement Capability

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2759W, on co-operative engagement capability, which capabilities over and above those originally planned for the first class Type-45 destroyers are not currently expected to be fitted to the class in addition to the enhanced electronic warfare capabilities; and if he will make a statement. [43879]

Mr. Ingram: Most of the capability originally planned to be fitted to the Type 45 through the incremental acquisition plan relates to upgrades in software to enhance elements of the ship's combat system. It is not possible to provide any more specific details as to what these capabilities are as to do so could prejudice the protection of national sovereignty against internal or external threats.

DCAE Cosford

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact *(a)* closure and *(b)* downsizing of DCAE Cosford may have on the (i) Shropshire and (ii) West Midlands economies. [38990]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. Until this phase is complete and a decision has been taken to select a preferred training partner, I am not in a position to make any detailed comment on the potential impact on any site or region of the United Kingdom.

Defence Training Review

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the locations of *(a)* population centres, *(b)* labour markets, *(c)* higher education institutions and *(d)* aerospace companies in choosing locations as part of the Defence Training Review. [40394]

Mr. Touhig: The procurement strategy of the Defence Training Review (DTR) Programme has required bidders to select training sites as part of their responses to the Invitations to Negotiate. This has been essential to ensure an integrated training and estates solution which delivers value for money. A comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of the bidding consortia's proposals is under way judged against defined evaluation criteria. Before a decision is reached on the preferred bidder, a Regional Socio-Economic Report will also be undertaken to assess the broader impact of the DTR Programme on the surrounding regions. This will not be concluded until the summer 2006.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the Defence Training Review on the aerospace industry in the West Midlands; [40396]

(2) what criteria he included in the Defence Training Review to ensure that its proposals will take account of the potential impact on businesses in the aerospace and engineering sectors. [40424]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review (DTR) Programme is conducting a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of the bidding consortia's proposals against defined evaluation criteria. As part of the MOD's wider assessment process a Regional Socio-Economic Report will be undertaken to assess the broader impact of the DTR Programme on the surrounding region and its economy. Until the evaluation phase is complete and a decision has been taken to select a preferred training partner, currently expected in summer 2006, I am not in a position to make any detailed comment on the wider impact of the DTR solution.

Electoral Administration

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will publish the questionnaire for the survey to establish the level of voter registration among service personnel; and when he will publish the findings of the survey; [43612]

(2) which agency or organisation within his Department was responsible for *(a)* devising and *(b)* carrying out the survey to establish the level of voter registration among service personnel; [43642]

(3) which Minister within his Department is responsible for the survey to establish the level of voter registration among service personnel; [43643]

(4) where the survey to establish the level of voter registration among service personnel was carried out, broken down by *(a)* service, *(b)* unit and *(c)* base; what the sample size was; and over what period the survey was carried out; [43644]

(5) what estimate he has made of the likely response rate to the survey to establish the level of voter registration among service personnel; and what adjustment he will make to the findings of the survey to allow for non-responses. [43645]

Mr. Touhig: The survey to establish the level of voter registration among Service personnel has been planned in conjunction with the Electoral Commission. The Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) devised the sampling strategy and is carrying out the survey. The questionnaire was despatched during the second week of December to 8,849 randomly selected service personnel, UK based and abroad, across all ranks and services. Responses are due for return by 3 February 2006.

The survey has been designed to produce results accurate to 5 per cent. for each service by officers and other ranks, and by posting in the UK or overseas, assuming a response rate of 45 per cent. Where response rates vary by groups, for example other ranks posted overseas, results will be weighted to ensure results are representative. As the Minister responsible for the survey, I intend that the results will be published and hope to be able to do so by the end of March 2006. Meanwhile, I am placing a copy of the questionnaire in the Library of the House.

Equal Opportunity Advisers

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of the number of unit equal opportunity advisers in each of the armed forces. [38598]

Mr. Touhig: Although 5,714 members of the armed forces have been trained as unit equal opportunities advisers no information is held centrally on the number of these personnel currently acting in this capacity.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future role in Gibraltar of the *(a)* RAF, *(b)* Royal Navy, *(c)* Army, *(d)* the Department's Gibraltarian workforce, *(e)* Navy, Army and Airforce Institution, *(f)* Department Hospital and *(g)* Department's schools. [44147]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans to change Gibraltar's current military role, which centres on providing a forward mounting base and other facilities to support overseas operations. This role will be kept under regular review.

An Infrastructure Service Provider (ISP) is to be introduced covering a number of facilities management functions. Introduction of the ISP will be based on a fair and open competition, which includes consideration of an in-house option. Efficiency measures will be achieved without reduction in output. These are essential to safeguard the Ministry of Defence's long-term commitment to Gibraltar.

The Navy, Army and Airforce Institution (NAAFI) facility in Gibraltar, providing a range of retail services comparable with those at other overseas stations where UK armed forces and their families are based, is located at Devil's Tower Camp. It is NAAFI's intent to open an additional facility at Europa Point in the near future.

An Integrated Healthcare Facility at Devil's Tower Camp will replace the Royal Naval Hospital (RNH) and the Joint Medical Centre and Dental Unit (JMDU). This project is on schedule to open in November 2007, at which point the RNH and JMDU sites will be handed over to the Government of Gibraltar.

Improvements are being made to the internal condition of St. Christopher School, and a programme is under way to develop management at the school.

QinetiQ

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to seek parliamentary approval before sale of the 'golden share' in QinetiQ and if he will make a statement. [43869]

John Reid: The Special (or Golden) Share that MOD presently holds in QinetiQ will be retained after the flotation of the company, to protect UK defence and security interests, as currently. There are no plans to relinquish the Special Share, even after any subsequent sell-down of the remainder of the Government's shareholding in QinetiQ, although this will be kept under review. If in the future there were any such plans, Ministers would anticipate informing Parliament.

RAF Leeming

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of RAF Leeming. [44499]

Mr. Ingram: As stated in my written ministerial statement of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 25WS, I have decided, subject to trade unions consultation, that the RAF communications hub will be formed at RAF Leeming. This means that communications personnel would move from RAF Sealand to RAF Leeming by April 2006. Communications personnel from RAF Brize Norton and RAF High Wycombe would move to RAF Leeming in 2007.

Royal Ordnance

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of security

of supply of *(a)* boxer caps, *(b)* initiators and *(c)* detonators; and which countries he expects to supply his Department via BAE Systems contracts if Royal Ordnance Chorley is closed. [43904]

Mr. Ingram: BAE Systems Land Systems will remain responsible for the security of supply of products previously manufactured at Chorley. Decisions on alternate sources are a commercial matter for the company.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which suppliers to his Department are being considered to replace Royal Ordnance Chorley. [43617]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* BAE Systems Land Systems will remain responsible for the security of supply of products previously manufactured at Chorley. Decisions on alternate sources are a commercial matter for the company.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment the Munitions Corporate Business Unit has made of the proposed cessation of manufacturing at Royal Ordnance Chorley. [43619]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Ministry of Defence are fully engaged with BAES Land Systems and a joint team has been formed to oversee the cessation of manufacturing. We remain confident that risks are being effectively managed and the company's plans are realistic and workable.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to extend the three-year period for a 12-months mobilisation to five years for Territorial Army personnel. [43685]

Mr. Touhig: There are no plans to make any orders under the Reserve Forces Act 1996 to extend the obligatory periods of mobilised service set out in that Act. It is our policy intention that reservists should only be mobilised compulsorily for a total of up to one year in any five except where no viable alternative exists.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what length of time Territorial Army personnel have to be on continuous overseas duty before they are exempted from income tax. [43673]

Mr. Touhig: Territorial Army personnel, like all Crown Servants, are not exempt from paying income tax when they are on overseas duty.

Training and Evaluation Capabilities

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the next routine five-yearly review of long-term partnership agreements on capabilities in training and evaluation will take place. [44173]

Mr. Ingram: The first quinquennial review of the Long Term Partnering Agreement between the Ministry of Defence and QinetiQ for the provision of Test, Evaluation and Training Services is due to complete by April 2008. Initial planning and scoping of the necessary workstreams is already under way.

Veterans' Badges

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who is eligible to apply for the UK armed forces veterans' badge. [44490]

Mr. Touhig: The armed forces veterans' badge will be issued to all service veterans. To cope with demand, eligibility to apply for the badge has been extended to veterans in tranches. Currently those eligible to apply include men and women who served in HM armed forces up to and including 31 December 1954.

Merchant seamen, Polish forces under United Kingdom command, the Cyprus Regiment and the Home Guard are also eligible to receive the badge. Widow(ers) whose spouse died from an injury or illness attributable to their service and who are in receipt of a war widow(ers) pension are also eligible to apply for the armed forces veteran's badge.

For a one-year trial period from February 2005, those currently leaving the armed forces have also been eligible. This arrangement will be reviewed shortly.

TRANSPORT

A418/A413

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the timetable for the *(a)* A418 Wing bypass and *(b)* A413 Wendover Road corridor improvements; [43307]

(2) if he will make a statement on his policy on a bypass for Bierton in Buckinghamshire. [43309]

Ms Buck: These relate to improvements on local roads, and as such are matters for Buckinghamshire county council to bring forward within their local transport plan.

Local road schemes costing more than £5 million are subject to prioritisation within the regional funding allocation, on the basis of advice from the region.

Administration Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39846]

Ms Buck: The total administrative costs reported by each agency of the Department for 2004–05 are set out in the following table.

Agency	*Administrative costs 2004–05 (£000)*
Driving Standards Agency	129,571
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	404,070
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	136,298
Vehicle Certification Agency	2,174
Highways Agency	94,823
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	65,964
Total	832,900

Administrative costs include staff, accommodation and other operating costs, including depreciation and other non-cash charges where appropriate. Fuller information on the income and expenditure of each agency is published in its Annual Report and Accounts, which is available in the Library of the House.

With the exception of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), net expenditure of the agencies is 'identifiable' for the purposes of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) published by the Treasury. MCA net expenditure is deemed to be non-identifiable and is considered to benefit the UK as a whole.

Alstom Rail Test Track

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has held with *(a)* Network Rail, *(b)* the Association of Train Operating Companies and *(c)* Alstom about the impact of the closure of the Alstom rail test track on (i) jobs and (ii) engineering capacity in the UK. [41057]

Derek Twigg: The Department has held informal discussions with Network Rail and the Association of Train Operating Companies about the implications for UK railway testing capability of Alstom's announcement of its intention to surrender its lease of the Asfordby/Old Dalby test track. Alstom's announcement was not preceded by discussions with the Department. BRB Residuary Ltd. has subsequently asked Alstom to clarify its intentions so that the future of the facility can be considered.

Aylesbury Southern Link Road

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the proposed Aylesbury southern link road. [43308]

Ms Buck: There are currently no proposals for an Aylesbury southern relief road before the Secretary of State. I am aware that local authorities in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands area submitted sub-regional studies to the South East England Regional Assembly on proposals for delivering housing growth, including infrastructure to support new developments. This scheme was included in the information supplied by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes authorities. It is for the Regional Assembly to consider the study's recommendations as they develop the South East Plan.

Bus Companies

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus companies were in existence in each of the last five years. [44250]

Ms Buck: Information relating specifically to bus companies is not held centrally. The following table relates to the number of Public Service Vehicle Operator's licences (which are required by any bus or coach operator) in issue for the last five years:

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]
Special restricted	146	120	128	126	112
Restricted	2,373	2,303	2,107	2,701	2,986
Standard	2,865	2,837	2,663	3,029	3,065
Standard international	2,780	2,672	2,540	2,647	2,563
Total	8,164	7,932	7,438	8,403	8,726

[1] Provisional

A Public Service Operator licence is generally required to carry passengers for hire or reward in vehicles adapted to carry nine or more passengers, and smaller vehicles in some circumstances.

There are four types of Public Service Vehicle Operator's licence. The special restricted licence is only available to Hackney Carriage operators who wish to use their taxis to operate a registered local bus service. The restricted licence only allows the operation of a maximum of two vehicles up to 16 seats. There are no restrictions on the number or size of vehicles for the other two types of licence which are, essentially, those used by bus and coach operators.

Currently there are approximately 1,700 PSV licence holders claiming Bus Service Operators Grant, which is a rebate on the fuel duty paid by the operator for the fuel used while operating a local bus service.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment he has made of the impact of fuel duty on local bus operators. [44249]

Ms Buck: Operators of local bus services are entitled to claim Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) from this Department. In general this grant is equivalent to 80 per cent. of the duty paid on the fuel used in operating services (the percentage of duty reimbursed is higher for gas used as a road fuel and bio-diesel).

The rate of BSOG is kept under regular review.

Policy on fuel duty is of course a matter for HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs.

Concessionary Travel

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether a senior citizen will be eligible for free travel in an area where he *(a)* is not a council taxpayer and *(b)* has a second home under new proposals for concessionary travel. [44626]

Ms Buck: In such cases, it is at the local authority's discretion.

Cycling England

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Department's funding to Cycling England is for each of the next three years. [43296]

Derek Twigg: The Department has provided Cycling England with a budget of £5 million per year for the three financial years from 2005–06.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance his Department has given to executive agencies that fall under the remit of his Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if he will make a statement. [41648]

Ms Buck: Agency key targets are set annually and agreed with the Department and Ministers, taking into account wider government objectives and priorities. Since its formation on 29 May 2002, the central Department has set no specific targets and offered no specific advice or guidance to the executive agencies on the subject of reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what training his Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41411]

Ms Buck: The Department is fully committed to reducing identity fraud and provides training for staff where it is required as part of their role. Such training is provided through specific courses, as part of general job specific training, or through mentoring.

Night Flying Restrictions

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy to allow the overall number of night flights into and out of Heathrow airport to increase. [43185]

Ms Buck: We have published a consultation paper, "Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports, Stage 2. of Consultation on Restrictions to apply from 30 October 2005". This invited views on proposals for future night flight restrictions. We are considering responses to that consultation and will announce our decisions in due course.

Predictive Dialling

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2315W, on predictive diallers, whether his Department makes calls using predictive dialling technology to groups other than members of the public. [43737]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport does not use predictive dialling technology.

Public Transport

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the merits of a public transport *(a)* hub and *(b)* corridor for Aylesbury; and if he will make a statement. [43310]

Ms Buck: A public transport hub proposal for Aylesbury was provisionally approved for Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) bid funding in March 2005. Ministers are expecting to announce the final decision on this shortly, as well as on other transport CIF proposals in Aylesbury.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on subsidies for *(a)* rail and *(b)* bus travel in East Yorkshire in each of the last five years. [44248]

Ms Buck: Rail services in East Yorkshire are supplied as part of four rail franchises with wider geographical boundaries than the county. Subsidies cannot be identified to a particular region.

Information on subsidies for local bus services is not available for East Yorkshire. However, figures are available for the East Riding of Yorkshire unitary authority. Expenditure by the authority on support of bus services is shown in the table (this includes expenditure funded by the Department's Rural Bus Subsidy Grant.)

	Bus subsidy (£000)
2000–01	2,196
2001–02	2,748
2002–03	3,029
2003–04	3,151
2004–05	3,511

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what his policy is on the proposed new *(a)* railway station and *(b)* park and ride scheme at Stoke Mandeville; [43294]

(2) what his policy is on park and ride schemes for *(a)* Weedon Hill and *(b)* Aston Clinton. [43303]

Ms Buck: The Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) proposal for Aylesbury Parkway rail station to the north of Aylesbury includes a park and ride scheme. This was provisionally approved in March 2005 for CIF funding. Ministers are expecting to announce the final decision on this shortly, as well as on other CIF proposals in Aylesbury.

A park and ride scheme at Stoke Mandeville is included in a list of schemes recently proposed by Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire local authorities for inclusion in the South East Plan. It is now for the South East Regional Assembly to consider this proposal as they develop the South East Plan.

New park and ride schemes at Weedon Hill and Aston Clinton are not identified as major schemes in the Buckinghamshire county council's provisional local transport plan. Any such proposals are for the local authority to consider and develop as appropriate.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been spent on improvements in transport infrastructure in Gravesham since 1997. [43275]

Ms Buck: Since the introduction of Local Transport Plans in 2000, Kent county council has received around £160 million for local transport improvements and maintenance schemes. In addition the county council has £16 million for the Kent Fasttrack public transport scheme.

Between 1997 and 2000 the county council received approximately £159 million for local transport capital investment. £16 million was provided for the South Thames-side Development Route Section 4 (some of which is included in the £159 million). The Department does not have the data to identify a figure for all local transport investment in Gravesham.

The Highways Agency's improvements have included the widening of the A2 between Bean and Cobham Phase One, costing £23 million. This work was completed in 2005.

Kent has benefited from the new trains and associated power supply and depot upgrades delivered as part of the Mark 1 "slam door" stock replacement programme, the total value of the investment (benefiting Kent and other parts of London and the South East) being in the region of £2 billion.

The Gravesham constituency has also benefited from the £4.6 billion Channel Tunnel Rail Link project, which includes a major new station within Gravesham constituency at Ebbsfleet, which will be served by international trains to Paris and Brussels from 2007 and high speed domestic trains to St. Pancras from 2009 (journey time Ebbsfleet to St. Pancras 16 minutes).

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to improve access to public transport for disabled people in Gravesham. [43276]

Ms Buck: We have introduced "accessibility planning" into the local transport planning process to encourage local authorities and other agencies to assess more systematically whether people can access transport services in their areas. This process covers all forms of transport from buses, coaches and taxis to cycling and walking networks. Making provision for disabled people is a condition against which the resulting Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are assessed.

At a local level, we are supporting the continued introduction of low floor buses in Gravesham. The Kickstart project (services 495/498 between Kings Farm, Christianfields, Gravesend Town Centre, Pepper Hill and Bluewater), launched in March 2005, introduced low floor single deck buses to the route replacing minibuses which were inaccessible to wheelchair users. The introduction of the new vehicles was combined with a programme of work to introduce raised kerbs and bus boarders on this route.

The Department continues to invest in accessibility improvements in Gravesham through LTP funding. Kent county council, Gravesham's local bus provider, Arriva and the Gravesham Access Group (which represents disabled people in the district) work in close partnership to identify priorities for funding. This includes identifying stops which require raised kerbing, dropped kerbs or hard standing.

LTP funding has also resulted in a £14.5 million investment in Fastrack, the new bus based transit system serving Gravesend, which will have fully accessible vehicles and roadside infrastructure designed in accordance with current best practice. Due to commence in March 2006, Fastrack will have bus boarders at all Gravesham stops to complement the fleet of new low-floor vehicles, providing level access for all passengers. All Fastrack stops will also be fitted with real time information displays.

Arriva estimates that at present over 70 per cent. of their Gravesham buses are low floor. They also endeavour to ensure that all staff receive disability awareness training.

Rail services in Gravesham are also generally accessible, a situation that will be enhanced with the completion of Ebbsfleet station. When opened, this station will offer high standards of accessibility and will be served by trains which meet the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 (RVAR) operating on the Integrated Kent Franchise. This will provide fast access to Stratford International and London St. Pancras stations (both of which will be fully accessible) and also south to Ashford International together with access to 'Eurostar' services to Belgium and France. The new station will have ample parking including convenient spaces reserved for disabled passengers.

More generally disabled people in Gravesham, as elsewhere in the country, will also benefit from the provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005). We have already laid regulations which will, from 4 December 2006, lift the transport exemption in Part 3 of the Act for land-based public transport, vehicle hire, breakdown services and vehicles used on leisure and tourism transport services. We will also be consulting shortly on draft regulations to set an "end date" of no later than 1 January 2020 when all trains will have to meet RVAR and to apply those regulations to older trains when they are refurbished.

Rail Modernisation Fund

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much of the Rail Modernisation Fund had been spent at the end of the financial year 2004–05. [40860]

Derek Twigg: We have invested some £7.7 billion between 2001–05 and plan to invest some £19 billion further by 2009.

Road Building (Lancashire)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice the Environment Agency has offered to Lancashire county council regarding *(a)* the Heysham M6 link and *(b)* the proposed bridge over the River Lune at Halton. [44657]

Dr. Ladyman: The Environment Agency is commissioned by Lancashire county council to advise on the Heysham-M6 Link Road scheme. Lancashire county council has been having ongoing discussions with the agency about all environmental aspects of the Heysham-M6 Link scheme. The design of the proposed bridge over the River Lune at Halton has been amended in accordance with advice from the agency.

Road Safety

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of fatal road traffic

accidents were assessed as being wholly or in part attributable to the consumption of illegal drugs by drivers in each of the last five years. [44638]

Dr. Ladyman: Estimates of fatalities in road accidents where the use of legal or illegal drugs by drivers was a contributory factor are not available, because routine accident reports do not currently record such factors. However under a pilot scheme, information on contributory factors to road accidents has been collected by 15 police forces. The use of legal or illegal drugs by drivers was considered a contributory factor in about 3 per cent. of fatal accidents recorded under this pilot scheme from 2000 to 2004.

Strategic Health Authority Staff

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many former Strategic Health Authority staff have been redeployed to *(a)* Network Rail, *(b)* the Office of the Rail Regulator, *(c)* other Government bodies and *(d)* his Department; and how many have been made redundant. [43035]

Derek Twigg: 14 staff of the Strategic Rail Authority have transferred to Network Rail, four to the Office of Rail Regulation and 171 to the Department for Transport. As at 31 January 2006, 139 will have been made redundant. Figures are not available in respect of staff moving to other Government bodies.

Tram Schemes

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much direct Government funding has been allocated to proposed tram schemes in *(a)* Merseyside, *(b)* Manchester and *(c)* West Yorkshire; and what meetings he has attended where schemes were discussed in the past 10 months. [37885]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to my Statement to the House on 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 17WS, about Merseytram, and the Secretary of State's Statement on 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 60WS, about Leeds Supertram. These Statements made clear that funding was no longer available for these schemes.

I also refer the hon. Member to the Secretary of State for Transport's Statement on 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 152WS, about Manchester Metrolink, which confirmed that £520 million public funding would be made available to deal with transport problems in areas covered by Phase III. The £520 million budget included an up-front local contribution of £60 million, and £70 million to be recouped through deductions of £7 million per annum from Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive's Local Transport Plan allocations, for 10 years.

The Secretary of State has attended frequent meetings with ministerial colleagues and officials to discuss a whole range of departmental policies.

Transport 2010 Document

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made towards meeting the targets in the Transport 2010 plan for *(a)* increased rail passenger kilometres and *(b)* increased rail freight. [40857]

Derek Twigg: Annual passenger rail use has increased from 38.2 billion passenger kilometres in April 2001 to 42.4 billion passenger kilometres at the end of March 2005. This represents an increase of 11 per cent.

The amount of rail freight has increased from 18.1 billion net tonne kilometres in 2000–01 to 20.6 billion net tonne kilometres in 2004–05. This is an increase of almost 14 per cent.

Tyne and Wear Metro

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the operating subsidy for the Tyne and Wear Metro is determined; what the operating subsidy is for 2005–06; what discussions he has had on the operating subsidy for 2006–07; and when he expects those discussions to be concluded. [44589]

Derek Twigg: Prior to 1997–98 support for metropolitan rail services was paid indirectly to all Passenger Transport Executives. In the case of Tyne and Wear these payments supported both heavy rail and Metro services.

Subsequently, heavy rail subsidy has been provided through franchise payments to Train Operating Companies and a separate subsidy has been provided for the Tyne and Wear Metro. This was calculated, until 2005–06 on the basis of a formula similar to that in place under the previous arrangements. Additional amounts were paid to subsidise the operation of the Sunderland extension, which opened in 2002, according to the actual operating deficit rather than the formula.

The Department has been engaged in detailed discussions with Nexus, the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive, to establish a new basis for providing operating subsidy from 2006–07 onwards and an agreement should be concluded soon, enabling the subsidy level for 2006–07 to be finalised.

Vehicle Operating Service Authority

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many consultants the Vehicle Operating Service Authority employs; how long each has been employed; in what capacity; and at what cost. [35830]

Ms Buck: The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) currently utilise 16 consultants. The majority have been working with VOSA for less than 12 months mainly assisting in specialist areas within projects such as MOT Computerisation project. This table sets out job functions and start dates of these consultants.

Job title	*Start date*
Interfaces Project Manager	1 April 2002
IT Project Manager	21 March 2005
Contract Manager	17 March 2005
Programme Assurance Manager	6 September 2004
Programme Manager	14 December 2004
Project Management Consultant (employed on ad hoc basis)	22 October 2003
Change Controller	4 April 2005
Head of Service Management Delivery	8 August 2005
Technical Assurance Manager	1997
Project Manager	13 June 2005

Job title	Start date
MOT Computerisation Reviews (employed on ad hoc basis)	1 September 2005
Project and Programme Quality Assurance	8 August 2005
Organisation Design Project	1 September 2005
Technical Assurance Review of the Commercial Portal (project 50 days work in total)	24 October 2005
Technical Assurance Review of the Commercial Portal (project 50 days work in total)	24 October 2005
Technical Assurance Review of the Commercial Portal (project 50 days work in total)	24 October 2005

Although over the course of the current financial year, there have been other consultants working with VOSA, it would involve disproportionate cost to establish the total number. In total, in the financial year up to 20 December 2005, VOSA attributed £2,592,420 to all consultancy work.

TREASURY

Africa (Debt Repayments)

Ann McKechin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of bilateral debt repayments to the United Kingdom by each country in Africa was for *(a)* the calendar year 2005 and *(b)* financial year 2004–05; and what the expected value is for 2005–06. [42085]

John Healey: The following table shows the official bilateral debt payments received from African countries, and the debts cancelled, by the UK Government for the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06. The figures for the 2005 calendar year are not held centrally within HM Treasury, DfID or the ECGD, and to gather all the information would incur disproportionate costs.

£ million

	2004–05		*2005–06*	
Market	*Recoveries*	*Debt forgiveness*	*Recoveries*	*Debt forgiveness*
Algeria	17.800	—	20.227	—
Botswana	0.02	—	—	—
Cameroon	—	5.782	—	—
Cote d'Ivoire	—	0.956	—	—
D R Congo	—	2.539	—	—
Egypt	12.153	—	12.966	—
Ethiopia	—	10.551	—	—
Gabon	8.249	—	19.155	—
Ghana	—	66.056	—	—
Kenya	2.422	—	0.595	—
Madagascar	—	24.064	—	—
Malawi	—	0.079	—	—
Morocco	8.203	—	6.471	—
Niger	—	4.967	—	—
Nigeria	105.954	—	1,052.662	1,142.412
Republic of Congo	—	74.000	0.153	—
Senegal	—	0.143	—	0.881
Sierra Leone	—	0.052	—	0.001
Zambia	—	162.390	—	—
Zimbabwe	0.6	—	0.08	—
Totals	155.383	351.579	1,112.223	1,143.294

1. Debt forgiveness figures as at 31 December 2005. There may be additional debt forgiveness before March 2006, but this cannot be estimated at present.

2. The payments by Zimbabwe were for ODA loans given by DfID.

3. The data for Botswana and Kenya include payments to CDC, formerly known as the Commonwealth Development Corporation.

4. Debt relief figures do not include payments from DFID to ECGD to allow 100 per cent. cancellation of ECGD loans and reimbursements under the Hold in Trust policy. These amounted to about £12.5 million in 2004–05. The estimate for 2005–06 is £1.2 million.

Bars and London NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what meetings officials from his Department have had with representatives of the Barts and the London NHS Trust; when such meetings took place; what discussions took place at such meetings; and if he will make a statement. [43457]

Mr. Des Browne: Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development and analysis. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

Business Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what amendments have been made to *(a)* regulations, *(b)* primary legislation and *(c)* legislation relating to the levying of business rates on domestic properties used in whole or part of business purposes since May 1997. [42836]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

None of the provisions in primary legislation or regulations which relate specifically to the rating of properties which are used for both domestic and non-domestic purposes has been amended since 1997.

Charities

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will takes steps to ensure that *(a)* documentary evidence is provided to support the allegations to be made about UK charities at the forthcoming meeting between the Israeli ambassador and the Economic Secretary and *(b)* that evidence is made available to (i) the Charities Commission and (ii) the charity concerned at the earliest possible opportunity. [43668]

John Healey: The regulation of UK charities is a matter for the Charities Commission. The Treasury, along with other Government Departments and the Charities Commission take all allegations against UK charities seriously and we stand ready to take any appropriate action.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of the Child Trust Fund for each year from 2004–05 to 2009–10; and if he will make a statement. [41225]

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of child trust funds was in 2005. [43664]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer given to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne) on 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 701W.

Compensation Claims

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to protect the public from excessive claims for commission by companies pursuing claims compensation. [41696]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

Part 2 of the Compensation Bill, introduced in the House of Lords on 2 November 2005, sets out a statutory framework for the regulation of claims management services.

The legislation will require those providing claims management services to be authorised by a regulator and abide by rules of conduct and a code of practice. These will make clear that the level of charges or fees for providing claims management services must be made clear to the claimant at the outset and be proportionate to the amount of work involved.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43485]

John Healey: The number of disciplinary procedures that have resulted in disciplinary penalties being applied to employees of HM Treasury in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Number of disciplinary procedures
2001	4
2002	5
2003	3
2004	3
2005	1

In addition, disciplinary procedures have been initiated against employees who have resigned before the disciplinary case has been concluded as follows:

	Number of procedures initiated against employees who resigned
2001	0
2002	1
2003	0
2004	0
2005	3

The Department does not keep a record of the number of disciplinary cases that are initiated and concluded but not proven.

Drug-related Deaths

Mr. Malins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many deaths consumption of illegal drugs was the primary cause in each of the last 10 years. [44726]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 23 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking in how many deaths consumption of illegal drugs was the primary cause in each of the last 10 years. I am replying in her absence. (44726)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2003. The table below shows the number of deaths for which any drug controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act was mentioned on the death certificate and the underlying cause was drug poisoning, for each of the ten years 1994 to 2003.

Deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] involving illegal substances,[2] England and Wales 1994 to 2003[3]

	Number of deaths
1994	936
1995	1,012
1996	1,174
1997	1,204
1998	1,349
1999	1,471
2000	1,571
2001	1,535
2002	1,430
2003	1,294

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9, E850-E858, E950.0-E950.5, E962.0 and E980.0-E980.5 for 1994 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14 from 2001 onwards.

[2] Includes deaths where the underlying cause was drug-related poisoning and a drug controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 was mentioned on the death record.

[3] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Economic Inactivity (Beverley and Holderness)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Beverley and Holderness under the age of 25 years were economically inactive in each year since 1997. [44318]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 23 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning economic inactivity. (44318)

The Office for National Statistics compiles statistics of inactivity for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The attached table shows the numbers of inactive people aged 16 to 24, resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency, for the 12 month periods ending February 1998 to February 2004 from the annual local area LFS, and for the 12 months ending March 2005 from the APS. The table also shows the figures as a percentage of the resident population aged 16 to 24.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Number of economically inactive persons aged 16 to 24 resident in the Beverley and Holderness parliamentary constituency

	Economically inactive persons aged 16 to 24	
Twelve months ending:	*Level (thousand)*	*Rate (percentage)*
February 1998	3	32
February 1999	3	31
February 2000	1	14
February 2001	2	28

Number of economically inactive persons aged 16 to 24 resident in the Beverley and Holderness parliamentary constituency

	Economically inactive persons aged 16 to 24	
Twelve months ending:	*Level (thousand)*	*Rate (percentage)*
February 2002	2	39
February 2003	2	20
February 2004	2	27
March 2005	4	40

Notes:
1. Estimates are subject to sampling variability.
2. Changes from year-to-year should be treated with particular caution.

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Contact Committee on certain schemes for collective investment in securities, *(b)* Contact Committee: European economic interest grouping and *(c)* Accounting Directives Contact Committee have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representations of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [38810]

John Healey: The Contact Committee on certain schemes for collective investment in securities has been wound up and its work taken over by the European Securities Committee. Financial services is a reserved matter for the UK Government and Treasury officials represent the UK at ESC meetings. HM Treasury has regular contacts with significant financial services centres throughout the UK to inform the position of the UK at these meetings.

There were no meetings of the Contact Committee on European Economic Interest Groups during the UK presidency.

The Contact Committee on the Accounting Directives has now been amalgamated with the Accounting Regulatory Committee. The Committee met three times during the UK Presidency. Meetings were chaired by the European Commission. The UK is represented by officials from the Department of Trade and Industry.

EU Meetings

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list EU meetings of *(a)* heads of state and *(b)* government that he has attended in the company of the Prime Minister since June 1997. [39900]

John Healey: In normal circumstances the Prime Minister represents the UK at European Councils, accompanied by the Foreign Secretary. The Chancellor of the Exchequer represents the UK at the Economic and Financial Affairs Council.

In addition, Finance Ministers also occasionally attend the spring European Council which focuses on EU Economic Reform.

Gershon Review

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will provide a break down by *(a)* Department and *(b)* activity of the £4.7 billion efficiency savings as a result of the Gershon Review announced in the pre-Budget report. [37150]

Mr. Des Browne: This information is available in departmental Autumn Performance Reports that have been published and in forthcoming Departmental Reports which all departments are required to publish by April.

Table 2: Efficiency Gains Reported to September 2005, by workstream

Workstream	*Total gains reported (£ million)*
Procurement	1,978
Productive Time	894
Policy, Funding and Regulation	520
Corporate Services	288
Transactions	113
Other[1]	942
Total	4,735

[1] SR04 efficiencies where Departments have not specified an allocation to a Gershon workstream.

Insurance Premium Tax

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received from insurance companies under investigation for alleged fraud regarding the insurance premium tax. [44795]

Dawn Primarolo: The Treasury has received no such representations.

Local Pay Arrangements

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the Government Departments that operate local pay arrangements, excluding London weighting. [44941]

Mr. Des Browne: Departments and agencies have authority to determine pay and conditions for their staff below the Senior Civil Service, which are appropriate to their business needs and which take account of Government policies on public sector pay. Under these arrangements Departments and agencies are required to submit a Pay Remit to Treasury outlining its proposals for increases in pay.

Departments and agencies are expected to ensure that their pay systems reflect the local labour markets in which they operate. However as a consequence of delegated pay no centrally collected list exists of the number of Government Departments that operate local pay arrangements excluding London Weighting.

Online Gambling Companies

Mr. Swire: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax was paid by online gambling companies in the last year for which figures are available. [44289]

John Healey: Separate figures for the amount of tax paid by online gambling companies are not available.

Private Finance Initiative Scheme

John Hemming: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what calculations are performed to compare

the costs of a private finance initiative scheme with traditional funding schemes from public sector borrowing. [44807]

John Healey: The required analysis for comparing whether a given project would be value for money using PFI compared with conventional funding is laid out in the Value for Money Guidance and the accompanying Quantitative User Guide, published in August 2004. These can be found on the HM Treasury website at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_private_partnerships/key_documents/ppp_keydocs_vfm.cfm

Private Members' Clubs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* working men's clubs and *(b)* other private members' clubs there were in England in the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by local authority. [43532]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 23 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many *(a)* working men's clubs and *(b)* other private members' clubs there were in England in the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by local authority. (43532)

Working men's clubs are included within the standard industrial classification (SIC) for licensed clubs. Private members' clubs are included within activities of other membership organisations not elsewhere classified. I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library showing the figures for licensed clubs (SIC 55401) and for activities of other membership organisations (SIC 91330).

These figures are based on the criteria used in the National Statistics publication "UK Business: Activity, Size and Location for 2005", published on the National Statistics website: www.statistics.gov.uk/ukbusiness, and relate to the number of local units operated by businesses registered for VAT as at March 2005.

All figures have been rounded to the nearest five to avoid disclosure.

Tax Arrears

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) charges interest on tax arrears determined following reviews of tax accounts, from a date prior to that on which HMRC *(a)* determined and *(b)* informed the liable person that such arrears existed; if he will amend this practice so that interest on tax arrears is only charged from the point that the liable person could reasonably first have made payment; and if he will make a statement. [44784]

Dawn Primarolo: Interest is not a penalty, and is charged in order to recompense the Exchequer where tax is paid later than the due date. In that, it is like any commercial interest. Interest applies whatever the reason for the delayed payment, and I cannot accept the case for different dates applying depending on the reason payment was not made on time.

Tax Credits

Greg Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 556W, on tax credit, whether an estimate was made by his Department in advance of the pre-Budget report of the prospective cost of the increase in the disregard from £2,500 to £25,000. [44872]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the right hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) and the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1836W.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff in his Department have administered each tax credit in each year since their introduction; and what the cost of administering each tax credit in each year has been. [43763]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the format requested.

Transformation Fund

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which local authorities have received support from the Transformation Fund since its inception; and how much each has received. [43736]

Beverley Hughes: I have been asked to reply.

The Transformation Fund was announced in the 2004–05 pre-Budget report. It will provide £125 million in each of 2006–07 and 2007–08 to invest in the professional development of the child care work force. The fund takes effect from April 2006 and therefore no local authorities have yet received support from it.

VAT

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer by how much tax revenue would change as a result of an increase in VAT of *(a)* 1 per cent., *(b)* 2 per cent., *(c)* 3 per cent. and *(d)* 4 per cent. [44651]

Dawn Primarolo: Effects of illustrative changes in VAT rates are published in Table 6 of the Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs, which can be found at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/FA1/96/pbr05_taxreadyreckoner_223.pdf and is published annually alongside the pre-Budget report. A hard copy can be found in the House of Commons' Library.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what items are exempt from VAT. [44652]

Dawn Primarolo: VAT exemption applies to a wide range of goods and services. Among the major categories are certain supplies of, or related to: land; insurance; financial services; postal services; education; health and welfare; charities; burial and cremation; betting and gaming; admission to certain cultural bodies; and subscriptions to trade unions and professional and public interest bodies.

The full list of supplies of goods and services which are exempt from VAT can be found in schedule 9 of the Value Added Tax Act 1994 which is reproduced in HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Notice 701/39, 'VAT liability law', which can found on HMRC's website at www.hmrc.gov.uk

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 278, on Afghanistan, when he expects the applied research programme to publish its conclusions on alternative livelihoods for poppy-growing Afghan farmers. [42643]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The DFID funded Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund (RALF), is identifying innovative opportunities that add to the range of options available to rural people in different parts of Afghanistan.

The field research commenced during 2005, and will continue until the end of 2006. Publication and dissemination of the results of that research will take place thereafter. Dissemination outputs will be targeted to local institutions and Afghan research and development agencies, presenting research findings in a readily accessible form.

Although research, especially looking at agricultural commodities, takes time to show results, there are encouraging signs that the projects funded by RALF will translate into practicable recommendations to improve incomes or food security, or provide alternative employment. DFID is planning a mid-term review of this programme in March 2006. The report of this review will be posted on the RALF website www.icarda.cgiar.org/RALFweb/RALF.htm.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to provide alternative cash crops for opium producers in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [42997]

Hilary Benn: DFID leads the British Government's efforts to develop alternative livelihoods in Afghanistan. In the financial year of 2005–06, DFID is to spend over £45 million for this purpose. This is an almost tenfold increase on the amount spent in 2003–04. In the financial year of 2006–07, spending is expected to continue at similar levels.

A proportion of this funding will continue to be specifically targeted on improving agricultural opportunities for Afghan farmers. This includes research to help identify, test and implement new crops and technologies. Innovative ways for farmers to make a living are also being pursued. Examples include apricot drying, honey bee keeping, and the introduction of fruit tree nurseries and greenhouses for vegetable production. DFID has also jointly funded, with United States Agency for International Development (USAID), a $25 million nationwide programme to increase access by over 500,000 farmers to seeds and fertiliser for alternative crops.

At the same time as developing agricultural opportunities, and in the interests of sustainability, it is important to also develop non-farm alternative livelihoods. DFID will continue to support activities which identify sustainable economic alternatives and social incentives to enable farmers to stop growing poppy.

Civil Servants (Retirement)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in his Department and its agencies was in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05; what the estimated cost is for each year from 2005–06 to 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [44768]

Mr. Thomas: The cost to The Department for International Development (DFID) of early departures is as follows:

	Cost (£)
1997–98	926,268
1998–99	494,903
1999–2000	620,471
2000–01	422,910
2001–02	562,967
2002–03	581,708
2003–04	1,639,414
2004–05	1,257,039
2005–06[1]	1,039,270
2006–07[1]	965,565
2007–08[1]	570,464

[1] Estimated costs based on expenditure arising from existing commitments.

Commission for Africa

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what mechanisms his Department has in place to implement the relevant recommendations of the Commission for Africa. [43812]

Hilary Benn: The Recommendations of the Commission for Africa report have been adopted as Government policy. Many of the recommendations are being taken forward through DFID's bilateral development programmes, through its contributions to multilateral agencies and through joint initiatives with other donor and African partners, such as the recently launched Africa Infrastructure Consortium. Other recommendations are directed at Africa and its leaders, and DFID is encouraging them to take action.

In addition, through its presidency of the G8 in 2005, the UK has built broader commitment to key recommendations, such as increasing aid and debt relief. Progress against these commitments will be monitored, reviewed and reported through a joint action plan, currently being developed.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43437]

Mr. Thomas: The items reported as stolen from DFID buildings over the last year, valued at over £100, are as follows.

	Number
Compaq IPAC pocket PC	1
Lamp posts	4
Bicycles	3
Laptop computers	6

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was by (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40097]

Hilary Benn: In accordance with Government accounting policy, DFID does not normally insure its buildings or staff. The following figures are for expenditure on its headquarters buildings in UK only.

Financial year	£
2002–03	8,748,344
2003–04	8,720,705
2004–05	9,668,959
2005–06 (Forecast)	9,450,000

Information on overseas offices is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID is not responsible for any other non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)s or agencies, but is responsible for CDC (formerly Commonwealth Development Corporation), a self-financing public corporation, based in London. The relevant figures for CDC are:

£

	Buildings	Insurance
2003	613,700	759,600
2004	963,600	648,700
2005 (Forecast)	262,000	308,000
2006 (Budget)	271,000	340,000

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43491]

Mr. Thomas: DIFD's Disciplinary Procedures are fully compliant with UK legislation and apply to civil servants working in the UK and overseas. We also apply them to our locally appointed staff overseas who work under local contracts, unless local law dictates otherwise.

The procedure covers dismissal and other disciplinary proceedings in respect of:

Unacceptable behaviour (misconduct). In the event of gross misconduct, the individual may be summarily dismissed.

Poor or unacceptable performance (capability).

The sanctions which may be applied are (this is a non exhaustive list): a written warning; a final written warning; dismissal with notice; dismissal without notice (summary dismissal). In serious cases, the penalties may also include downgrading or redeployment, stoppage of future performance pay, and a ban on promotion or consideration for a specified period.

We did not hold a central record of disciplinary action for all staff until October 2004 so the statistics include our best estimate of cases prior to this date.

	Commenced	Disciplinary action taken
2001	5	5
2002	12	11
2003	3	2
2004	3	2
2005	10	9
Total	33	29

Ethiopia

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on his Department's proposed review of UK aid to Ethiopia. [43136]

Hilary Benn: I visited Ethiopia on 18 January and met Prime Minister Meles. I expressed my deep concern over recent political events in Ethiopia and told the Prime Minister that the UK, together with all other budget support donors, will not at present provide general budget support which the Ethiopian Government can use for any purpose.

However, we remain committed to supporting poor people in Ethiopia. We are working with other donors and Government to design a new mechanism for providing funds in a more transparent and accountable way, so that basic services such as education and health and water can continue to be provided throughout the country.

Gaza/West Bank

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to visit Gaza and the occupied West Bank in the next four months. [41935]

Hilary Benn: I have no current plans to do so.

Gleneagles Commitments

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what mechanisms he has in place for his Department to follow up the donor commitments made by the G8 member countries at Gleneagles in 2005. [43813]

Hilary Benn: The Government are committed to ensuring that G8 pledges made at Gleneagles are implemented. DFID is involved in the implementation

of specific initiatives: for example, the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa and the Investment Climate Facility. DFID is also working with others to ensure effective monitoring mechanisms to hold governments to account for delivery of their commitments and to assess results.

At a national level, the "Gleneagles Implementation Plan" sets out the milestones the UK believes need to be achieved in 2006 to set us on the right track for delivery of the Gleneagles' commitments. This Plan has been placed in the Libraries of the House and will be updated monthly to show further progress. At the international level, the Africa Partnership Forum (APF) will monitor, review and report progress against the respective commitments by Africa and its development partners (not just the G8), on the basis of a Joint Action Plan now being developed. As one of the 2005 APF Co-Chairs, DFID, on behalf of the UK, has been closely involved in the development of this Plan and we remain fully committed to this process. We are also supporting the Archbishop of Cape Town's proposal for an 'African Monitor', which will track the implementation of commitments, and their impact, through a network of civil society groups.

HIV/AIDS (Paediatric Care)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the written answer on 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 210W, on HIV/AIDS, what discussions *(a)* have taken place and *(b)* are planned with the Global Steering Committee to ensure that children will receive paediatric drugs by 2010. [43410]

Hilary Benn: The UK is co-chair of the Global Steering Committee on Scaling up Towards Universal Access, (GSC) which is due to report to the UN General Assembly High Level meeting in June 2006. The GSC is considering the obstacles to scaling up comprehensive AIDS programmes, including access to treatment.

Early discussions have already highlighted the need to unblock obstacles to treatment for children, including the lack of adequate diagnostics and treatments for children, and the poor disaggregation by age and gender of reporting on treatment.

The GSC, which met for the first time on 9 and 10 January, is expected to meet twice more, in February and March, before finalising in April its report to the UN General Assembly High Level meeting in early June.

The UK is hosting with UNICEF, the Global Partners Forum on Children Affected by HIV and AIDS (GPF) in early February. One of the six streams of the GPF is access to treatment and care for children with HIV and AIDS. Discussions at the Global Partners Forum will feed into the work of the Global Steering Committee.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41283]

Mr. Thomas: Fraud awareness, including identity fraud is included in the induction training for all staff appointed by DFID.

In relation to front desk staff, all visitors to the Department have to be identified and then accompanied by a member of staff throughout their visit.

Guidelines are in place for administrative staff carrying out identity checks as part of the appointment and security clearance procedures for all new staff. These include sight of passports, birth certificates and other data that are checked as part of our security vetting process.

Inter-ministerial Meetings

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many inter-ministerial meetings his Department has held with the Scottish Executive since May 1999; and what the *(a)* Scottish Executive department concerned, *(b)* subject and *(c)* date was in each case. [39872]

Mr. Thomas: Ministers have regular dialogues with ministerial colleagues in the Scottish Executive, discussing a wide range of issues of mutual interest. It is not our practice to disclose details of such meetings.

Millennium Development Goals

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what public service agreements his Department is now relating to the millennium development goals. [43810]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) 2005–08, has the overall aim of 'eliminating poverty in poorer countries, in particular through achievement by 2015 of the millennium development goals' (MDGs).

The PSA contains six targets and 13 sub-targets. Targets one and two are directly linked to the MDGs, seeking progress towards the MDGs in 16 key countries in Africa and nine key countries in Asia. The sub-targets seek a reduction in the proportion of people living in poverty, an increase in primary school enrolment and in the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary school, a reduction in under-five mortality rates, an increase in the proportion of births assisted by skilled birth attendants, and the achievement of targets on HIV and tuberculosis, all of which tie in with the first six MDGs.

Target three on improving the effectiveness of the multilateral system, target four on improving trading opportunities, target six on ensuring that at least 90 per cent. of DFID's bilateral programme goes to low-income countries and the Africa sub-target on enhancing partnership to increase the effectiveness of aid and ensure that international policies support African development, all feed into MDG eight on developing a global partnership for development.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what mechanisms he is setting in place for an annual evaluation of progress towards the millennium development goals. [43811]

Hilary Benn: Progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets, which tie in to the millennium development goals, is assessed twice-yearly in DFID's autumn performance reports and departmental reports. The most recent analysis of progress against the Department for International Development's public service agreement (PSA) targets for the period 2003 to 2006 was published, in the Autumn Performance Report 2005, which was laid before Parliament on 9 December 2005. It is available both in hard copy in the Libraries of the House and electronically on DFID's website:

http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/autumnperfreport05.pdf

The Technical Note to DFID's 2005–08 public service agreement provides full details of the indicators and methodologies which are used to monitor performance against the targets. The Technical Note is available on DFID's website:

www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/PSA/technicalnotes.pdf

Updated assessments of performance against all PSA targets and sub-targets will be provided in DFID's Departmental Report 2006, which is expected to be published in May.

The UK Government are supporting the proposed International Development (Transparency and Reporting) Bill. When enacted, this will require DFID to place an annual report before Parliament setting out the UK Government's policies and use of resources in support of international development, including achievement of the millennium development goals. DFID welcomes the Bill and is actively supporting its development.

Overseas Aid

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether it is his policy to find other mechanisms to fund pro-poor policies in those countries that have had budgetary support suspended or reduced as a consequence of actions by the recipient government. [43815]

Hilary Benn: It is DFID policy to seek other ways to fund poverty reduction efforts in countries where budget support has been suspended or reduced.

DFID may decide to suspend or reduce budget support if we think that a partner government has breached its partnership commitments. DFID will consider a range of responses, including to change the way we deliver our aid to government and/or to switch some or all of our aid away from government to non-government channels.

In deciding how to respond to a breach, DFID will consider the impact that any decision will have on poor people and longer term poverty reduction efforts. For example in Uganda, at the end of 2005, DFID decided to re-allocate £15 million to humanitarian assistance in northern Uganda provided through the UN. In Ethiopia in 2005, DFID decided to suspend budget support due to election related violence and detention of the opposition. Instead we plan to channel the aid through a safety net programme for the most vulnerable people, and support to service delivery by local government.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development to which countries offered budgetary support, where budgetary support has subsequently been suspended or refused; and what the reasons were in each case. [43820]

Hilary Benn: In 2005–06, DFID formally committed to provide Poverty Reduction Budget Support (PRBS) (which includes both budget support which is provided to finance implementation of the poverty reduction strategy, and budget support earmarked to specific sectors within governments' programmes) to the Governments of Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia.

Thus far, in 2005–06, the PRBS has been either fully or partially suspended in Ethiopia and Uganda.

In Ethiopia, £50 million of general budget support was suspended following election related violence and the detention of opposition.

In Uganda, of the £50 million general budget support planned, £15 million was suspended due to a significant overspend on public administration and concerns about the political transition and prospects for a free and fair election.

Palestinian Authority

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he has taken to monitor the expenditure of development aid within the Palestinian authority to ensure that it does not *(a)* support and *(b)* sustain terrorist-related activities. [41892]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The UK Government absolutely condemns all acts of terrorism and takes concern over the use of UK aid very seriously. The UK Government are committed to ensuring that all UK development assistance is properly accounted for, used for the intended purposes and represents value for money.

Since 2004, all DFID financial support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) budget has been provided through a Reform Trust Fund managed by the World Bank. Funding is conditional on the achievement of benchmarks for reform, progress against which is carefully monitored. The benchmarks cover the PA's audit and accounting processes as well as issues such as pension reform, the wage bill and the PA's budget process. The benchmarks require that the PA submit its annual financial statements to the Palestinian Legislative Council and be independently audited. This is intended to ensure legitimate usage of PA funds and that taxpayers' funds achieve value for money.

DFID, along with the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other donors that provide budget support, undertake twice-yearly reviews of the PA's progress against its reform benchmarks and maintain close contact with the PA at all times. DFID and other Trust Fund donors have made it clear to the

PA that it would be unacceptable if PA budgetary resources were used in any way that supported or condoned terrorism and that budget support would be suspended in such an event.

Other forms of DFID assistance to the Palestinian people are channelled through organisations whose accounts are independently audited.

Priority Countries (Funding)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding has been allocated to budget support for each of his Department's 20 priority countries; and how much of that funding has been allocated to *(a)* health and *(b)* education. [42449]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not have a classification list of priority countries as such but in our public service agreement we do have a number of key countries in Africa and Asia, 25 in total, in which we monitor progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. These countries have been chosen because they are DFID partner countries with high numbers of poor people and receive the largest proportions of total DFID spending in these continents.

These countries are set out in the following table along with the amounts of poverty reduction budget support received over the past five years. The amount of budget support allocated to the specific sectors of health and education are detailed in the second table but the majority of this funding is provided as general budget support and not allocated to any specific sector.

Poverty reduction budget support for DFID PSA countries

£ million

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Africa					
Congo (Dem Rep)	0	0	0	0	0
Ethiopia	0	0	10	20	45
Ghana	40	25	20	25	35
Kenya	15	0	0	0	0
Lesotho	0	0	0	0	0
Malawi	30	12.5	0	10	15
Mozambique	15.7	25.7	14.7	20.3	35.8
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0
Rwanda	25.4	18	22	18.8	34.3
Sierra Leone	19.5	10	10	10	12
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0
Sudan	0	0	0	0	0
Tanzania	40	35	45	60	65
Uganda	60	47	29.5	30	35
Zambia	15	0	0	4	13
Zimbabwe	0	0	0	0	0
Asia					
Afghanistan	0	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	6.6	0	29.8
Cambodia	0	0	0	0	0
China	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	65	30	75	51.3
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	0
Nepal	0	0	0	0	2.1
Pakistan	0	20	20	50	7.5
Vietnam	0	0	0	10	20

Sector allocated expenditure on Health and Education through PRBS

£ million

	2000–01		*2001–02*		*2002–03*	
	Health	*Education*	*Health*	*Education*	*Health*	*Education*
Mozambique	5.7	—	5.7	0	4.7	0
Uganda	0	15	0	12	0	12
Gambia	0	—	0	0	0	0
India	0	—	0	0	0	0
Nepal	0	—	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	0	—	0	0	0	0

£ million

	2003–04		*2004–05*	
	Health	*Education*	*Health*	*Education*
Mozambique	5.3	0	5.3	0
Uganda	0	0	0	0
Gambia	0	4	0	4
India	0	20	0	51.3
Nepal	0	0	0	2.1
Pakistan	15	0	7.5	0

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list private Members' Bills introduced *(a)* under Standing Order No. 14(6), *(b)* Standing Order No. 23 and *(c)* Standing Order No. 57 which were (i) supported and (ii) opposed by his Department in each session since 1997–98. [41637]

Hilary Benn: In July 2005, the hon. Member for Stone (Mr. Cash) introduced the International Development (Anti-corruption Audit) Bill under Standing Order 57. This was tabled for Second Reading on 14 October and again on 28 October but was not reached. In 2002–03 and 2003–04 no private Members' Bills were introduced which fell under the departmental responsibility of DFID. No information is held about private Members' Bills presented prior to this time.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the United Kingdom aid budget to sub-Saharan Africa excluding debt cancellation was for *(a)* the 2005 calendar year and *(b)* financial year 2004–05; and what the expected budget is for 2005–06. [42084]

Hilary Benn: In 2004–05 the UK's gross public expenditure on development in sub-Sarahan Africa amounted to £1.18 billion. This figure is reported in table 11 in our annual publication, Statistics in International Development (SID).

Of this figure, £269.8 million represents debt relief to countries in sub-Sarahan Africa. This comprises of: £246.6 million for the Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD), £9 million for CDC (see SID Table 24), £1.7 million for DFID (see SID Table 12.1) and £12.5 million in payments to allow 100 per cent. cancellation of ECGD loans and reimbursements under the Hold in Trust policy (see SID Table 23).

This means that in total, the UK channelled £911 million of bilateral assistance to sub-Sarahan Africa, if bilateral debt relief of all forms is excluded. Note that the UK also spent money in Africa via multilateral agencies, however this amount is not disaggregated to show how much went to Africa. The UK also made a payment to the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) trust fund amounting to £42.1 million in 2004–05 for the cancellation of multilateral debt.

Aid can also be reported according to the international classification 'official development assistance' (ODA). This is undertaken on a calendar year basis. In 2004 (the latest year for which data are available), the UK ODA expenditure for sub-Sarahan Africa was £1.236 billion of which £387 million was debt relief. Excluding debt relief, the total ODA for sub-Sarahan Africa was £849 million.

The target for the bilateral programme (excluding debt relief) for 2005–06 in sub-Sarahan Africa is £1 billion.

Sudan

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what actions the Government are taking to help people of Southern Sudan. [43907]

Hilary Benn: DFID is helping the people of Southern Sudan in a variety of ways. First and foremost we are working to ensure that peace and security is sustained, through strong political support for the 9 January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and for the deployment of UN peace-keepers. DFID is also providing immediate practical assistance to help establish the new Government of South Sudan and strengthen the capacity of the police and legal system there.

On the humanitarian front, DFID is providing approximately £27 million a year through UN agencies and NGOs to help meet the urgent needs of the existing population, and those returning from other areas. This is providing food and shelter, and access to basic services such as water and sanitation, health care and education. Over two million people remain displaced from Southern Sudan, many in camps around Khartoum, and with others we are pressing to ensure that their rights are protected.

DFID is also helping to fund longer-term development needs in the south, including infrastructure, by our support for the Multi-donor Trust Fund, to which we have committed approximately £24 million over three years.

Water and Sanitation (Funding)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 871W, on water and sanitation (funding), what agreements were made by EU member states at the December European Council on allocations of aid. [42736]

Hilary Benn: The 15–16 December European Council endorsed the "European Consensus on Development" that was agreed by EU Development Ministers on 22 November at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). In May 2005, member states made commitments that should see annual EU aid double to over €66 billion per year by 2010.

The first part of the consensus sets out a common development vision to guide all EU member states development co-operation activities. Under the consensus, least developed and low income countries will be given priority in terms of overall resource allocation. It states that resources will be allocated in an objective and transparent way, based on the needs and performance of the beneficiary countries, taking into account specific situations.

Part 2 of the consensus sets out the revised EC Development Policy Statement to guide EC aid. It makes clear that the Community will apply all the principles in Part 1. It also provides more detail on needs criteria and performance criteria. The needs criteria include population, income per capita and the extent of poverty, income distribution and the level of social development. The performance criteria include political, economic and social progress, progress in good governance and the effective use of aid. The 22 November GAERC also asked the Commission and member states to publish aid projections by type and country over the next three years and possibly over a longer period.

The European consensus states that investing in areas including health, water management and infrastructure are among the top priorities for combating poverty. Part 2 sets out the aims of the EC's 'integrated water resources management' policy framework which is designed to ensure a supply of sufficient, good quality drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene for all human beings.

The December European Council also adopted the EU-Africa Strategy. The strategy re-emphasised the EU's commitment to facilitate access to water and sanitation in Africa.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when his Department will publish a full Country Assistance Plan for Yemen. [43886]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development is planning to publish its Country Assistance Plan for Yemen by July 2006.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to help improve literacy of women in Yemen. [43887]

Mr. Thomas: Improving female literacy rates is one of the main objectives of the Government of Yemen's Basic Education Development Strategy. Currently 73.5 per cent. of Yemeni women are illiterate, one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world. The Department for International Development (DFID) is providing £15 million over five years to support this strategy

through a project co-funded with the World Bank and other donors. The project aims to increase the number of girls enrolled in basic education by 23 per cent. and the number of girls completing basic education by 30 per cent. by 2010. This will be done by helping increase girls' access to school, including by providing more girls only classrooms and female teachers.

To help keep girls in school, the project will enable parents to have greater involvement in school management, and provide community based adult literacy classes, as evidence shows that adult literacy has a major impact on pupil attendance and performance. The project also aims to improve the quality of education through improvements to teacher training, curriculum development, and education policy, planning, and implementation. This should contribute to better learning outcomes, including higher rates of female literacy.

DFID is also providing £12 million to the Yemen Social Fund for Development (SFD) over four years which provides community level development. Approximately half of the SFD's funds are used to improve access to and quality of education, with a strong focus on girls education.

DFID has also funded Yemeni participation in regional adult literacy workshops in Algeria and Cairo as part of the G8-Broader Middle East Partnership for Progress that has adult literacy as one of its key themes.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of water shortages in Yemen; and what steps his Department plans to take to help alleviate water shortages. [43888]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that the rapid depletion and mismanagement of water resources are a major threat to Yemen's development and future stability. Yemen receives relatively little aid in relation to its levels of poverty, and few donors are operating in Yemen. To improve the effectiveness of the aid which Yemen receives, DFID is helping the Government of Yemen and donors to improve the co-ordination of donor aid and persuade donors to support Government of Yemen policies rather than unco-ordinated projects. An important part of improving aid effectiveness is that donors focus their assistance in a few areas, and do not duplicate assistance from other donors.

The Yemeni Ministry of Water and Environment has, with donor support, developed a National Water Sector Strategy and Investment Plan (NWSSIP) which is a comprehensive assessment of Yemen's water sector and an action plan to improve water management. Donors, (including the UK) and Government of Yemen, have signed a declaration of support for NWSSIP. DFID also encouraged the Government of Yemen to include the NWSSIP into its new plan for tackling overall development and poverty reduction, to help ensure that water management is considered in other areas of government policy. This ensures sector needs are reflected in planning and budget allocations.

The World Bank, the German and the Dutch Governments are providing substantive assistance to the water sector in Yemen, allowing DFID to focus on other areas. We do however help to improve water management through our contributions to the Social Fund for Development (£12 million over four years) which provides community level development including improving water supply and sanitation to the poorest communities. We recognise the importance of strengthened donor engagement including helping the government develop better policies. We are therefore considering support to finance a water specialist to the World Bank office in Sana'a.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment his officials have made of the poverty reduction strategy in Yemen. [43889]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development is providing £3 million over three years in support of the Yemen poverty reduction strategy (PRS). This includes actively supporting development of the 3rd PRS (which is known as the Development Plan for Poverty Reduction-DPPR).

DFID officials assess the content and implementation of the PRS/ DPPR at key stages; for example, when the Government releases a monitoring report, and in response to the needs assessment for the DDPR, which will be based on the Millennium Development Goals. Together with other donors, we will also assess the content of the DPPR when it is released and throughout its implementation. Concerns we have raised include the need to strengthen:

links between the PRS/ DPPR and a comprehensive, transparent budget;

strategies to address political and social exclusion, gender inequality, and severe poverty;

attention to governance reforms and under-emphasised fields such as justice;

evidence of impacts of the PRS in key sectors such as health and education; and

indicators on which to gauge progress.

In addition to our assessments of the PRS/ DPPR, DFID's support is particularly geared to enabling Yemenis themselves to assess and influence these strategies. Through Oxfam and other partners, we are supporting civil society groups to: shape the content of the plans; ensure that they are in the interests of the poor and promote gender equality; and monitor and hold the Government accountable for delivering on the commitments they contain.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which projects his Department supports for the promotion of *(a)* democracy and *(b)* transparency of civic institutions in Yemen. [43890]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development's programme in Yemen focuses on supporting the development of a more stable, responsive, and accountable state. This includes enabling Yemeni citizens to contribute to how government services are delivered, and holding the Government accountable for their quality.

DFID is directly supporting the promotion of democracy and transparent civic institutions through provision of £900,000 for improving the effectiveness of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda

(SCER), which is responsible for administering elections in Yemen and ensuring that they are free and fair.

Presidential and local council elections will be held in Yemen in September 2006. DFID's funding will be used to provide expert advice in how to prepare and conduct elections, including helping to improve legislation to ensure good management of the electoral process and to train SCER staff in administration of elections. It will also be used to help increase participation, particularly by women, in the electoral process and political life through a public information campaign conducted by the SCER in cooperation with civil society organisations.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures are in place to monitor the application of British Government aid in Zimbabwe. [42470]

Hilary Benn: DFID channels its support to the people of Zimbabwe through United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations, rather than providing direct support to the Government of Zimbabwe.

All proposals for DFID funding are subject to rigorous scrutiny, particularly with regard to the target group affected by the intervention in question, transparency of funding mechanisms and the presence of robust monitoring and evaluation systems. DFID Zimbabwe requires regular reporting from partner organisations and carries out its own monitoring and evaluation exercises on a regular, generally quarterly or six-monthly, basis. In cases where partner organisations are funded in instalments, funding is contingent upon evidence that previous contributions from DFID have been disbursed in the manner agreed in our formal agreement with that organisation.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money the British Government gave under their aid programme in Zimbabwe to *(a)* the Republic Police Grant, *(b)* the Zimbabwe Republic Police Organisation Development, *(c)* the UK/Zimbabwe Air Traffic Control Radar, *(d)* Land Rovers ATP and *(e)* LANPOL Police ATP in each year between 1997 and 2001. [42472]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows how much money the UK Government gave under their aid programme in Zimbabwe to the following programmes between 1997 and 2001.

The Republic Police Grant and the Zimbabwe Republic Police Organisation Development programme are one and the same.

Expenditure by UK financial year

£000

Programme title	*1996–07*	*1997–08*	*1998–09*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Zimbabwe Republic Police Organisation Development	8	90	741	741	96	—
Air Traffic Control Radar Phase 2 Monitoring Consultancy—Civil Aviation Authority	83	115	88	39	19	—
Aid-and-Trade Provision Supply of 300 Land Rovers	224	62	—	—	—	—
Land Rovers for Zimbabwe Republic Police Aid-and-Trade Provision Project	—	—	5,354	1,355	24	[1]-49

[1] Indicates that amount was returned to DFID.

DFID suspended development assistance to Zimbabwe in 2002, in protest at continuing disregard for democratic principles and mismanagement of the economy by the Government of Zimbabwe. Since that time, DFID has only supported the international response to the humanitarian and HIV/AIDS crisis in Zimbabwe, through funding to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government will be taking to help alleviate the effects of the recent cholera outbreak in Harare, Zimbabwe. [43906]

Hilary Benn: There have been several outbreaks of cholera across Zimbabwe in the past two months, which is not unusual at this time of year. In Harare, there have been five suspected cases with three deaths. There have been other outbreaks, including in the Chikomba district (219 suspected cases and seven deaths), and the Buhera district (51 suspected cases and three deaths). While the Harare figures remain low by comparison and do not yet constitute an epidemic, the danger of cholera spreading rapidly through urban areas with high population density remains high.

The Zimbabwean Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, supported by the World Health Organisation, has led investigations into suspected cases in Harare and notes that, although many cases have been presented with symptoms suggestive of cholera, only a few have been given a positive diagnosis following laboratory tests.

The situation so far is under control. DFID is in contact with the World Health Organisation and UNICEF who are monitoring the situation closely. DFID has funded an emergency preparedness project with the Save the Children Fund (UK), who have stocks of cholera kits for deployment, including intravenous fluids, should this be necessary. Should the problem escalate, DFID stands ready to offer additional assistance in the form of funds for procurement of commodities as well as provision of technical expertise according to need.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Office *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43504]

Mr. Hoon: No disciplinary action has been taken against civil servants in the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons within the last five years.

Ministerial Visits

David Mundell: To ask the Leader of the House further to his oral statement of 17 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1115, what the arrangements are for his visit to the Scottish Parliament to discuss Sewel motions. [43028]

Mr. Hoon: My visit to the Scottish Parliament has not yet been confirmed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Early-day Motions

Mr. Steen: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the cost was of printing and administering early day motions in each of the last four parliamentary Sessions. [44625]

Nick Harvey: House of Commons printing and publishing charges are calculated in arrears by financial year and are therefore available only in this form. The cost of printing and publishing early day motions (EDMs), to the nearest £1,000, for the last four financial years, has been:

	Amount (£)
2001–02	338,000
2002–03	516,000
2003–04	573,000
2004–05	614,000

As a consequence of in House origination and pagination, the cost per printed page has been held at around £60 a page over the past three years, compared to the cost in 2000–01 of £77 a page.

Other costs associated with administering EDMs, such as editorial preparation and control, and electronic publishing, are not separately identifiable. The number of EDMs tabled, and the number of signatures added, have risen markedly in the past four years:

	Average number of EDMs tabled per week	*Average number of signatures added per week*
2001–02	41	2,167
2002–03	52	2,673
2003–04	63	3,055
2004–05	60	3,090

Mail (Security Scanning)

Mr. Drew: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what recent assessment he has made of the performance of the organisation which is responsible for security scanning mail to the House; on how many occasions the House authorities have made complaints about its work; what assessment has been made of the environmental consequences of the journeys required to process mail; and if he will make a statement. [44424]

Nick Harvey: The performance of the company responsible for security scanning is under constant review with regular meetings being held between representatives of the company and representatives of both Houses of Parliament. A number of teething problems occurred during the first weeks of the new contract last year; these appear to have abated and there has been no cause for complaint in the last two months. Some of the concerns raised were related to the interface between the screening and the mail processes, and both organisations involved have worked hard to improve these. No assessment has been made of the environmental consequences of the journeys required to process the mail, in view of the need for extensive off-site security screening in the current security climate.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Civil Servants

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by her Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41582]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's civil servant salary costs in each year since 1997 are shown in the table:

	Salary (£000)	*Salary as percentage of net resource outturn*
1997–98	8,458	0.29
1998–99	9,112	0.30
1999–2000	10,169	0.31
2000–01	10,654	0.35
2001–02	12,245	0.38
2002–03	13,392	0.38
2003–04	14,488	0.35
2004–05	15,319	0.40

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997; [39102]

(2) if she will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which her Department is responsible and

(c) independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by her Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39103]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has over 60 sponsored bodies/Executive agencies and the figures for them could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what has been the annual expenditure on vehicles for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39994]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) lease five cars from the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA). Four for our Ministers and one for our permanent secretary.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has over 60 sponsored bodies/Executive agencies and the figures for them could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library of the House.

Departmental Property

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by her Department in the past 12 months. [43429]

Mr. Lammy: In 2005 the items reported stolen, valued at over £100 were: 1 desktop PC and 1 mobile phone.

Departmental Staff (Disciplinary Actions)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in her Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43499]

Mr. Lammy: The Department commenced disciplinary actions against eight civil servants during the last five years; one in 2000–01, one in 2001–02, four in 2003–04 and two in 2004–05. Seven of the disciplinary actions resulted in a sanction being applied.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) whether *(a)* opera, *(b)* (i) classical, (ii) jazz, (iii) blues and (iv) choral music and *(c)* folk singing is recorded as participation in an arts activity for the purposes of her Department's Public Service Agreement performance target 3; and if she will make a statement; [44022]

(2) whether attending a *(a)* book or poetry reading, *(b)* street performance, *(c)* musical, *(d)* film, *(e)* cultural festival and *(f)* carnival is recorded as an attendance for the purposes of her Department's Public Service Agreement performance target 3; and if she will make a statement; [44026]

(3) whether attending a *(a)* world, *(b)* dance, *(c)* rock, *(d)* alternative, *(e)* blues, *(f)* electronica, *(g)* hip-hop, *(h)* rap, *(i)* rhythm and blues, *(j)* soul, *(k)* bangra, *(l)* jungle, *(m)* punk, *(n)* folk and *(o)* choral music event is recorded as an attendance for the purposes of her Department's Public Service Agreement performance target 3; and if she will make a statement; [44027]

(4) whether designing *(a)* clothes and *(b)* websites is recorded as participation in an arts activity for the purposes of her Department's Public Service Agreement performance target 3; and if she will make a statement; [44035]

(5) whether *(a)* directing, *(b)* stage designing and *(c)* costume designing for (i) plays, (ii) television programmes and (iii) films is recorded as participation in an arts activity for the purposes of her Department's Public Service Agreement performance target 3; and if she will make a statement. [44036]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested can be found in the 2005–08 Public Service Agreements (PSA) Technical Note, which is on my Department's website at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2005/psa_tech_note.htm

This Technical Note sets out how the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will measure progress towards its PSA targets.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she has responded to the conclusion in the Statistics Commission's report that her Department's reporting against Public Service Agreement performance target 4 uses low level results from a sample survey which is not taken into account in target setting; and if she will make a statement. [44029]

Mr. Caborn: The Department's Public Service Agreement (PSA) Technical Note publishes information about the data used to measure target 4 and its limitations. The issues raised by the Commission will be considered in the setting of future targets.

In reporting progress against PSA target 4, the Department does currently produce cumulative averages and trends for HMT as additional background information.

The target is measured using data from the Office for National Statistics' Annual Business Inquiry. This survey provides detailed information about the industries covered by the target and is the best source available.

Digital Television

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) when she estimates digital television will be accessible to all people living in Dundee through household aerials; [44045]

(2) when she plans to switch off the analogue signal in Dundee. [44046]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Government are committed to ensuring that at Digital Switchover everyone in the UK who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form can receive them on digital without needing to pay a subscription.

Switchover for the Grampian region will happen in the first half of 2010.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of households in the UK had access to digital television through their household aerial in each of the past three years. [44048]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Around 73 per cent. of UK households can access Freeview services via their aerial, with the right equipment. The figure is the same for each of the past three years.

Football Foundation

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what schemes have been financed by the Football Foundation in *(a)* the Tees Valley and *(b)* the Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency area. [43806]

Mr. Caborn: In the Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland area, the Football Foundation has funded four junior kit schemes for schools and is currently considering two applications under the Barclays Spaces for Sport Coaching Pack and one under the Barclaycard Free Kicks schemes.

To date, the Football Foundation has not funded any schemes in the Tees Valley area.

Gambling

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what information her Department collects on internet-related problem gambling. [44290]

Mr. Caborn: In 1999, the National Centre for Social Research conducted a study into the prevalence of problem gambling in Britain. It did not include the online gambling sector which was not of sufficient size or maturity to make a statistical impact.

This summer, the Gambling Commission will be conducting a baseline study into the prevalence of problem gambling in all gambling sectors, including online gambling. This study will be repeated at three-yearly intervals once the Gambling Act 2005 is fully implemented in September 2007.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research she has commissioned on the effects of internet gambling. [44291]

Mr. Caborn: My Department has commissioned research into attitudes towards gambling, gambling spend and participation in gambling activities. This includes, but is not specific to, online gambling.

This summer, the Gambling Commission will be conducting a study into the prevalence of problem gambling in all gambling sectors, including online gambling, which will be published before the Gambling Act 2005 is fully implemented in September 2007.

Inter-ministerial Meetings (Scottish Executive)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many inter-ministerial meetings her Department has held with the Scottish Executive since May 1999; and what the *(a)* Scottish Executive department concerned, *(b)* subject and *(c)* date was of each such meeting. [39939]

Mr. Lammy: I am sorry for not replying sooner to the hon. Member's question, tabled on 19 December 2005.

Ministers have regular dialogues with ministerial colleagues in the Scottish Executive, discussing a wide range of issues of mutual interest. It is not our practice to disclose details of such meetings.

Licensing Act 2003

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effects of the Licensing Act 2003 on levels of crime and disorder in *(a)* Gravesham and *(b)* England and Wales. [43280]

Mr. Caborn: It is too early to draw any firm conclusions about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on the level of crime and disorder. However, there are anecdotal signs of some positive impact from the new flexibility in closing times to reduce flash points at 11 pm, and we have received no evidence that licensing law changes have had an adverse impact on accident and emergency facilities.

The Government will continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation closely, including a programme of evaluation being conducted by the Home Office into the impact of the licensing reforms on crime and disorder.

Olympic Games

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what level of funding has been made available to support youth sport up to the 2012 London Olympics. [44296]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* In the five years leading up to 2008, DCMS, DfES and lottery investment in PE and school sport will total over £1.5 billion. This is being invested in schemes benefiting children and young people through PE, School Sport, Club Links and Coaching.

In addition, Sport England is funding a number of programmes up to 2009[1], which will help support and deliver youth sport.

Examples of these programmes include £100 million Exchequer funding up to 2008 in England for the Community Club Development Programme, to assist National Governing Bodies in developing community sports clubs which increase participation and widen access to sport for groups including young people.

A further example is the £17 million Exchequer funding allocated to the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme up to 2008 and the £2 million Lottery funding allocated to 2012 scholarships, to support our young medal hopefuls[2].

[1] DCMS has a three year commitment until 2008 to provide Sport England and UK Sport with Exchequer funding. Lottery distribution shares within the Sport good cause are fixed until 2009 to allow Sport England and UK Sport to distribute Lottery funding. As such, details of funding commitments beyond 2009 are currently not available.

[2] From 1 April 2006, the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme and 2012 scholarships will be funded by UK Sport.

Poetry

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Arts Council is planning to take to promote poetry in the 2005 to 2008 period; what funding has been allocated for this purpose in the budget for that period; and if she will make a statement. [44435]

Mr. Lammy: Poetry is promoted throughout the 2005 to 2008 period through the 24 Arts Council England (ACE) poetry Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs). ACE is funding organisations and activity that encourage both writing and reading across all age groups and right across society.

The following table shows the amount ACE has given to literature RFOs, and within this amount those which focus on poetry. Many literature organisations which may not be poetry specific, do also have a poetry remit.

£

	Funding		
Art form	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Literature	5,419,289	5,529,656	5,782,567
Poetry	1,759,165	1,617,152	1,612,683

TV Licence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will end the practice of charging TV licence payers a separate fee for holiday homes and other permanent structures where it is evident that the television could not be viewed simultaneously at both properties. [43953]

Mr. Caborn: No. The Government have no plans for any changes to the existing licensing requirements for permanent structure second homes.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total amount raised by the television licence fee has been since it was last reviewed. [44873]

Mr. Caborn: The current television licence fee settlement was announced in February 2000. Total television licence fee revenue for the financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05 inclusive, as recorded in the BBC annual reports and accounts, was £13,301 million. This includes payments to the BBC by the Department for Work and Pensions for free licences issued to people aged 75 or over.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Air Routes (Price Fixing)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to create a more competitive market on air routes between Heathrow and the USA; whether he has made any assessment of price fixing on such routes; and if he will make a statement. [43101]

Ms Buck: I have been asked to reply.

The UK Government is actively engaged, alongside our EU partners, in negotiations towards an EU-wide Air Services Agreement with the US. Such an agreement could remove existing limitations on services between Heathrow and the US, enabling an unlimited number of services to be operated by any EU or US airline, subject to the availability of appropriate slots. However, no agreement has yet been reached.

The Department is not aware of any evidence of price fixing on Heathrow-USA routes. It would be for the UK's competition regulator, the Office of Fair Trading, to investigate such matters.

Artists Resale Levy

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what criteria were used in setting the level of sales in relation to the artists' resale levy below €3,000; what assessment has been made of the administrative costs of setting the level at this rate; and if he will make a statement. [44409]

Barry Gardiner: *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Government considered all evidence and opinion submitted during consultation and in subsequent discussions with key interests. This included submissions from artists and the art market, the report of House of Commons Select Committee and the most up to date independent economic research. Setting the threshold at €1,000 would allow a large number of UK artists to receive royalties. Below €1,000 the administrative costs do become disproportionate to the benefit to the artist. We have balanced the need to protect our art market with the need to reward artists for their creativity. The draft regulations were laid before this House on 15 December and will be debated in due course.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42871]

Alan Johnson: All buildings on the DTI HQ estate are fitted with audible fire alarms.

Business Review

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many companies will be required to produce the proposed enhanced Business Review; how many would have been required to produce an Operating and Financial Review; whether all companies

operating in the United Kingdom will have to produce such business reviews; and what enhancements to the proposed Business Review will be made. [42145]

Alun Michael: Under provisions introduced into the Companies Act 1985 by the Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc.) Regulations of March 2005, all GB quoted companies would have been required to produce an Operating and Financial Review. The associated Regulatory Impact Assessment put the number of quoted companies at 1,290.

Only GB registered companies will be required to produce a Directors' Report including a Business Review, under section 234ZZB of the Companies Act 1985, for financial years beginning on or after 1 April 2005. The Regulatory Impact Assessment accompanying the regulations which introduced the requirement indicated that 37,290 GB companies will have to publish a Directors' Report including a Business Review. This does not include companies which meet the statutory definition of a small company which will not have to include a Business Review.

As I indicated in my statement to the House before Christmas, the Government are currently inviting views on whether any particular requirements of the Business Review need to be further clarified; and on any other considerations which Ministers should take into account in deciding how to frame suitable amendments for the Company Law Reform Bill on these matters. The consultation closes on 15 February and therefore no decisions have been taken.

Cape Town Treaty

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the UK Government have to ratify the Cape Town treaty. [42028]

Alun Michael: The UK played an active role in negotiations on the Cape Town Convention and Aircraft Protocol at the 2001 Diplomatic Conference and is committed to its ratification though there are no immediate plans to do so.

It should be noted that the convention is one of a number of so-called "mixed competence" Treaties where conclusion at EU level has been blocked due to disagreement between the UK and Spain over Gibraltar. Spain does not formally recognise Gibraltar competent authorities, because it does not recognise Gibraltar's 1969 constitution. In April 2000, a set of "Postboxing Arrangements" was concluded, to facilitate communications between Gibraltar authorities and their counterparts elsewhere in the European Union by indirect contact through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London. These arrangements were circulated to all member states and the institutions of the EU on 19 April 2000. They laid down how "postboxing" would operate in relation both to EU instruments and to certain named international conventions. They would only apply to other treaties if both sides agreed. For its part, the UK has also made clear that it would need to obtain the consent of the Government of Gibraltar.

Coal Reserves (Scotland)

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what licences have been granted for *(a)* the extraction of coal and *(b)* coal exploration in South Lanarkshire; and in what areas in each case. [44235]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on current Coal Authority licences in South Lanarkshire are as follows:

Name	*Licensee*	*Address*
Broken Cross	The Scottish Coal Company Ltd.	Lanark
Chapelhill Site	The Scottish Coal Company Ltd.	Carmacoup
Climpy	CRE Energy Ltd.	Forth
Dalquhandy Site	The Scottish Coal Company Ltd.	Bankend, Coalburn
Edge Farm	George Raeburn	East Kilbride
Edge Farm Site	George Raeburn	East Kilbride
Glentaggart	The Scottish Coal Company Ltd.	Lanark
Wilsontown	Hall Construction Services Ltd.	Forth

Other exploration and opencast licences/agreements have been issued by the Coal Authority in South Lanarkshire but these are now expired.

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the total coal reserves are in Scotland; [44236]

(2) what the total coal reserves are in South Lanarkshire; and in what areas they are situated; [44237]

(3) what the total coal reserves are in the Douglas and Nethan valleys; in what areas they are situated; and how many tonnes each area has. [44238]

Malcolm Wicks: There are no reliable estimates of total potential coal reserves in Scotland.

50.1 million tonnes of reserves suitable for surface mining are known at existing opencast mines and sites either with planning approval or at the planning application or pre-application stage. 13.3 million tonnes of these reserves are situated in South Lanarkshire. Information is not available concerning such reserves in the Douglas and Nethan valleys.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry why the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North sent to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 2 November and transferred to his Department on 11 November was not transferred to the Department for Transport until 6 December; and if he will make a statement. [37867]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* This letter was held up in the transfer administration process. I apologise to my hon. Friend and to his constituent for the delay.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the letter dated 26 October from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan on Exports to China. [38549]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* My hon. Friend, the Minister for Trade, replied to this letter on 9 January. The reason for the delay in responding is explained in his letter.

Departmental Buildings/Equipment

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to ensure that the buildings and electrical equipment used by his Department are energy efficient. [42562]

Alan Johnson: DTI is working toward achieving the energy efficiency targets expressed in the framework for sustainable development, Part E—Energy. The targets set are to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings on the estate by 15 per cent. in terms of KWH usage and that used per square metre by 2010–11.

The DTI London HQ estate is being reduced by approximately 30 per cent. as the result of a major rationalisation programme to make more efficient use of our accommodation with significant associated reductions in the Department's overall energy usage.

The Department has implemented a number of energy efficiency initiatives since the target was published. The main strategy is to gain efficiencies as a result of the estate strategy to reduce the physical size of the estate and the number of buildings. We have also included a number of energy efficiency projects in our main buildings to improve lighting and environmental controls as well as occupant awareness.

Departmental Publications

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total cost was of the literature produced for his Department's Corporate Responsibility conference on 1 and 2 December 2005; and what percentage of paper used in this literature was recycled. [42381]

Alan Johnson: The total cost for the literature produced for the Corporate Responsibility conference on 1 and 2 December 2005 was £2,001. In addition to this we purchased 400 recycled A4 presidency writing pads from the FCO for £360.

It is the Department's policy to produce all publications on recycled paper containing a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste.

EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what new infrastructure will be put in place to help producers of electrical and electronic equipment to comply with recycling obligations under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive and the Restrictions on Hazardous Substances Directive; [41859]

(2) how many waste electronic and electrical collection facilities for domestic users the Government plans to set up in *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007 and *(c)* 2008; where these will be based; and whether doorstep collections will be arranged if there is no collection facility nearby; [41861]

(3) how the planned *(a)* domestic and *(b)* industrial collection facilities will be financed when the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive is implemented; and by whom. [41862]

Malcolm Wicks: On 14 December 2005, I announced a review of proposals for implementing the WEEE Directive. This will lead to a full consultation exercise in the spring. At this stage of the process, I am unable to assess what new infrastructure will be required. Officials in the Department are working closely with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the most pragmatic and practical way forward. There are no recycling obligations under the Restrictions on Hazardous Substances Directive.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he proposes to implement the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the United Kingdom. [42179]

Malcolm Wicks: On 14 December 2005, I announced a review of proposals for implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the UK. A new timetable for implementation will not be set until the review is concluded.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the reason is for the postponement in implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the United Kingdom announced by his Department on 15 December 2005. [42180]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government is committed to implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Directive in the UK in a way which maximises the environmental benefits associated with the directive and minimises the costs to business. The implementation of the directive has been delayed in order to take full account of concerns expressed by businesses and other stakeholders.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of the delay in the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive on business. [42296]

Malcolm Wicks: The delay in the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the UK has been welcomed by business. It will give the Government time to ensure that the costs to business are minimised once the directive has been fully implemented.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when full implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive is expected to take place. [42297]

Malcolm Wicks: On 14 December 2005, I announced a review of proposals for implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive in the UK. A new timetable for implementation will not be set until the review is concluded.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what costs will be incurred by the Government as a result of the delayed implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [42298]

Malcolm Wicks: The delay to the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive will have significant implications for local

authorities. The Department has agreed to meet any new costs in relation to the delay. We will consult local authority representatives about these amounts.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many man-hours have been spent on each *(a)* review of and *(b)* consultation on implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive; and how much each such (i) review and (ii) consultation has cost. [42300]

Malcolm Wicks: This question cannot be answered without incurring disproportionate cost to the Department.

European Regional Development Fund

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what factors affected the decision on which regions should receive additional allocations from the European Regional Development Fund under paragraph 54 of the final comprehensive proposal from the Presidency of the Financial Perspective 2007 to 2013; what account he took of the position of the Highlands and Islands when making the proposal; and if he will make a statement. [44277]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Paragraph 43 of the final comprehensive proposal from the presidency, explained that the methods, definitions and arrangements set out in the document for allocating the structural and cohesion funds to the member states are by necessity of a general nature. They do not allow an adequate response to certain circumstances, such as the need to take into account revisions of the most recent statistical data; the disproportionate impact on certain regions and countries of mechanically applying certain criteria and exceptional geographic and demographic circumstances.

Some member states and regions were identified as having circumstances that justified special provision. This is reflected in paragraphs 44 to 54 of the proposal.

I am aware of the particular difficulties of the Highlands and Islands as a result of falling GDP levels. The December budget settlement will provide further substantial European support, to enable the Highlands and Islands to tackle those challenges over the next seven years. This support comes on top of the quarter of a billion euros the region has received since 2000.

Export Licences

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many requests for export licences for Man Portable Air Defence Systems to Governments or their agents were made under the June 2003 G8 Evian protocol; and how many were granted. [38294]

Malcolm Wicks: ECO has not received any applications to export complete MANPAD systems since June 2003.

ECO has issued three and refused one export licence(s) for components for MANPADS.

Freepost

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual cost has been to Royal Mail of fraudulent or abusive misuse of the freepost system in each of the last five years. [44189]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Gas Prices

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the effect of UK gas prices on industry. [43900]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government take the recent increases in gas prices very seriously, and particularly their impact on the competitiveness of UK industry. We understand that this creates tough trading conditions, especially for energy intensive users, and we are aware of a few companies having reduced production in response to the very high prices since November. This will, of course, have a negative impact on UK industrial output, but in terms of overall GDP this will be relatively minor.

I have visited a number of major industrial gas users and am continuing to meet with companies, business representatives and gas suppliers to discuss gas prices and security of supply. We are also undertaking some research into the capability of UK industry to reduce their gas demand.

The impact on UK businesses of increases in gas prices will depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas a particular company uses, the degree of their exposure to spot and forward prices and the duration of high prices. It will also be affected by the energy prices paid by their competitors. A further sector-specific issue is whether they are in a competitive market where international trade sets the price or in a sector where prices are determined more locally and rising energy costs could be passed on.

Provisional data for October 2005 show that UK retail gas prices for small, medium and large industrial users were below the EU15 median. However, individual companies will have agreed commercially confidential contract terms and prices that might differ from these averages. I am also aware, from my industry visits and meetings, that, there is some evidence that gas prices in the UK for some of our very large industrial users are above those on the Continent, and I recognise the risk that this presents to UK competitiveness. Officials are working closely with Industry and Ofgem, with a view to help, wherever possible, to mitigate the situation and reduce these impacts.

Marine Bill

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to contribute to the Marine Bill, with particular reference to *(a)* streamlining consents for activities in the marine environment and *(b)* improving the planning regime for such activities. [43166]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department is working closely with Defra as the Department leading on preparation of a Marine Bill. Making consenting and offshore planning processes more efficient is an important objective for the Bill.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received on the content of the draft Marine Bill; and if he will make a statement. [43167]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has had various discussions with other departments, industry and stakeholders on proposals for a Bill. The Government will shortly be undertaking a public consultation on most of the main issues that a Marine Bill might cover and will in due course publish a summary of the representations received in response to that consultation.

Miners Compensation Scheme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to resolve the pension loss issues at co-defendant rates in the coal miners compensation scheme. [44540]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Department is working hard to reach agreement on this issue with all parties. The information that is required to process claims affected by this issue is not with the Department but with the claimants' representatives and insurers of the small mines. I am therefore unable to give a firm date for resolution of this issue, but hope that we will soon be able to reach an agreement with the other parties.

Natural Environment Research Council

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many requests for additional funding the Natural Environment Research Council made in each year since 1997; what the amounts were in each case; and how many of these requests were granted. [42552]

Barry Gardiner: During the course of each Spending Review since 1997, the Natural Environment Research Council has requested funding to support its key priorities. NERC received the following allocations from the Department (as set out in the Science Budget allocations publications at http://www.ost.gov.uk/research/gov_spend.htm), which are subject to technical budgeting adjustments:

Budget (£ million)

	Science
1997–98	165.1
1998–99	168.8
1999–2000	178.5
2000–01	181.8
2001–02	192.9
2002–03	205.4
2003–04	264.1
2004–05	314.2
2005–06	334.0

In addition, the Department administers the Large Facilities Capital Fund which provides capital funding for large scientific projects. NERC sought support from the fund towards the construction of RRS James Cook and a rebuild of the Halley Antarctic Station, and has been granted upto £25 million for the first and £20.1 million for the second.

NERC has also requested additional funding outside the normal allocation process. In particular it has requested support for the following:

2001—a contribution towards the estimated £3.023 million costs of reconstruction of the Bonner Laboratory at the Rothera research station in Antarctica following its destruction by fire. The Department agreed to provide up to £2.49 million to support the rebuilding costs.

2001—a request for support for costs arising from impact of the foot and mouth outbreak. No additional support was provided and the costs were met by NERC from within its existing allocation.

2002—a request for additional funding during the transition to Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB). No additional support was provided.

2005—a contribution towards the redevelopment of part of the British Geological Survey site at Keyworth. The Department has agreed to provide up to £5 million towards capital costs.

2005—restructuring of CEH (see answer to PQ No. 42553 answered on 20 January 2006.)

Patents Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of sections 1 to 4 of the Patents Act 2004. [41002]

Alan Johnson: Sections 1 to 4 of the Patents Act 2004 will bring UK patents legislation into line with the revised European Patent Convention ("EPC"). These provisions will be brought into force at the same time as the revised EPC itself takes effect. This is desirable in order to maintain consistency between the UK and European patents systems. It is uncertain exactly when this will be, because the revised EPC takes effect two years after the 15th state has ratified or acceded, or (if earlier) three months after the final state has ratified or acceded. At present I understand that 14 states have done so, and that includes the UK. The revised EPC, and the corresponding provisions in the 2004 Act, are therefore unlikely to take effect before mid-2008.

Pension Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39993]

Alan Johnson: The pension contributions recorded in the Department of Trade and Industry's Consolidated Resource Accounts (which include the executive agencies, The Insolvency Service, Employment Tribunals Service, National Weights And Measures Laboratory and the NDPB The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service) are as follows:

	£000
2002–03	30,053
2003–04	32,076
2004–05	34,876

The pension costs of the non-consolidated bodies for which the Department is responsible are accounted for in each of the individual body's published accounts. To table each of these bodies to obtain this information would result in the incurring of disproportionate costs.

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 per cent. to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Postcomm

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what reasons Postcomm gave for its decision to remove Presstream from price control when the new price control regime starts in April; and if he will make a statement. [44256]

Barry Gardiner: Price control is a matter for Postcomm, the industry regulator. Background information regarding its decision can be found on its website at http://www.psc.gov.uk/policy-and-consultations/consultations/price-control.html

Renewable Energy Systems

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for how many projects Renewable Energy Systems Groups has received Government grants, including grants from regional development agencies; and what the level of funding received was for each project. [43358]

Malcolm Wicks: None.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate his Department has made of the annual premiums Renewable Energy Systems would receive on electricity generated at the proposed wind farm at Den Brook. [43359]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has made no estimate of the annual premiums Renewable Energy Systems would receive on electricity generated from the proposed wind farm at Den Brook.

This is primarily a matter for the developer.

Wind Farms

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has had with Renewable Energy Systems Groups regarding the proposed wind farm at Yelland, Devon. [43357]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has had no discussions with Renewable Energy Systems regarding the proposed wind farm at Yelland in Devon.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what premiums the Government offers to companies running wind farms for the energy that they contribute to the National Grid which is not available to energy generated through other means. [43355]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government does not offer companies running wind farms a premium for their electricity that is not available to energy generated through other means.

However, wind farms, like some other sources of renewable energy such as wave and tidal power, are supported under the Renewables Obligation.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost to public funds of grants to companies for the construction of wind farms has been for each of the last five years, broken down by company. [43360]

Malcolm Wicks: The cost to public funds of grants to companies for the construction of offshore wind farms in the last five financial years is as follows:

£ million

Financial year	*Project*	*Developer*	*Cost*
2004–05	North Hoyle	National Wind Power	7.5
2004–05	Scroby Sands	EON UK	7.5
2005–06	Kentish Flats	Kentish Flats Ltd.	8.7
2005–06	Barrow Offshore	Centrica and Dong A/S	6.5
2005–06	North Hoyle	National Wind Power	2.3
2005–06	Scroby Sands	EON UK	2.2
Total			34.7

No capital grants have been paid to companies for the construction of onshore wind farms in the last five financial years.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in Hartlepool since the penalty was introduced; and how many have been breached. [39173]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the crime reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced. The Home Office court proceedings database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction. These data are available at criminal justice area level only.

Asylum/Immigration

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Minister's statement in the Standing Committee on the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill, on 25 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 237, when the full review and evaluation of section 9 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004, will be completed; if he will place a copy of the study and its results in the Library; and if he will make a statement. [41908]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration Service/National Asylum Support Service (NASS) review and evaluate section 9 is currently ongoing. The document is scheduled to be completed by the end of February.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants were returned to other EU countries under the terms of the Dublin Regulations in each month since June 2005. [40356]

Mr. McNulty: The approximate number of asylum applicants returned to other EU countries under the terms of the Dublin Regulations in each month since June 2005 is as follows:

	Number
June 2005	130
July 2005	140
August 2005	150
September 2005	140

These figures are based on internal management information and as such are not of sufficient quality to be published as National Statistics.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the removal of failed asylum seekers from the United Kingdom. [40442]

Mr. McNulty: All asylum claims are considered on their individual merits by specially trained caseworkers with access to comprehensive and up to date country information, with due regard to the United Kingdom's obligations under both the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Asylum seekers whose claims are not successful are given every opportunity to leave the United Kingdom voluntarily. However, it is essential to the maintenance of a fair immigration and asylum system that those who have no right to remain in the United Kingdom and who have chosen not to leave voluntarily are removed.

This is always done in the most sensitive way possible, treating those being removed with courtesy and professionalism. We will only remove an asylum seeker from the UK where it has been found that it is safe to do so.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2877W on asylum/immigration, what the cost would be of providing a quantitative answer to the question; and if he will make a statement. [43044]

Mr. McNulty: *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* As part of the Home Office, IND is not obliged to comply with any information request where the prescribed costs of supplying the information exceed £600. The £600 limit applies to all central Government Departments. At the end of September 2005 there were 6,100 outstanding asylum applications awaiting an initial decision.

As the number of asylum cases outstanding by nationality is not available, confirming how many outstanding applications for leave to remain on grounds of asylum there are from applicants from each member state of the European Union would require an examination of each individual case record. The IND has estimated that this would considerably exceed the £600 figure.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applications were made by Eritreans to the United Kingdom during 2004–05; and how many of these applications were successful. [43134]

Mr. McNulty: The requested information is not available. Information on asylum applications, grants of asylum at initial decision and appeal outcomes for Eritrean nationals is published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at: http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to set up an Immigration and Nationality Directorate office in Scotland for the purpose of attracting more immigrants to Scotland. [39937]

Mr. McNulty: There is currently a Public Enquiry Office in Glasgow which offers a same day service for the consideration of straightforward applications for leave to remain and settlement from non-EEA nationals living anywhere in the UK.

Bicester Accommodation Centre

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much of his Department's budget was allocated to building an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [43509]

Mr. McNulty: The capital budget allocation for the development of the trial of accommodation centres was £3 million in 2003–04 and £54 million in 2004–05. The capital budget allocation in 2005–06 was £52 million and related only to the centre near Bicester.

Community Support Officers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria were used in making the decision not to give community support officers powers to arrest. [43415]

Hazel Blears: The primary role of community support officers (CSOs) is to provide high visibility reassurance policing and to tackle low level crime and anti-social behaviour. We have set out our proposals to establish a standard set of powers for CSOs which includes the power to detain a person for up to 30 minutes, pending the arrival of a constable. The proposed standard set of powers will ensure that all CSOs have the powers necessary to play a full role in neighbourhood policing teams.

Correspondence

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 28 November 2005 regarding police re-organisation from Mr. Terrence S. Hyde, a constituent of the hon. Member for Shrewsbury and Atcham. [43060]

Hazel Blears: A reply was sent to Mr. Terence Hyde, on 16 January 2006, and a copy has been sent to the hon. Member.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 22 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, on behalf of Juliet Johnson (Home Office reference J1094975, acknowledgement reference B28026/5). [43175]

Mr. McNulty: Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 18 January 2006.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter of 22 November 2005 from the hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, on behalf of Ansumana Barrow and Fatoumata Barrow (reference B453843, acknowledgement reference BZ8028/5). [44108]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate replied to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 19 January 2006.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 12 October 2005 from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green regarding her constituent Mr. Isaac Amas-Osasu (Home Office ref: A1435001). [44722]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate replied to the hon. Member's letter to the Head of Member of Parliament Correspondence Section on 20 January 2005.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many notifiable offences were committed in England in each year since 1976–77, broken down by *(a)* burglary, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* robbery, *(d)* violent crime and *(e)* other offences; what the percentage change was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [41306]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the following tables.

Table 1: Offences recorded by the police in England

Number and percentage

	All burglary		*Vehicle crime*		*Robbery*	
	Number	*Percentage change*	*Number*	*Percentage change*	*Number*	*Percentage change*
1976	486,771	n/a	480,394	n/a	11,267	n/a
1977[2]	571,101	n/a	575,770	n/a	13,395	n/a
1978	536,683	-6	581,395	1	12,867	-4
1979	521,272	-3	559,669	-4	12,218	-5
1980	590,153	13	590,343	5	14,699	20
1981	686,899	16	680,227	15	19,920	36
1982	771,713	12	763,850	12	22,497	13
1983	772,981	0	715,113	-6	21,813	-3
1984	854,736	11	762,280	7	24,610	13
1985	828,808	-3	807,248	6	27,179	10
1986	886,347	7	941,747	17	29,630	9
1987	855,910	-3	997,343	6	32,262	9
1988	776,413	-9	930,414	-7	31,055	-4
1989	786,917	1	969,065	4	32,777	6
1990	961,696	22	1,200,462	24	35,731	9
1991	1,160,470	21	1,416,489	18	44,738	25
1992	1,290,664	11	1,468,715	4	52,224	17
1993	1,307,683	1	1,445,873	-2	57,098	9
1994	1,203,637	-8	1,303,055	-10	59,377	4
1995	1,183,159	-2	1,253,756	-4	67,284	13
1996	1,112,752	-6	1,227,368	-2	73,172	9
1997	968,630	-13	1,057,787	-14	62,261	-15

Number and percentage

	Violent crime[1]		*All other offences*		*Total*	
	Number	*Percentage change*	*Number*	*Percentage change*	*Number*	*Percentage change*
1976	105,583	n/a	954,119	n/a	2,026,867	n/a
1977[2]	110,915	n/a	1,242,780	n/a	2,500,566	n/a
1978	116,242	5	1,196,503	-4	2,430,823	-3
1979	122,602	5	1,205,727	1	2,409,270	-1
1980	126,956	4	1,248,511	4	2,555,963	6
1981	133,415	5	1,320,928	6	2,821,469	10
1982	143,830	8	1,425,591	8	3,104,984	10
1983	146,677	2	1,451,377	2	3,086,148	-1
1984	151,899	4	1,558,657	7	3,327,572	8
1985	162,791	7	1,636,758	5	3,435,605	3
1986	169,696	4	1,659,879	1	3,657,669	6
1987	189,053	11	1,655,090	0	3,697,396	1
1988	205,398	9	1,607,085	-3	3,519,310	-5

Number and percentage

	Violent crime[1]		All other offences		Total	
	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change
1989	227,638	11	1,691,243	5	3,674,863	4
1990	236,985	4	1,915,220	13	4,314,363	17
1991	251,720	6	2,176,456	14	5,005,135	16
1992	268,821	7	2,276,259	5	5,304,459	6
1993	278,380	4	2,215,301	-3	5,247,237	-1
1994	296,208	6	2,194,007	-1	4,996,907	-5
1995	295,428	0	2,120,551	-3	4,852,894	-3
1996	326,387	10	2,123,800	0	4,790,307	-1
1997	326,993	0	2,007,981	-5	4,361,391	-9

n/a = not applicable.
[1] Includes violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery.
[2] In 1977, offences of criminal damage of value £20 and under were introduced into the series.

Table 2: Offences recorded by the police in England[1]

Number and percentage

	All burglary		Vehicle crime		Robbery	
	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change
1998–99	911,243	n/a	1,021,565	n/a	65,982	n/a
1999–2000	869,704	-5	992,054	-3	83,368	26
2000–01	803,144	-8	924,795	-7	94,264	13
2001–02	846,301	n/a	1,025,945	n/a	120,329	n/a

Number and percentage

	Violent crime[2]		All other offences		Total	
	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change
1998–99	571,027	n/a	2,343,260	n/a	4,847,095	n/a
1999–2000	662,525	16	2,521,415	8	5,045,698	4
2000–01	692,552	5	2,511,903	0	4,932,394	-2
2001–02	773,897	n/a	2,637,449	n/a	5,283,592	n/a

n/a = not applicable.
[1] Using the expanded coverage and revised counting rules which came into effect on 1 April 1988. Figures in this table are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.
[2] Includes violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery.

Table 3: Offences recorded by the police in England[1]

Number and percentage

	All burglary		Vehicle crime		Robbery	
	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change
2002–03	851,988	1	926,971	-10	106,652	-11
2003–04	783,970	-8	843,228	-9	99,914	-6
2004–05	650,682	-17	699,474	-17	87,625	-12

Number and percentage

	Violent crime[2]		All other offences		Total	
	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change	Number	Percentage change
2002–03	935,019	21	2,888,938	10	5,602,916	6
2003–04	1,052,601	13	2,965,518	3	5,645,317	1
2004–05	1,127,681	7	2,817,212	-5	5,295,049	-6

[1] The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced nationally in April 2002. Because of this, figures in this table are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.
[2] Includes violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded offences of *(a)* burglary, *(b)* thefts and *(c)* thefts from cars there have been in each division of the Staffordshire police force in each year since 1997. [43474]

Hazel Blears: The available information relates to offences recorded in basic command units (BCUs) in the Staffordshire police force area and is given in the tables. Data at BCD level have only been collected since 1999.

Table 1: Recorded offences in Staffordshire 1999–2000 to 2001–02

Number of offences

Basic Command Unit	Offence	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Chase	Domestic burglary	1,624	1,615	1,912
	Thefts	[1]—	10,094	9,750
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,536	3,134	2,968
North Staffordshire	Domestic burglary	1,600	1,235	1,417
	Thefts	[1]—	6,347	7,791
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,625	2,086	2,861
Stoke on Trent	Domestic burglary	4,336	3,176	3,093
	Thefts	[1]—	12,435	14,095
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	4,275	3,367	3,857
Trent Valley	Domestic burglary	1,513	1,523	1,661
	Thefts	[1]—	9,085	10,132
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,162	2,000	2,632

[1] Not available

Note:

The data in this table are prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. The data are therefore not directly comparable with those for subsequent years.

Table 2: Recorded offences in Staffordshire 2002–03 to 2004–05

Number of offences

Basic Command Unit	Offence	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Chase	Domestic burglary	1,446	1,342	1,003
	Thefts	9,098	8,955	8,001
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,302	2,505	2,030
North Staffordshire	Domestic burglary	1,178	922	753
	Thefts	6,989	6212	5,329
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,198	1,832	1,489
Stoke on Trent	Domestic burglary	2,438	2,491	1,732
	Thefts	12,711	12,100	10,448
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	3,237	3,106	2,501
Trent Valley	Domestic burglary	1,396	1,410	1,225
	Thefts	9,606	9,226	8,439
	of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,357	2,133	1,780

Note:

The data in this table take account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. The data are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Criminal Records Bureau

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what details of an offence are recorded in information included in disclosures by the Criminal Records Bureau. [42572]

Andy Burnham: All Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures provide employers with information concerning individuals' offences as recorded on the police national computer (PNC), including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings. This would include the date of the conviction, the description of the offence, the disposal and the court or police force concerned. In the case of cautions, the date of the caution and the place it was issued are also included.

Where an application indicates that the position involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults, the disclosure, whether it is at the standard or enhanced level, will detail the nature of an individual's inclusion on the Protection of Children Act list or list 99, where the position involves working with children, or details of inclusion on the protection of vulnerable adults list where the position involves working with vulnerable adults. Where the individual is not included on either or all of those lists, the disclosure will record that fact.

An enhanced CRB check involves a further level of checking against non-conviction information which may be held locally by individual police forces. Additionally, any relevant adult or child protection list should be checked where relevant to the position applied for and if a match is found that fact is included on the disclosure.

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will make changes to the Criminal Records Bureau's portability scheme with a view to reducing the financial burden placed on voluntary bodies. [42788]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau's Portability Service operates at no cost to the registered body network, which includes organisations belonging to the voluntary sector. Changes to the Portability Service are under consideration but not with the specific aim to reduce the financial burden on voluntary bodies. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) remains committed to its stated support of voluntary bodies by processing free of charge disclosure checks for those who fall within the definition of a volunteer.

The primary aim of the changes is to minimise the inherent risks involved in reusing disclosures. The decision to accept 'ported' disclosures lies entirely with the employer or regulating body concerned, as does the accompanying risk of making use of potentially out of date information when assessing suitability.

Departmental Objectives

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress towards his Department's strategic objective IV. [41060]

Mr. McNulty: The Government's strategy for a comprehensive reform of the asylum and immigration process "Controlling our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain" was published in February 2004. The subsequent consultation period on the new points-based system for managed migration described in "Selective Admission: Making migration work for Britain" ended on 7 November 2005.

We anticipate publishing our response in the spring with a timetable for next steps. The e-borders programme will deliver a fully integrated border control system and is planned to roll out in three stages from 2004 to 2014. We have introduced a range of legislative and operational measures which have successfully reduced the number of unfounded asylum applications and processing times.

The Department remains committed to achieving its aim of tipping the balance and the number of failed asylum seekers being removed from the UK has risen significantly. We removed three, 935 asylum seekers in

Q3 2005, 10 per cent. more than in Q3 2004. The 'New Asylum Model' will introduce faster, tightly-managed processes for all new asylum claimants.

We have negotiated returns arrangements to assist in returning immigration offenders and are putting immigration at the centre of our relationship with all major countries from which illegal migrants and failed asylum seekers come. We continue to engage closely with other EU member states on returns and have taken part in a number of successful joint operations in this area. The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill which is currently before Parliament will provide the necessary legislative basis for those parts of the strategy which require primary legislation.

DNA Profiles

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2890W, on DNA profiles, how many *(a)* murderers and *(b)* rapists who had been arrested but had not initially been charged or cautioned for an offence have been caught as a consequence of having their profiles stored on the national DNA database; and if he will make a statement. [44407]

Andy Burnham: Research carried out in January 2006 indicates that: 37 murders/manslaughters, 16 attempted murders and 90 rapes have so far been linked to people who had DNA samples taken on arrest but who were not subsequently proceeded against for the arresting offence. It is not possible at the current time to determine the outcome of the police investigation of these crimes.

Extradition

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many certificates under section 70(1) of the Extradition Act 2003 have been signed by his Department in respect of requests from the US since 1 January 2005; and how many requests have been received from the US for which a certificate has yet to be issued. [43893]

Andy Burnham: Certification of an extradition request is only carried out after the full request has been received. Usually the person concerned is not arrested until after receipt of the full request, but it is also possible in a case of urgency for the person concerned to be arrested provisionally. The requesting state can then submit the full request at a later date.

We do not comment on any cases in which arrests have not been made, as to give such information might endanger the course of justice. In the period 1 January 2005 to 18 January 2006, eight arrests have taken place in respect of extradition requests from the US which are dealt with by the Home Office. Certificates have been issued in respect of six of these cases.

The other two cases are provisional arrest requests in which the full request has yet to be received from the US. The legal deadline for receipt of those requests has not yet passed.

Highly Skilled Migrant Programme

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been accepted under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme in each year since its introduction; and, how many of those were unemployed on the latest date for which figures are available. [38715]

Mr. McNulty: The following table provides detail of the numbers of approvals issued under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) for each calendar year since the programme was launched. These approvals allow individuals to apply either for leave to enter or leave to remain in the United Kingdom as Highly Skilled Migrants. (These data have not been provided under National Statistics protocols. They have been derived from local management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change.)

The increase in the number of applications approved followed a review of the programme in October 2003. This review resulted in the introduction of a number of changes to the HSMP criteria to ensure that the programme attracted a greater share of highly skilled individuals to the United Kingdom. Information is not collected to determine if a Highly Skilled Migrant is unemployed. Successful applicants have to demonstrate though that they are able to maintain themselves and any dependants without recourse to public funds.

Initial grants of leave issued to Highly Skilled Migrants are limited to a period of 12 months. Only where a Highly Skilled Migrant has been able to establish that they have taken all reasonable steps to become lawfully economically active in the UK during this initial period, will an extension to their stay, for a further period of 36 months, be granted.

Identity Cards

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role council electoral registration departments will play in the administration of the planned identity card scheme. [41239]

Andy Burnham: Currently, it is not anticipated that council electoral registration departments will have any role in the administration of the planned identity card scheme.

Illegal Broadcasting

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions there were in each of the last five years in relation to *(a)* pirate radio stations and *(b)* illegal broadcasts. [38023]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

I am informed by Ofcom that convictions concerning pirate radio stations and illegal broadcasts in the last five years were as follows.

	Number
2000	41
2001	20
2002	[1]49
2003	[2]103
2004	[3]60
2005	[4]16

[1] Also two formal cautions April to December 2002.
[2] Also five formal cautions.
[3] Also six formal cautions.
[4] Also eight formal cautions and 34 outstanding prosecutions.

Note:
The figures for formal cautions are drawn from an information system which came into service on 1 April 2002.

There is no legal distinction between illegal broadcasters (pirate radio stations) and illegal broadcasts. The figures given therefore cover the two categories.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the full report of his Department's investigation into allegations that visas were issued and refused on the basis of applicants' appearance at Lunar House, Croydon will not be published. [43272]

Mr. McNulty: I have undertaken to publish the results of the investigation as fully as I can and will do so as quickly as possible. It is important that those conducting the investigation are not constrained in any way during the investigation and that the outcome is unprejudiced.

By promising to publish a summary of the investigation report I have not ruled out the full report being published, but have enabled the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to maintain the protection of any security processes which may be required.

IRIS Project

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 597W, on the IRIS project, when he expects to publish the key findings of the project IRIS operational pilot. [42708]

Mr. McNulty: The evaluation of the Project IRIS operational pilot will be commercially sensitive but I will report the key findings to the House.

Jo Martinson

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure disciplinary action is taken against members of the police involved in the failure to bring to court the case of the death of Jo Martinson. [44395]

Hazel Blears: The Chief Officer of Essex has sole responsibility for all operational matters. If any of his officers are found to have breached the Code of Conduct, as set out, in this case, in The Police (Conduct) Regulations 1999 (Statutory Instrument 1999 no. 730), he can institute disciplinary action.

Knives

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* fined and *(b)* imprisoned for (i) illegally selling knives to under 16-year-olds and (ii) marketing a bladed product in a manner which (A) indicates that it is suitable for combat and (B) is likely to promote simulations of violent behaviour since the Knives Act 1997 in (1) Greater London and (2) each London borough. [43577]

Hazel Blears: The information for London is shown in the table. Statistics are not available for each London borough.

Offenders sentenced to fines and imprisonment for offences under the Knives Act 1997, London

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Unlawful marketing of knives (selling or hiring)[1]								
Sentenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful marketing of knives (offering or exposing to sell or hire)[1]								
Sentenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful marketing of knives—having in possession for the purpose of sale or hire[1]								
Sentenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Publication of any written pictorial or other material in connection with the marketing of any knife—the material suggesting/indicating knife suitable for combat September 1997[1]								
Sentenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Offenders sentenced to fines and imprisonment for offences under the Knives Act 1997, London

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Publication of any written pictorial or other material in connection with the marketing of any knife—the material is otherwise likely to simulate or encourage violent behaviour involving use of the knife as a weapon[1]								
Sentenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Selling a knife etc. to a person under 16 years[2]								
Sentenced	0	2	1	0	1	3	3	1
Fine	0	2	1	0	1	3	3	1
Immediate custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] These sections of the Act came into force in September 1997.
[2] This offence is not included in the Knives Act 1997. It is covered by the Offensive Weapons Act 1996 S.6(1).
Source:
RDS-NOMS 18 January 2006.

London Bombings

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use the police made of public mobile communications networks during the response operation to the incidents on the London Underground and bus network on 7 July 2005. [43780]

Hazel Blears: I refer the hon. member to the answer I gave on 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1273W .

Miniature Motorbikes

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the police about the illegal use of miniature motorbikes and quad bikes; what plans his Department has to tackle this misuse; if he will establish a compulsory registration scheme for such bikes; and if he will take steps to prohibit ownership for a set period of time by individuals who have been caught using them illegally. [41834]

Hazel Blears: We are aware of public concern about the misuse of these vehicles and the issue has been raised with us by the police and by other antisocial behaviour practitioners.

The police already have a power under the Police Reform Act to seize any mechanically propelled vehicle which is being driven either in a careless and inconsiderate manner on-road or off-road without lawful authority contrary to s3 or s34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, and is causing or likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public. The driver can also be prosecuted for the Road Traffic Act offence and penalised accordingly.

The Home Office issued on 1 November additional guidance to the police on this legislation, explaining the rationale behind its various aspects, clarifying its terms and the circumstances in which it might be used and offering examples of effective operations. At the same time Regulations governing use of the power were simplified. The Government are now considering what more can be done to curb the problem; including whether there is a need for further legislation, and mandatory registration. We have no current plans to prohibit ownership.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will require the National Criminal Intelligence Service to allow inward communication from the public via e-mail and the internet; and if he will make a statement. [44240]

Hazel Blears: The National Criminal Intelligence Service was not set up to receive reports direct from members of the public, but provides links which the public can use to make contact electronically with the appropriate authority.

National Identity Register

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what access police will have to biometric information on the proposed national identity register in conducting criminal investigations other than for use in identifying a particular suspect. [41671]

Andy Burnham: The police will not have access to the National Identity Register. However, they can apply to be provided with information, including biometric information, from the Register, where it is in the interests of national security or for purposes connected with the prevention or detection of crime, subject to safeguards provided for under clause 23 of the Identity Cards Bill.

In addition, with regard to applying for photographs, signatures, fingerprints or other biometric information, clause 23(1) provides that a police application for this information will only be successful if they show that it would not have been practicable for them to have obtained the information by other means-by conducting a search on their own fingerprint records for example.

NSPCC

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 452W, on the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, what the basis is for his confidence in social workers' awareness of the risks of prejudicing future police investigations; and if he will make a statement. [42511]

Hazel Blears: It is the responsibility of the Senior Investigating Officer to set the parameters of the police investigation and to ensure that third parties involved in the case are aware of the risks of prejudicing the investigation.

'Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' was jointly published by the Home Office, Department for Health and Department for Skills and Education in 1999. Chapter five includes guidance on investigative interviews with children where social workers have a role and states at paragraph 5.36 that "leading or suggestive communications should always be avoided". In addition, paragraphs 6.24 to 6.26 sets out guidance in relation to investigating organised and multiple abuse and states the need for the police and other agencies involved to agree clear written protocols in relation to all key operational and policy matters.

Passports

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 378W, on passports, when his Department will revise published guidelines on photograph standards. [43881]

Andy Burnham: The photo guidance leaflet contained in the passport application pack is being updated to take account of the revised guidelines published on the UKPS website in November, and will be available in passport application packs distributed in late February or early March 2006. The UKPS website also displays the current photo guidance leaflet and this will be replaced as soon as the design for its successor is confirmed, within the next fortnight. The website has updated information on photographs on other pages, and this newer information is signposted from the main page.

Police

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what level of fitness is required for police officers; [42461]

(2) if he will instigate an assessment of *(a)* the fitness of police officers and *(b)* possible measures to improve fitness. [42458]

Hazel Blears: All applicants recruited to the post of constable must be in good health and able both physically and mentally to perform the duties of a police officer.

As part of the standard recruitment process, applicants are required to pass a national job related physical fitness test to ensure that they are capable of meeting the physical demands of police work and to ensure that they are not put at risk from undertaking police tasks. The test must be passed prior to entry and again during the probationary period.

We are also considering the introduction of regular testing of all officers in-service to ensure maintenance of the minimum fitness standard.

Details of the recruit fitness test are contained on the Police Could You website at www.policecouldyou.co.uk and are set out for forces in Home Office Circular 43/2004. We are placing a copy of the Circular in the Library of the House.

Officers in certain specialist roles are also required to demonstrate a higher level of fitness on a regular basis. Work is being undertaken to ensure consistency in standards across the Service.

Officers are encouraged to develop and maintain health and fitness as part of the Home Office's strategy for a healthy police service and individual force occupational force strategies.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 771W, on police, how many fatal accidents involving police service vehicles there were in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [40900]

Hazel Blears: Figures are provided in the table. Data collected on behalf of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary appear in column A and provide the number of fatalities resulting from road traffic collisions on public roads involving police vehicles and those resulting from immediate/emergency response and police pursuits.

The figures in this column are comparable with the figures provided in the previous PQ answer. The Independent Police Complaints Commission published the bulletin on "Deaths during or following police contact: Statistics for England and Wales 2004–05" on 19 November 2005. This includes a wider definition of road traffic fatalities which, for the purpose of the reporting, are defined as deaths of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians resulting from police pursuits, police vehicles responding to emergency calls and other police traffic-related activity. These data are provided in column B.

Fatal accidents involving police service vehicles—2004–05

	Column A	*Column B*
	Fatalities resulting from road traffic collisions on public roads involving police vehicles and those resulting from immediate/emergency response and police pursuits as at 31 March 2005	*Road traffic fatalities including the deaths of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians resulting from police pursuits, police vehicles responding to emergency calls and other police traffic related activity (2004–05)*[1]
Avon and Somerset	0	0
Bedfordshire	1	2
Cambridgeshire	0	1
Cheshire	0	0
Cleveland	0	2
Cumbria	0	0
Derbyshire	1	1
Devon and Cornwall	0	0
Dorset	2	0
Durham	0	0
Dyfed-Powys	0	0
Essex	1	2
Gloucestershire	0	0
Greater Manchester	4	4
Gwent	0	1
Hampshire	0	1
Hertfordshire	0	0
Humberside	0	1

Fatal accidents involving police service vehicles—2004–05

	Column A *Fatalities resulting from road traffic collisions on public roads involving police vehicles and those resulting from immediate/emergency response and police pursuits as at 31 March 2005*	*Column B* *Road traffic fatalities including the deaths of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians resulting from police pursuits, police vehicles responding to emergency calls and other police traffic related activity (2004–05)* [1]
Kent	0	0
Lancashire	1	3
Leicestershire	0	1
Lincolnshire	2	2
London, City of	0	0
Merseyside	0	1
Metropolitan police	4	5
Norfolk	0	0
Northamptonshire	0	1
Northumbria	2	2
North Wales	0	1
North Yorkshire	0	0
Nottinghamshire	1	2
South Wales	0	0
South Yorkshire	2	2
Staffordshire	0	0
Suffolk	0	0
Surrey	0	0
Sussex	2	2
Thames Valley	0	1
Warwickshire	2	2
West Mercia	0	1
West Midlands	0	1
West Yorkshire	0	2
Wiltshire	0	0
Total	23	44

[1] Taken from the "Deaths during or following police contact: Statistics for England and Wales 2004–05" publication published on 19 November 2005.

[2] Force is unable to provide figures in 2004–05.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the rollout of safer neighbourhood policing teams will be completed for each ward in Wimbledon constituency. [41705]

Hazel Blears: There are currently 285 safer neighbourhoods teams in London; a minimum of eight per borough. On Tuesday 10 January the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service Sir Ian Blair and Mayor of London Ken Livingstone announced that the roll out of safer neighbourhoods is being accelerated to ensure every neighbourhood in London will have a full team in place during the next financial year (2006–07). This will mean that the remaining 340 wards will initially have teams of four staff in place by April 2006, rising to six staff by April 2007. This will increase the number of teams from the current 285 to a total of 625 a year ahead of schedule

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the rollout of the remaining safer neighbourhood policing teams is planned to be fully completed in each ward of the London borough of Wandsworth; and if he will make a statement. [40909]

Hazel Blears: There are currently 285 safer neighbourhoods teams in London; a minimum of eight per borough. On Tuesday 10 January the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, Sir Ian Blair and Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone announced that the roll out of safer neighbourhoods is being accelerated to ensure every neighbourhood in London will have a full team in place during the next financial year (2006–07). This will mean that the remaining 340 wards will initially have teams of four staff in place by April 2006, rising to six staff by April 2007. This will increase the number of teams from the current 285 to a total of 625 a year ahead of schedule.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the roll-out of the Safer Neighbourhood policing teams is planned in each ward of the London borough of Haringey; and if he will make a statement. [42639]

Hazel Blears: There are currently 285 Safer Neighbourhoods teams in London; a minimum of eight per borough.

On 10 January the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service Sir Ian Blair and Mayor of London Ken Livingstone announced that the roll out of Safer Neighbourhoods is being accelerated to ensure that every neighbourhood in London will have a full team in place during the next financial year (2006–07).

This will mean that the remaining 340 wards will initially have teams of four staff in place by April 2006, rising to six staff by April 2007. This will increase the number of teams from the current 285 to a total of 625 a year ahead of schedule.

Racially Aggravated Offences

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Crown Prosecution Service on the prosecution of racially aggravated offences. [35650]

Hazel Blears: Discussions have been, and will continue to be, held in the context of making the criminal justice system more effective in bringing offences, including racially aggravated offences, to justice.

Recorded Offences (Humberside)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been found to be carrying knives in public without good reason or lawful authority in each division of Humberside police in each year since the introduction of the Knives Act 1997. [42586]

Hazel Blears: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform which show that the number of people proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for carrying knives in public without good reason or lawful authority for Humberside police force area, 2002–04 are contained in the table.

It is not possible to identify those convictions by each division of Humberside police as the data are not collected at this level of detail.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts under Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139(1), Humberside police force area, 1997 to 2004

Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Having an article with blade or point in public place	Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139 as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996, Sec 3	1997	60	43
		1998	63	45
		1999	80	65
		2000	63	53
		2001	61	46
		2002	81	69
		2003	77	63
		2004	120	105
Having an article with blade or point on school premises [2]	Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139A(1)(5)(a) added by Offensive Weapons Act 1996, Sec 4(1)	1997	—	—
		1998	1	—
		1999	—	—
		2000	2	2
		2001	—	—
		2002	—	—
		2003	2	2
		2004	1	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Stateless People

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many stateless people were known to be resident in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and what his policy is on considering applications for leave to remain. [43049]

Mr. McNulty: No distinction is made between applications for leave to remain from stateless people and from people who have a nationality. Stateless people whose applications are successful are granted leave to enter or remain in the usual way. Those whose applications fail are expected to leave the United Kingdom, usually to return to their countries of habitual residence. Statistics on grants of settlement—that is, grants of permanent residence—to stateless persons, 2000 to 2004, are given in the following table. However, they are not cumulative and they do not take account of persons who subsequently embark or acquire British Citizenship.

Further immigration statistics can be found in the Command Papers "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom" available from the Library and from the Home Office websitehttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Grants of settlement, stateless persons [1,2], 2000–04

United Kingdom Nationality	*Number of persons Stateless*
2000	930
2001	390
2002	215
2003	330
2004[3]	205

[1] Includes persons whose nationality is recorded as unknown.
[2] Data from 2003 also exclude dependants of EEA and Swiss nationals in confirmed relationships
[3] Provisional
Data rounded to the nearest 5.

Under-age Sales

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many businesses were prosecuted for selling *(a)* alcohol, *(b)* glue products and *(c)* fireworks to under-age people in the South Lakeland Crime and Disorder Partnership in 2004–05. [43379]

Hazel Blears: The available information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows that there were no prosecutions in South Lakeland petty sessional area for selling intoxicating substances or fireworks to persons under age in 2004. In addition, there were no prosecutions as notified to the court proceedings database for retailers supplying intoxicating substances or fireworks to persons under 18.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2005 will be published in the autumn.

Violent Crime

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the reasons for changes in the number of recorded violent crime in each of the last four quarters. [41872]

Hazel Blears: There are three main reasons for the increases in recorded crime in each of the last four quarters for which figures are available (i.e. ending April to June 2005).

There is still some residual effect from the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002. Analysis shows that there is some increase in recording as police forces improve compliance with the standard.

Many of the Government's programmes for tackling domestic violence and sexual crime are encouraging the reporting and therefore recording of offences

which had hitherto been grossly under-reported. The reclassification of some offences (such as indecent exposure) as violent has also led to increases.

More pro-active policing and increased police effectiveness may cause an increase in recorded crime. Use of CCTV, for example, may lead to recording and detection of assaults which would otherwise have gone unreported and unrecorded.

The British Crime Survey, which is widely-regarded as providing a more reliable trend measure because it is resistant to changes in reporting, police recording and local policing activity, showed a fall of 7 per cent. in violent crime during this period (though this was not statistically significant).

Work Permits

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits were granted to health workers from overseas in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* each month in 2005 for which records are available, broken down by country. [24259]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 1 November 2005]*: Table 1 displays the number of permits approved for health workers from overseas in 2004 broken down by country. These figures include all approvals made for overseas applications, in-country applications, extension applications and change of employment applications.

Table 2 displays the number of permits approved for health workers from overseas for each month in 2005 for which records are available, broken down by nationality. These figures include all approvals made for overseas applications, in-country applications, extension applications and change of employment applications.

Table 1

Nationality	*Permits approved in 2004*
India	13,479
Philippines	11,452
South Africa	4,945
Zimbabwe	3,121
Nigeria	1,563
China Peoples Republic of	1,544
Pakistan	1,393
Australia	1,133
Ghana	843
Bulgaria	839
United States of America	602
Zambia	589
Romania	516
Kenya	514
Others	5,960
Total	48,493

Table 2

	Permits approved in 2005									
Nationality	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*Total*
India	1,403	1,047	1,068	1,064	948	1,123	1,155	1,105	976	9,889
Philippines	640	647	742	647	591	690	722	614	648	5,941
South Africa	315	312	308	286	273	339	261	274	268	2,636
Zimbabwe	229	196	155	216	198	235	179	179	226	1,813
Pakistan	172	110	99	83	81	122	119	109	67	962
Nigeria	129	106	113	142	129	131	124	125	114	1,113
China Peoples Republic of	113	130	160	127	112	104	122	129	201	1,198
Australia	81	95	88	85	75	81	83	78	74	740
Ghana	67	62	69	65	71	74	69	86	73	636
Mauritius	56	25	29	37	33	24	25	25	35	289
Bulgaria	51	45	56	56	50	61	44	43	41	447
Romania	49	39	49	56	29	35	46	73	50	426
Zambia	49	39	27	42	26	35	44	60	50	372
United States of America	48	41	27	53	35	48	79	76	90	497
Others	530	436	414	385	396	480	506	477	469	4,093
Total	7,864	6,660	6,808	6,688	6,094	7,164	7,156	6,906	6,764	62,104

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the change in the level of opium production in Afghanistan was in 2002 to 2004. [44121]

Dr. Howells: Opium production in Afghanistan increased in the years 2002 to 2004. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducts an annual survey into the level of opium poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan. Full details can be found on their website http://www.unodc.org

According to the survey, opium production in the years 2001–04 was estimated as follows:

	Production (Tonnes)
2001	185
2002	3,400
2003	3,600
2004	4,200

The production figures were lower in 2001 as the Taliban had imposed a ban on opium poppy cultivation in July 2000 in order to manipulate the world price for the illegal product. By July 2001, the tactics they employed had led to a 91 per cent. reduction. This ban was enforced with a combination of fear and bribery and drove up the price of opium so that those with opium stockpiles profited, many of whom colluded with the Taliban Government.

The lack of viable central state and war-damaged infrastructure in Afghanistan created conditions in which opium cultivation could thrive once again. President Karzai, with support from the international community, is working hard to change this and has made clear that eliminating opium is vital for Afghanistan's future and is key to stability.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likely change in the level of the production of opium and its derivatives in Afghanistan in the next 12 months. [44122]

Dr. Howells: In November 2005, the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODC) confirmed the poppy cultivation and production figures for the 2004–05 season from their annual survey. They estimated that opium production was around 4,100 metric tonnes, a decrease of only 100 tonnes (2.4 per cent.) compared to 2004, despite a significant 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 to 104,000 ha in 2004–05. Good weather and an absence of crop disease were responsible for a significant increase in yield in 2004–05. UNODC will provide an early indication of this season's (2005–06) production figures in their Rapid Assessment Survey, which is due to be published in the next couple of weeks.

While the UNODC figures were encouraging last year, we need to be cautious about the future. There is a risk that cultivation and production may increase again in the next 12 months—initial reports suggest that farmers in some provinces are threatening to return to cultivation. Our goal is to ensure that the downward trend in cultivation and production is maintained in the long term. We are working hard with the Government of Afghanistan and other international partners to ensure the Government of Afghanistan is able to deliver on this goal.

Arms Exports

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the use of UK arms equipment by the Indonesian military in relation to the EU code of conduct on Arms Exports. [43392]

Ian Pearson: We have had no confirmed reports that British-supplied military equipment has been used in Indonesia in contravention of the EU code of conduct.

All export licence applications for Indonesia are rigorously assessed on a case by case basis against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria taking account of the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letters of 1 December and 20 December 2005 from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire about the US Congress. [44064]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Officials are consulting the British embassy in Washington about the hon. Member's proposal to hold a reception in connection with the Congressional-Parliamentary Tennis Challenge. I will reply to his letters on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary as soon as possible.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date Henri Nswana was accredited to the UK from the Democratic Republic of Congo *(a)* as chargé d'affaires and *(b)* as ambassador; and when his accreditation ended. [41307]

Ian Pearson: Mr Henri Nswana began his posting as Minister Counsellor at the Democratic Republic of the Congo embassy in the UK in 1998. He was accredited as chargé d'affaires in early 2000, and became ambassador for the Democratic Republic of Congo on 6 July 2003. His accreditation ended on 20 October 2005.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what monitoring of the recent referendum in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was undertaken by his officials or representatives; and what advice he was given on its *(a)* administration and *(b)* outcome. [44468]

Ian Pearson: The EU sent an official Electoral Observation mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to monitor the referendum. UK representatives

from the British embassy in Kinshasa also observed the referendum. Despite the logistical challenges of organising a referendum in such a vast country, it took place in a largely peaceful and positive atmosphere, and the turnout was good. International observers agreed that it had largely been properly and freely conducted, with few incidents of violence.

The UK welcomes the outcome of the referendum: the strong endorsement of the draft constitution underlines the desire of the Congolese people for completion of the transition to full democratic government as soon as possible. We continue to urge the Congolese Government and National Assembly to maintain the momentum of the political process and ensure that the envisaged timetable for elections before 30 June 2006 can be met.

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05. [40083]

Mr. Straw: While core IT equipment is centrally provided, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) also operates a devolved system of budgeting under which directorates have freedom to buy a range of IT and other equipment to support their work. Fax machines, in particular, are paid for from such devolved budgets and no central figures exist for the numbers used within the FCO. Some other equipment is refreshed regularly under existing contracts. The following figures are available, but not necessarily complete, for IT equipment in use in the English regions, at sites in London and in the south east, particularly Hanslope Park, near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire:

	Current	*Acquired 2003–04*	*Acquired 2004–05*
(a) Personal computers	4,857	359	580
(b) Laptops	290	53	134
(c) Servers	343	28	88
(d) Printers	491	125	130
(e) Scanners	80	14	20

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(f) Photocopiers (NB photocopiers used by the FCO in the UK are leased and not actually owned by the Department)	335	355

Non-departmental public bodies (NDPB):

British Council

The British Council, which has offices throughout the country, has no central data on photocopiers or fax machines. For the other equipment in question it has outsourced its infrastructure support to Logica CMG which owns all the relevant assets.

Details of equipment held for other NDPBs for which the FCO is responsible, all of which are based in London, are as follows:

The Great Britain-China Centre

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(a) personal computers	6	6
(b) laptops	2	2
(c) servers	1	1
(d) printers	2	2
(e) scanners	1	1
(f) photocopiers	1	1
(g) fax machines	1	1

The British Association for Central and Eastern Europe

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(a) personal computers	3	3
(b) laptops	2	2
(c) servers	1	1
(d) printers	5	5
(e) scanners	1	1
(f) photocopiers	1	1
(g) fax machines	1	1

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(a) personal computers	14	17
(b) laptops	4	4
(c) servers	2	2
(d) printers	9	9
(e) scanners	1	1
(f) photocopiers	2	2
(g) fax machines	1	1

The Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission (MACC)

The Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission owns no IT equipment, and did not do so during 2003–05. The Association of Commonwealth Universities, which provides the secretariat to the MACC, does have some of the IT listed, but buys and maintains this from its own budget.

Equipment used for FCO's advisory NDPB's is included within the totals given elsewhere in this answer.

Executive Agencies

Wilton Park (Near Steyning, West Sussex)

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(a) Personal computers	52	57
(b) Laptops	12	13
(c) Servers	5	6
(d) Printers	28	29
(e) Scanners	4	4
(f) Photocopiers	8	8
(g) Fax machines	5	5

Some of the categories include multi-function machines. Three photocopiers also act as combined scanners. The other photocopiers also act as fax machines.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42894]

Mr. Straw: None.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39979]

Mr. Straw: The information is as follows:

Annual expenditure on vehicles for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in each of the last three financial years; and planned expenditure for 2005–06.

Vehicle running costs for the FCO home fleets operating out of Hanslope Park near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and King Charles street, London in south east England, including fuel, maintenance at Hanslope Park and insurance are as follows:

	Vehicle running costs (£)
2002–03	142,160
2003–04	159,102
2004–05	185,697
April to December 2005–06	126,535

Expenditure for replacement vehicles for the FCO home fleets operating out of Hanslope Park near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and King Charles street, London in south east England, are as follows:

	Expenditure for replacement vehicles (£)
2002–03	123,128.29
2003–04	92,997.98
2004–05	115,242.00
2005–06	54,050.49

Annual expenditure on vehicles for each of the FCO non-departmental and other public bodies in each of the last three financial years and planned expenditure for 2005–06.

The BBC World Service operates two vehicles in the UK both of which are located in Caversham, Reading in south east England. Running costs, including fuel, maintenance and insurance, are as follows:

	Vehicle running costs (£)
2002–03	2,500
2003–04	2,500
2004–05	2,500
2005–06	2,500

One replacement vehicle was purchased in March 2005 (2004–05) at a cost of £16,250. The BBC World Service car pool remains at two vehicles.

There has been no expenditure for vehicles in each of the last three financial years and none is planned for:

The Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission

The British Association for Central and Eastern Europe

The Diplomatic Service Appeal Board

The Foreign Compensation Committee

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy

The Wilton Park Academic Council

The British Council

The Great Britain–China Centre

The Government Hospitality Advisory Committee for the Purchase of Wine

Annual expenditure on vehicles for each of the FCO executive agencies in each of the last three financial years and planned expenditure for 2005–06 is as follows:

Wilton Park operated two cars from April 2002 until July 2004. Thereafter this decreased to one car. There is also one delivery/storage van. All of the vehicles are operated in south east England. The running costs for these vehicles, including fuel, maintenance and insurance are as follows:

	Vehicle running costs (£)
2002–03	5,500
2003–04	5,500
2004–05	5,150
2005–06	4,180

Replacement vehicles have not been purchased during the last three financial years, and there are no plans to replace these vehicles in the current or next financial years.

There has been no annual expenditure on vehicles for other public bodies for which the FCO is responsible in Scotland, Wales, each of the English regions and Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years and none is planned for 2005–06.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43894]

Mr. Straw: Details of disciplinary actions which were commenced against civil servants employed in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and which resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years are as follows:

	Disciplinary actions commenced	*Sanctions applied*
2001	8	7
2002	14	9
2003	21	19
2004	9	7
2005	19	17

The figures given for the disciplinary actions commenced include cases which were not upheld or where the individuals left the FCO before the procedure was completed. The figures given for sanctions applied are the number of penalties handed out where an allegation of misconduct was upheld in line with our Misconduct Procedure. We do not keep central records for all oral warnings and these have not been included in the above information. A copy of the FCO Misconduct Procedure is available in the Library of the House.

East Africa

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the border dispute on the horn of Africa between Eritrea and Ethiopia; and if he will make a statement; [33191]

(2) what assessment he has made of the recent UN Security Council threat to implement sanctions against Eritrea and Ethiopia; and if he will make a statement; [33192]

(3) what assessment he has made of the ban instituted by Eritrea on flights by the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea within its airspace; and if he will make a statement. [33193]

Ian Pearson: We remain concerned at the continuing tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea over their disputed border. We continue to underline to both parties that there should be no return to war; that the decision of the boundary commission is final and binding, and must be implemented; and that they should engage in dialogue on all the issues that divide them.

We have also supported United Nations Security Council Resolution 1640, urging Eritrea to restore full co-operation with the UN force, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, urging both parties to show maximum restraint and return to previous deployment levels, and stressing the UN Security Council's readiness to consider further measures if one or both parties fail to comply. We call on both Ethiopia and Eritrea to respond promptly and positively to the Council's demands.

Ethiopia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Ethiopia on the continuing imprisonment of Daniel Behele and Netsanet Demessie. [41526]

Ian Pearson: We have made representations to the Government of Ethiopia at ministerial and official level regarding all those, including civil society representatives, detained in connection with the political disturbances in 2005. Most recently, my noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, raised our concerns directly with Prime Minister Meles on 17 December. He stressed the need for the trials of those charged to be transparent, independent and impartial. The international community is monitoring the trials closely.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to ensure that the Ethiopian President adheres to the final and binding boundary commission border demarcation. [43132]

Ian Pearson: We supported UN Security Council resolution 1640, which demanded that Ethiopia accept fully and without further delay the final and binding decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia boundary commission and take immediately concrete steps to enable, without preconditions, the commission to demarcate the border completely and promptly. On 17 December 2005, my noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met Prime Minister Meles in Addis Ababa and had constructive discussions on the border. As a consequence we are consulting widely with international partners to further the process.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the viability of sanctions to ensure that President Meles Zenawi complies with the Algiers Agreement; and if he will make a statement. [43133]

Ian Pearson: UN Security Council resolution 1640 demands that Ethiopia accept fully and without further delay the final and binding decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia boundary commission. It did not threaten sanctions against Ethiopia for failing to implement the boundary commission's ruling as set out in the Algiers Agreement. It threatened sanctions in the event that Ethiopia or Eritrea did not meet the Security Council's demand to return forces to December 2004 levels of deployment.

The UN Security Council considered the implementation of Security Council resolution 1640 on 9 January 2006 when it decided to postpone further consideration to allow time for bilateral initiatives. We, along with Security Council partners, will consider next steps in light of the progress of these initiatives.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to secure the release of the 131 recently detained Ethiopian opposition leaders, reporters and aid workers. [43135]

Ian Pearson: We remain concerned at the arrest and detention of Coalition for Unity and Democracy opposition leaders, media and civil society representatives. We continue to raise those concerns with the Government of Ethiopia at every suitable opportunity. Most recently, my noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and stressed the importance that those detained and charged with offences should receive a fair, open and transparent judicial trial and those not charged should be released immediately.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when a new Governor of Gibraltar will be appointed; and who will be consulted on the appointment. [44537]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence will consider candidates to succeed Sir Francis Richards as Governor of Gibraltar.

In keeping with the commitment made by my noble Friend Baroness Amos, the then Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, at the Overseas Territories Consultative Council in September 2002, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar will be involved in the consultation process.

This recruitment process is already under way, and we hope to make an announcement in the spring.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of talks on the transfer of powers from the Governor of Gibraltar and the UK Government to the Gibraltar Government. [44538]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Chief Minister of Gibraltar wrote to my right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary in December 2003 formally tabling proposals for the reform of the 1969 Gibraltar Constitution. These proposals have been considered very carefully and have been the subject of two rounds of discussion between officials and a cross-party Gibraltar delegation, led by the Chief Minister. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary recently met the Chief Minister to discuss a number of the more important issues. Substantial progress has been made, but a number of outstanding issues remain.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of talks between the UK, Gibraltar and Spain. [44539]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and his Spanish counterpart, Sr Moratinos, announced the creation of the new Trilateral Forum on Gibraltar in October 2004. Since then, the Chief Minister and senior officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Spanish Foreign Ministry have met on four occasions to discuss a range of issues, including telecommunications, aviation issues, pensions and cross-border co-operation. These talks are progressing well and they are likely to meet again in the first half of next month.

Guy Patrice Lumumba

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the arrest of Guy Patrice Lumumba in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [42502]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* Guy Patrice Lumumba was arrested on 17 December 2005 in Kinshasa and accused of a common law violation. I am not aware of any official statements from the Congolese authorities relating to his case.

India

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage the Government of India to ensure the protection of the minority Christian and Muslim communities in the Darys district of Gujarat from violence threatened by Hindu extremist groups. [44772]

Dr. Howells: We are aware of the alleged involvement of Hindu extremist organisations in attacks against religious minorities in India. We condemn all instances where individuals are persecuted because of their faith or belief, wherever they happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned. Our High Commission in New Delhi continues to monitor the issue of religious freedom, with staff making regular calls on the appropriate Indian authorities to flag up our concern about incidents of religious intolerance. We will continue to insist that the right to freedom of religion is upheld, and that those responsible for attacks against people on grounds of their religion are brought to justice.

Indonesia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will assess the position of the Christian community in Indonesia, with particular reference to those facing *(a)* prosecution and *(b)* the death penalty. [44423]

Ian Pearson: Christians in Indonesia enjoy a high degree of religious freedom. Their right to worship is protected under the Indonesian constitution. There are sporadic incidents of inter-religious violence in certain religiously mixed areas which have adversely affected both the Christian and Muslim populations. However, these have decreased in recent years and the Government of Indonesia is keen to ensure good inter-communal relations, including by working with Muslim and Christian community leaders to reduce tensions.

There are a small number of court cases involving Christians. Where the death penalty has been imposed, as in any other court case, we urge the Indonesian Government to refrain from carrying out executions, and to consider the abolition of the death penalty.

Iran

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multi-lateral contact he has had with the Government of Iran since January 2005 concerning nuclear processing; and what plans he has for further contact. [44458]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had regular bilateral and multi-lateral contact with the Government of Iran since January 2005.

He presently has no plans for further meetings.

Iraq

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his officials have had with the Kurdish Regional Government of Iraq concerning *(a)* removal of non-Kurdish people from the area and *(b)* freedom of expression; and if he will make a statement. [44463]

Dr. Howells: Officials have had no discussions with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) on the removal of non-Kurdish people from the Kurdish region.

The Government are committed to supporting freedom of expression in Iraq. Our embassy offices in Iraq discuss such matters with the Iraqi Government, including the KRG, on a regular basis.

Maldives

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Maldivian Government about the recent incident of harassment of Minivan Radio by Interpol; and if he will make a statement. [44725]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any discussions with the Government of the Maldives on this subject. However, officials from the British high commission in Colombo, accredited to the Maldives, raised this incident with the Maldivian Deputy Foreign Minister on 16 January 2006. We are aware that the Sri Lankan police, acting on a request through Interpol from the Government of the Maldives, made inquiries at the offices of Minivan Radio in Colombo in December 2005. We have no detailed information about the nature of these inquiries. We understand that the Sri Lankan police have indicated that no further action is to be taken. Minivan has relocated its Sri Lankan office to the United Kingdom.

We support democratic reform in the Maldives. Guaranteeing press freedom is an essential part of this process. In support of this, we have funded training for private and state media in Maldives which seeks to raise the quality of political reporting and public debate.

Nuclear Proliferation

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the UK Government have taken since the June 2005 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation treaty; and if he will make a statement. [44498]

Dr. Howells: Since June 2005, the UK has continued to play a proactive role in international efforts in a range of fora to strengthen all three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), including:

at the UN world summit, where we worked extensively for proactive language on non-proliferation;

through our continuing involvement in the Norwegian-led seven-country initiative designed to generate broad support for a forward-looking non-proliferation agenda;

in the International Atomic Energy Agency, where we have actively participated in discussions designed to strengthen the NPT and address the issue of non-compliance;

as G8 President during 2005, including by leading G8 efforts to encourage all states to adopt the IAEA's Additional Protocol;

through active participation in the diplomatic conference which agreed the Amendment on the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Somalia

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what British participation there has been in the peace process in Somalia; and if he will make a statement. [44455]

Ian Pearson: We have been closely engaged in the Somali National Reconciliation Conference and the subsequent political process and continue to work closely with the UN and other members of the international community to achieve a comprehensive and lasting settlement and a return to good governance in Somalia. My noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development and their officials have met the Transitional Federal President, Speaker and Prime Minister of Somalia on many occasions and have urged them to resolve their differences through dialogue.

They have also met with and fully support the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in encouraging Somali-owned reconciliation initiatives. We are working with other members of the international community to help convene an early meeting of the Transitional Federal Parliament inside Somalia and remain prepared to offer further assistance to reconciliation and rebuilding the Somali state.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what monitoring of the human rights situation in Somalia is undertaken by his officials; and if he will make a statement. [44457]

Ian Pearson: Our ability to monitor the human rights situation in Somalia is severely limited because of the dangerous internal security situation, but as set out in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report on Human Rights 2005, our judgment is that Somalia's population, many of whom have been displaced, both internally and across borders, lacks access to basic economic, social and political rights as well as formal judicial systems.

Somaliland

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent communications he has had with the Government of Somaliland; and if he will make a statement on future relations. [44454]

Ian Pearson: My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met the Somaliland authorities' Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Edna Adan, on 20 May 2005. During the year he exchanged letters with the Head of the Somaliland authorities, His Excellency Dahir Rayale Kahin, on the London bombings and the Somaliland elections. We acknowledge the progress achieved by Somaliland and hope to help the authorities there to further their democratic and developmental agenda through bilateral and multilateral contributions to aid programmes.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's

most recent assessment is of criminal violence in Sudan; and what recent reports it has received from the United Nations Mission in Sudan on this issue. [18120]

Ian Pearson: The United Nations Mission in Sudan provides regular reports on the security situation in Sudan. The security situation has improved in the south since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. However, criminal violence and banditry are widespread in Darfur. When my noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, visited Sudan from 5–8 October he made clear to the Government of Sudan that more must be done to improve security in Darfur. The Government are providing almost £32 million to support the African Union Mission in Darfur, which includes a sizeable civilian policing element.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to tackle the ongoing violence and rape in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [44039]

Ian Pearson: We deplore the ongoing rape and sexual violence in Darfur. Such attacks are abhorrent and totally unacceptable. In his latest report on Darfur, the UN Secretary-General notes that reports of sexual assaults are received on a daily basis. The African Union (AU) mission in Darfur is increasingly co-ordinating its patrols to provide protection for women when they leave the camps for Internally Displaced Persons. Where this is happening the number of reported rapes has decreased significantly, and we are encouraging the AU to promote this practice. The UK has provided almost £32 million in support to the AU.

We have made, and continue to make clear to the Government of Sudan that more must be done to provide security for the citizens of Darfur, and that perpetrators of such crimes must be brought to justice. In late December 2005, the UK participated in a mission to assess human rights in West Darfur consisting of representatives of the Government of Sudan, the UN and international community. The mission paid specific attention to sexual violence, and produced a number of recommendations. We are pressing the Government of Sudan to implement these recommendations as a matter of urgency.

Terror Suspects

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what NATO's policy is on the rendition of terror suspects detained by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [44265]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Troops deployed under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are able to arrest and detain by virtue of the authorisations permitting use of all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate contained in, most recently, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1623 (2005), and by agreement with the Government of Afghanistan. NATO-agreed ISAF detention policy is that individuals should be transferred to the Afghan authorities at the first opportunity and within 96 hours or released.

UN Convention Against Corruption

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the Government will ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. [44441]

Ian Pearson: The Government's policy on international treaties is that we only move to ratification once UK law is in compliance. In order to comply with the commitments contained in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption it was necessary, inter alia, to introduce secondary legislation under the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Act 1990 (Enforcement of Overseas Forfeiture Orders) and the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (External Requests and Orders). The relevant Orders in Council came into force by 1 January 2006. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is now in the process of drafting the instrument of ratification. This requires the Secretary of State's signature and must be formally presented to the depository organisation, in this case the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The process should be completed early in 2006.

UN Human Rights Convention

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the members of the UK delegation to the 2006 United Nations Human Rights Convention in Geneva; and what issues the delegation proposes to bring before it. [44573]

Ian Pearson: The UN World Summit on 14–16 September 2005 agreed to create a new UN Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights. Negotiations on the mandate, functions and other elements of the Council are ongoing in New York. Their conclusion and its timing will influence the format of this year's Commission on Human Rights, and the work that it will undertake. For this reason it is not yet possible to list the UK's delegation, although we can confirm that it will be headed by the UK Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, ambassador Nick Thorne. For the same reasons, no decisions have been taken on what issues we might bring before the Commission. We expect to work closely with EU and other partners in ensuring a smooth transition from the Commission to the Human Rights Council.

Western Sahara

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of the EU-Morocco Fishing Agreement on the peace process in the Western Sahara. [44577]

Dr. Howells: The UK fully supports the United Nations process, including the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to Western Sahara, to assist the parties to achieve a political solution to the question of Western Sahara. The EU-Morocco fisheries agreement is an EU bilateral partnership agreement and should have no effect on the question of the status of Western Sahara being dealt with under the UN process.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the progress of decolonisation of the Western Sahara; and when he expects a referendum to be held. [44578]

Dr. Howells: The UK fully supports the efforts of the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and his new Personal Envoy to Western Sahara, Peter Van Walsum, to assist the parties to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. On 18 January 2006, Mr. van Walsum briefed the UN Security Council on progress. The UK will now consider his comments carefully.

On 28 October, the Security Council unanimously adopted United Nations Security Council Resolution 1634 which renewed the mandate for the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara. The Government supported this. There are, however, no plans for a UN referendum to be held in the near future.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Adenstar (Portslade)

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what factors he took into account in accepting the invitation to open the new offices of Adenstar in Portslade on 13 May 2002; and if he will make a statement. [44786]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Audit Commission Chairman

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria were used when making the decision to reappoint James Strachan as Chairman of the Audit Commission. [42598]

Mr. Woolas: Mr. Strachan was offered re-appointment as Chairman of the Audit Commission for a period of two years. In December 2005 he wrote to inform my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister of his decision not to take up his reappointment.

Beach Safety

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to make beach safety provision a statutory responsibility of *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* other beach owners. [44704]

Jim Fitzpatrick: At present the provision of beach safety services is at the discretion of local authorities. The Government have no plans to replace the current discretionary power with a statutory obligation.

The Government wants to see local authorities act as effective and responsible community leaders, listening to the views of local people and providing services which meet their needs.

There are no plans to legislate to alter the responsibilities of private beach owners.

Brighton and Hove Albion

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he *(a)* informed and *(b)* sought advice from (i) his Permanent Secretary and (ii) other officials before deciding (A) to meet the Chairman of Brighton and Hove Albion and (B) to accept hospitality from the club on 16 December. [44789]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

The hospitality provided to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister by Brighton and Hove Albion on 16 December consisted of a steak and kidney pie and a glass of water in the crèche temporarily being used as the directors' box. This event was also attended by the directors of both clubs.

Council Tax

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money was raised by council tax in each of the last seven years. [44649]

Mr. Woolas: The council tax received in England in each of the last seven years is tabled as follows. The figures include both arrears received for previous years and prepayment of council tax for subsequent years.

	£ million
1998–99	10,579
1999–2000	11,457
2000–01	12,242
2001–02	13,208
2003–03	14,510
2003–04	16,392
2004–05	17,372

The data are as reported on QRC4 forms submitted by all billing authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister each year.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people were billed for council tax in 2004–05. [44658]

Mr. Woolas: The number of council tax demand notices issued by local billing authorities in 2004–05 is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Details of the number of chargeable dwellings in England in 2004–05 are published in Table 2.2k of Local Government Financial Statistics England No. 16, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's

website at: http ://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/lgfs/2005/lgfs16/h/lgfs16/xlsfiles/lgfs16-2-2k.xls.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of each response to the Department's Consultation Paper on council tax revaluation in England: publication of property information. [43006]

Mr. Woolas: The responses to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Consultation Paper—'Council Tax Revaluation in England: Publication of Property Information' have been made available in the Library of the House. A large majority of these are supportive of the inclusion of property details in any new council tax valuation list. A new valuation list will only be compiled at such time as a council tax revaluation takes place. There are no plans to publish additional information on property details as part of the current list.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39984]

Mr. Woolas: Set out as follows are the contributions incurred by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies (NDPB) for financial years 2002–03 to 2004–05. The planned expenditure for bodies other than ODPM are not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. In addition, the geographical split across the regions can be obtained only at disproportionate cost:

£000

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06 (planned)
(a) ODPM	17,025	20,414	22,103	29,855
(b) (ii) Planning Inspectorate	3,080	3,240	3,292	—
(b) (ii) The Rent Service	1,982	2,146	n/a	n/a
ODPM Consolidated	22,087	25,800	25,395	—
(b) (i) NDPBs				
English Partnerships	1,479	1,551	1,997	—
Castle Vale Housing Action Trust	238	242	2,621	n/a
Liverpool Housing Action Trust	482	430	3,581	—
Stonebridge Housing Action Trust	153	164	311	—
Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust	29	1,064	n/a	n/a
Housing Corporation	2,340	2,960	3,200	—
London Thames Gateway Development Corporation	n/a	n/a	6	—
The Standards Board for England	143	225	327	—
Thurrock Development Corporation	n/a	3	7	—
Valuation Tribunals Service	n/a	n/a	567	—
West Northamptonshire Development Corporation	n/a	n/a	0	—
(b) (iii) Other bodies				
Commission for Local Administration	486	726	634	—
Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre	190	208	222	—
The Fire Service College	581	627	716	—
Audit Commission for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales	[1]	13,024	16,256	—
Leasehold Advisory Service	[1]	[1]	[1]	—

n/a—Data not applicable
[1] Not disclosed

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Engagements

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether staff from his Department plan to attend *(a)* the Mass Appraisal Valuation Symposium in Vancouver, Canada on 6–7 February 2006, *(b)* the Integrating GIS and CAMA Conference in Orlando, Florida on 19–22 February 2006 and *(c)* the International Property Tax Institute International Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in August. [42594]

Mr. Woolas: No staff within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will attend any of the events listed.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether staff from his Department attended *(a)* the International Property Tax Institute International Conference in Prague on 23–24 August 2005, *(b)* the Southern African Tax Institute Workshop on the Valuation and Rating of Public Service Infrastructure on 2–3 June 2005 in Pretoria, South Africa and *(c)* the Eighth International Conference of the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation in Alicante, Spain on 22–25 February 2005. [42595]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no record of any of its staff attending any of the events listed.

EU Funding

Danny Alexander: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of agreed changes to the EU budget on funds provided by the EU for regeneration in deprived areas of the UK; and if he will make a statement. [44253]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

In my written statement to Parliament of 20 December 2005 I set out the impact of the EU budget settlement for the UK's future Structural Funds allocations. The UK will receive approximately €2.6 billion in Convergence funding (previously called Objective 1 funding) for its poorest regions. Cornwall and West Wales and the Valleys will receive full Convergence funding, while the Highlands and Islands will receive phasing-out Convergence funding averaging approximately two-fifths of the intervention rates for the UK's future full Convergence regions. The UK will also receive approximately €6.2 billion in Competitiveness funding for its other regions. Of this, South Yorkshire and Merseyside will receive phasing-in Competitiveness funding averaging approximately one-third of the intervention rates for the UK's future full Convergence regions. We have now started the process of deciding how the UK's remaining Competitiveness funding should be allocated between our nations and regions. Finally, the UK will receive approximately €0.6 billion in Co-operation funding. The Government will also need to agree with the Commission how this should be allocated.

Fire Service (Mobile Communications)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what use the fire service made of public mobile communications networks during the response operation to the incidents on the London Underground and bus network on 7 July 2005. [43783]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The fire and rescue service made very limited use of the public mobile communications networks at the incidents they attended on the 7 July 2005. The public mobile phone systems are not used by the London Fire Brigade as the primary means of communication for the mobilisation of officers or appliances to attend incidents, nor to pass information from the incidents. All the primary communication systems performed efficiently on the 7 July.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many instances have been recorded of the fire service using mobile phone location data to effect a rescue operation. [43784]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally. The fire and rescue service is not responsible for tracking criminals.

Local Authority Allowances

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the guidance and regulations the Government have published since May 1997 on allowances for local authority members of *(a)* national park authorities, *(b)* passenger transport authorities, *(c)* fire authorities, *(d)* police authorities and *(e)* regional chambers. [42607]

Mr. Woolas: Legislation provides that a special responsibility allowance may be payable to members representing their local authority at meetings of another body.

Since 1997 guidance has been issued to accompany legislation on members' allowances in 2001 and 2003.

Since 1997 the following legislation having relevance to attendance, and later special responsibility, allowances have been published:

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1998/556 came into force: 1 April 1998

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1998/557 came into force: 1 April 1998

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1999/1086 came into force: 30 April 1999

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1999/1087 came into force: 30 April 1999

The Local Government Act 2000 came into force: 28 July 2001

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001/1280 came into force: 4 May 2001

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003/1021 came into force: 1 May 2003

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003/1692 came into force: 31 July 2003

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the representations the Government has received from hotel companies and the tourism industry in relation to the reform of local government finance in the last two years. [42610]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no record of any such representations. The Department for Culture Media and Sport have received copies of representations made by such groups to Sir Michael Lyons' independent Inquiry. Sir Michael published an interim report and consultation paper on 15 December. This report lists contributors to his inquiry and understand that links to the representations received will be posted shortly on the inquiry's website at: www.lyonsinquiry.org

Pay and Work Force Strategies

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities are implementing local government pay and workforce strategies. [44950]

Mr. Woolas: A People Management Survey 2005 conducted by the Employers Organisation showed that 83 per cent. of local authorities have a work force strategy in place.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions his Department has had with mobile phone operators on the siting of mobile phone masts; and if he will make a statement. [41472]

Yvette Cooper: Since the beginning of November the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has had one meeting with the Mobile Operators Association and a representative of each of the five mobile network operators, which discussed the Code of Best Practice on siting of mobile phone masts.

Representatives of the mobile networks operators have attended a project meeting for the research to identify the future direction of mobile phone and electronic communications network technology.

Officials have also had telephone conversations with representatives of the mobile networks operators about a number of different issues.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Ordnance Survey has provided the Valuation Office Agency with *(a)* aerial and *(b)* satellite imagery. [42593]

Mr. Woolas: No.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2837W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what penalties can be levied on businesses who refuse to allow a valuation officer or his agent to conduct an internal inspection after written notice has been given of the inspection. [42596]

Mr. Woolas: The maximum fine for refusing access to a valuation officer who has given notice as required of the exercise of the power of entry is level 1 on the standard scale, under legislation introduced in 1988.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information Ordnance Survey has provided to the Valuation Office Agency in relation to council tax valuations and revaluations. [42917]

Mr. Woolas: No such information has been provided.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Valuation Office Agency *(a)* collects and *(b)* collates information from local planning authorities on (i) business planning applications and (ii) residential planning applications. [43100]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency may obtain information from local planning authorities which is relevant to its various valuation activities.

Value Bill Project

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the *(a)* purpose, *(b)* extent and *(c)* status of the Value Bill project; how much has been spent on the project to date; and what the total forecast expenditure is for the whole project. [42620]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information is as follows:

(a) The Value Bill Project is one of the 22 Local e-Gov National. The project examined ways of effectively and efficiently linking local government and the Valuation Office Agency.

(b) The project has achieved its objective.

(c) This project has now completed its development phase. It was awarded grants totalling £2,660,950.00 over two years (2002–04). The products are now being rolled out by London Connects.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Helplines

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff will be answering calls on each of the benefit helplines at his Department from 23 December 2005 to 3 January 2006; and what the equivalent figures were for *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2003. [39178]

Mr. Plaskitt: The number of people answering calls at any helpline may vary during each day in order to provide as consistent a level of service as possible to the varying volume of calls being received.

The information that is available is recorded in the table:

	BEL (DCS)	*Disability Living*	*Child Support Agency*	*Debt Mgmt*	*Jobcentre Plus Direct—First Contact*	*Employer Direct*	*National Benefit Fraud Hotline*	*Pension Centres*
2005–06								
23 December 2005	22	348	185	30	1,762	60	33	745
29 December 2005	27	264	108	16	[2]1,532	80	28	770
30 December 2005	27	265	216	13	1,452	[4]71	24	709
3 January 2006	38	311	445	24	1,951	250	35	767
2004–05								
24 December 2004	21	95	119	19	[3]n/a	[5]n/a	[6]n/a	[7]n/a
30 December 2004	27	149	169	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
31 December 2004	22	90	139	11	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
4 January 2005	41	306	286	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003–04								
23 December 2003	20	206	130	[1]n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
29 December 2003	32	81	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
30 December 2003	38	83	114	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
31 December 2003	21	53	152	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2 January 2004	22	208	313	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

	Pension Credit App Line	Pension Direct	Pension Guide Order Line	Future Pension Centre	RP Tele Claim	IPC	Pension Info Order Line
2005–06							
23 December 2005	259	133	71	84	57	44	9
29 December 2005	[8]n/a	[2]133	44	68	52	42	8
30 December 2005	n/a	133	45	82	49	40	7
3 January 2006	n/a	161	45	116	95	50	7
2004–05							
24 December 2004	n/a	155	41	60	72	[10]n/a	[11]n/a
30 December 2004	n/a	155	31	58	51	n/a	n/a
31 December 2004	n/a	155	46	43	36	n/a	n/a
4 January 2005	n/a	155	38	102	39	n/a	n/a
2003–04							
23 December 2003	n/a	141	49	[9]n/a	88	n/a	n/a
29 December 2003	n/a	141	61	n/a	84	n/a	n/a
30 December 2003	n/a	141	56	n/a	85	n/a	n/a
31 December 2003	n/a	141	41	n/a	62	n/a	n/a
2 January 2004	n/a	171	49	n/a	77	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available.
[1] Debt Management figures are unavailable due to installation of new IT system.
[2] In addition, Jobcentre Plus Direct, First Contact will have 194 staff answering calls from Scotland on 28 December 2005.
[3] Jobcentre Plus Direct, First Contact figures are unavailable for 2003–04 and 2004–05 as, prior to the establishment of the new organisational structure in April 2004 calls, would have been dealt with right across the dispersed regional organisation.
[4] In addition, Employer Direct will have six staff answering calls on 31 December 2005.
[5] Employer Direct has only recently joined the Jobcentre Plus Directorate, exact figures are not available for 2003–04 or 2004–05.
[6] National Benefit Fraud Hotline has only recently joined the Jobcentre Plus Directorate, exact figures are not available for 2003–04 or 2004–05.
[7] Comparable Pension centre figures are not available for 2003–04 or 2004–05.
[8] No further Pension Credit Application Line data is available.
[9] Data for the Future Pension Centre is not available for 2003–04.
[10] Data for the International Pension Centre are not available for 2003–04 or 2004–05.
[11] Data for the Pension Information Order Line are not available for 2003–04 or 2004–05.
Note:
No information is available for the outsourced Winter Fuels Line.

Benefit Payment Times

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average time taken from application was for claimants to receive their payments of each benefit that the Department distributes in the last period for which figures are available; [39393]

(2) what proportion of payments of each benefit that his Department distributes were not distributed within the target timescale in the last period for which figures are available. [39394]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the table.

Target	Achievement (percentage)	Average actual clearance time (days)
Attendance allowance[1]: clear claim in 22 days	100	17.9
Attendance allowance[2]: clear claim in 8 days	100	4.5
Bereavement benefit/widows benefit	[3]n/a	10.6
Carers allowance: clear claim in 22 days	100	13.4
Disability living allowance[1]: clear claim in 39 days	100	34.5
Disability living allowance[2]: clear claim in 8 days	100	5.7
Incapacity benefit: clear claim in 19 days	92.4	15.4
Income support: clear claim in 12 days	95.41	11
Jobseekers allowance: clear claim in 12 days	91.62	14
Maternity allowance	[3]n/a	11.5
Pension credit: average actual clearance time 10 days[1]	n/a	8.62
State pension claims: clear 95 per cent. in 60 days[4]	97.05	n/a
State pension claims: clear 91 per cent. in 28 days[4]	90.64	n/a

[1] Figures are year to date to November 2005.
[2] Normal rules
[3] Special rules (those cases where the claimant has a terminal illness)
[4] Measured from when evidence requirements are met
[5] Target applies only to non-complex cases (complex cases are those claims to state pension from customers who have been widowed or divorced and the spouse's national insurance contributions are taken into consideration).
Note:
Not part of any PSA or reportable performance measure and do not appear on the management information portal. We still collect data through MISP but the information is purely used as a local measurement tool.

Benefit Services

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of the free telephone service on the take-up of *(a)* crisis loans and *(b)* other benefits. [41823]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 23 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what assessment he has made of the impact of the free telephone service on the take up of *(a)* crisis loans and *(b)* other benefits. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

In areas that are covered by the new Jobcentre Plus model, the customer calls a contact centre to make a claim for any working age benefit. This call is charged at local rate, or alternatively the customer can use a dedicated Customer Access phone in their local Jobcentre free of charge. We have not undertaken any central assessment of the impact of the availability of Customer Access phones on the take-up of working age benefits.

The free telephone service for crisis loans is not yet available in every part of the country and, therefore, we are not yet able to formally assess the impact of the service on national take-up of Crisis Loans.

I hope this helpful.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children were living in poverty in each year since 1975–76, measured in terms of *(a)* absolute low income, *(b)* relative low income and *(c)* material deprivation; and if he will make a statement. [41195]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available. The available information is in the tables.

Children with income below 60 per cent. of 1996–97 median income held constant in real terms, 1994–05 to 2003–04, (absolute low income)

Number (Million)

	Below 60 per cent. median	
FRS (GB)	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
1994–95	3.3	4.3
1995–96	3.2	4.4
1996–97	3.2	4.2
1997–98	3.0	4.0
1998–99	2.8	3.9
1999–2000	2.4	3.6
2000–01	2.0	3.0
2001–02	1.6	2.5
2002–03	1.5	2.2
2003–04	1.4	2.2

Children falling below 60 per cent. of contemporay median income, (relative low income)

Number (Million)

	Below 60 per cent. median	
FRS (GB)	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
1994–95	2.9	4.0
1995–96	2.8	4.0
1996–97	3.2	4.2
1997–98	3.1	4.1
1998–99	3.1	4.1
1999–2000	3.0	4.1
2000–01	2.7	3.8
2001–02	2.6	3.7
2002–03	2.6	3.6
2003–04	2.6	3.5

Notes:
1. The Family Resources Survey (FRS) data is for all financial years 1994–95 until 2003–04. Comparisons of estimates between the two sources should be treated carefully.
2. FRS figures are for Great Britain. The reference period for FRS figures is single financial years.

Source:
FRS.

Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in 'Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04', available in the Library. The report includes comparisons of incomes against low income thresholds, such as the commonly used relative low income threshold of 60 per cent. of contemporary median income.

Data to measure material deprivation have been collected on the Family Resources Survey since 2004. Baseline data for the material deprivation and low income combined tier of the child poverty measure will be available in spring 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children lived in workless households in each year since 1975–76; and if he will make a statement. [41223]

Margaret Hodge: At spring 2005 there were 1.75 million children living in a household with no adult in work. Information prior to 1992 is not available; the available information is in the table.

Period	*Children in households with no one in work*
Spring 1992	2,224,705
Spring 1993	2,312,341
Spring 1994	2,420,001
Spring 1995	2,370,800
Spring 1996	2,292,382
Spring 1997	2,126,242
Spring 1998	2,132,863
Spring 1999	2,080,762
Spring 2000	1,900,721
Spring 2001	1,841,432
Spring 2002	1,899,472
Spring 2003	1,820,008
Spring 2004	1,782,604
Spring 2005	1,752,731

Source:
Household Labour Force Survey

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of children in *(a)* working and *(b)* workless households were living in relative poverty in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [41291]

Margaret Hodge: The seventh annual "Opportunity for all" report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators. Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04", available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

The information requested is in the table.

Percentage of children living in households with income less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median income, Great Britain

2003–04	*Percentage*
Before housing costs	
Working	13
Workless	55

Percentage of children living in households with income less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median income, Great Britain

2003–04	*Percentage*
After housing costs	
Working	17
Workless	77

Notes:
1. Working households are defined as having at least one adult in work, where an adult is over 16 years of age including those above state retirement age.
2. Workless households are defined as having no adults in work.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by what date he plans to start to measure the number of children experiencing material deprivation in the United Kingdom; what targets he will set for reducing this measure of deprivation; and if he will make a statement. [41308]

Margaret Hodge: Data to measure material deprivation have been collected on the Family Resources Survey since 2004. Baseline data for the material deprivation and low-income combined tier of the child poverty measure will be available in spring 2006.

The technical note setting out details of how the child poverty PSA target announced in the 2004 Spending Review will be measured is available in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much information relating to Child Support Agency cases in Kent has been lost due to the new IT system. [28595]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Substantive answer from James Plaskitt to Adam Holloway:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much information relating to Child Support Agency cases in Kent has been lost due to the new IT system.

Neither the Agency nor the service supplier (EDS) are aware that any data has been lost from the new computer system (CS2) in any area of the country. Any information relating to child support cases that has been saved to the system is retained in the system.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Customer Management Computer Systems

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what performance standards are contractually required for the provision of the Customer Management computer system; what sanctions there are for the system provider if the standards are not met; on what occasions these standards have not been met; and what action was taken as a result. [34252]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 23 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question concerning the performance standards that are contractually required for the provision of the Customer Management computer system; what sanctions there are for the system provider if the standards are not met; on what occasions these standards have not been met; and what action was taken as a result. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The contract for the Customer Management System (CMS) contains two measures of performance standards; service availability and response times.

The CMS service availability level measures the extent to which the CMS end to end operational service is accessible for use by all CMS registered users in each Service Management Period (SMP). The service level for CMS is that the system should be available for at least 98.5 percent of the time in each SMP. This has not been met on four occasions since CMS began in October 2003.

The other criteria that we use to measure system performance are system response times that are measured using a variety of different system transactions. These have not been met on only one occasion.

There are sanctions for non-compliance with the service levels in the form of service credits against the service charge for the SMP. The value of the service credits increases on a pre-determined scale depending on the extent of the failure. We have claimed back the appropriate service credits on each of the five occasions that the service levels have not been met.

Throughout, we have worked jointly with our service providers on a programme of continual and sustained service improvement resulting in a number of system releases during 2004 and 2005 to remove non-critical system defects and improve the performance and reliability of the system.

I hope this response is helpful.

Departmental Advisers

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the costs were to his Department of external *(a)* consultants, *(b)* advisers, *(c)* accountants and *(d)* lawyers in each of the last six years. [42770]

Margaret Hodge: A breakdown into the specific categories requested is not available.

Expenditure on externally provided management and technical support, including consultants, advisers, accountants and lawyers is as follows, however the figures cover costs for a more comprehensive definition than the categories requested. It includes management and IT consultants, staff providing professional services, including financial and legal services.

	Total (£ million)
2001–02	169.49
2002–03	291.52
2003–04	412.53
2004–05	345.63

Note:
The Department for Work and Pensions was established in June 2001.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each

independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39077]

Margaret Hodge: Spend on external consultants and advisers since May 1997 (where available) is in the table. Spend for April 2005 to date is also given in some instances but is not yet available in every case.

(a) The Department was established in June 2001 and information relates from this date only.

The Department

Financial year	*£ million*
2001–02	94.46
2002–03	141.04
2003–04	306.72
2004–05	168.37

(b) (i) Each non-departmental public body. Listed are those who operate separate accounting systems, others for example the Independent Review Service and the National Employer Panel are included in the total at answer *(a)*.

The Disability Rights Commission

Financial year	*£*
2000–01	19,488
2001–02	797,045
2002–03	435,415
2003–04	611,676
2004–05	789,438

Private Pensions Fund—established 6 April 2005

Financial year	*£*
April-November 2005	576,00

Independent Living Funds[1]

Financial year	*£*
2001–02	56,235
2002–03	13,363
2003–04	35,014
2004–05	73,151

[1] No figures available before 2001

Pensions Ombudsman[1]

Financial year	*£*
2002–03	24,100
2003–04	10,800
2004–05	74,200

[1] No figures available before 2002–03

Remploy Ltd.

Financial year	*£*
1997–98	740,000
1998–99	924,000
1999–2000	1,712,00
2000–01	3,335,000
2001–02	2,479,000
2002–03	2,171,000
2003–04	2,559,000
2004–05	3,240,000

(b) (ii) Each executive agency for which the Department is responsible.

With the exception of The Rent Service and The Health and Safety Executive listed in the table, who operate separate accounting systems, the agencies within the Department are included in the total at answer *(a)*. Our systems do no allow us to separate the Departmental agencies from the Departmental total.

The Rent Service[1]

Financial year	*£*
2004–05	14,400
2005–06 to date	1,800

[1] Became part of DWP in April 2004

The Health and Safety Executive

Financial year	*£*
1997–98	1,348,000
1998–99	1,081,000
1999–2000	1,773,000
2000–01	3,775,000
2001–02	3,702,000
2002–03	1,881,000
2003–04	3,180,000
2004–05	4,111,000
2005–06 to date	620,000

(c) Each independent statutory body organisation and body financially sponsored by the Department.

Motability

Financial year	*£*
1997–98	0
1998–99	0
1999–2000	1,712
2000–01	0
2001–02	33,962
2002–03	24,471
2003–04	21,134
2004–05	32,230

The Pensions Advisory Service

Financial year	*£*
1997–98	0
1998–99	0
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	1,000
2002–03	0
2003–04	10,000
2004–05	9,136

Economic Inactivity

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the recent level of economic inactivity among young people. [38521]

Margaret Hodge: Since 1997 the proportion of the total population aged 16–24 not in full-time education or work has gone down. Without this improvement the number of jobless young people not in full-time education would be 50,000 higher than it is now.

This reflects the success of the New Deal, which has helped in virtually eradicating long-term youth unemployment.

Ethnic Minorities

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made in encouraging ethnic minority recruitment within his Department. [33512]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is constantly working to attract applicants from all areas of society when recruiting staff.

Between 2003–04 and 2004–05 the success rate of job applicants from minority ethnic groups increased from 14.2 per cent. to 19.3 per cent.

Following a continuous improvement review by an external HR consultancy, DWP has produced further good practice guidelines for all its recruiting teams to ensure that they recruit from as wide a range of people as possible.

Incapacity Benefit

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of recipients of incapacity benefit are incapacitated as a result of *(a)* physical disabilities or injuries, *(b)* stress, depression and other mental health problems and *(c)* drug or alcohol dependency. [35313]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. There is no specific group of diagnoses that covers physical disabilities or injuries. Stress, depression and other mental health problems all fall within the mental and behavioural disorders group of diagnoses, as do drug abuse and alcoholism.
The available information is in the following table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants, by diagnosis group, at 31 May 2005.

	Number of IB/ SDA claimants	*Percentage of all diagnoses*
All cases	2,784,000	100.0
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	21,000	0.8
Neoplasms	39,900	1.4
Diseases of the blood and blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism	4,500	0.2
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	39,700	1.4
Mental and behavioural disorders	1,086,100	39.0
of which:		
Alcoholism	48,000	1.7
Drug abuse	48,300	1.7
Diseases of the nervous system	166,300	6.0
Diseases of the eye and adnexa	19,700	0.7
Diseases of the ear and mastoid process	12,100	0.4
Diseases of the circulatory system	168,900	6.1
Diseases of the respiratory system	65,600	2.4
Diseases of the digestive system	43,300	1.6
Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous system	16,900	0.6
Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	524,300	18.8
Diseases of the genitourinary system	19,800	0.7
Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	4,700	0.2
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	—	—
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	25,200	0.9
Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified	331,400	11.9
Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	157,500	5.7
Factors influencing health status and contact with health services	37,100	1.3

Notes:
1. Figures rounded to the nearest 100.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disability allowance (SDA), including IB credits-only cases.
3. Figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
4. Diagnoses are taken from the International Classification of Diseases (ICD10).
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) 100 per cent. data.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the role of *(a)* national and *(b)* local voluntary organisations in partnership programmes with government agencies to support incapacity benefit recipients in gaining employment. [43141]

Margaret Hodge: We have always used voluntary and local organisations to work in partnership to deliver employment support to our customers. We intend to continue to do so in the future. The voluntary sector has a vital contribution to make in providing effective support to individuals so that they can move closer to the labour market and find a job.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of incapacity benefit have been in receipt of the benefit for *(a)* less than one year, *(b)* between one and two years, *(c)* between two and three years, *(d)* between three and four years, *(e)* between four and five years and *(f)* more than five years. [44951]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Pensions Reform gave on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 374W to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central (Jim Cousins).

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1774W, on Jobcentre Plus, if he will carry out a sample survey of calls from warm phones; and whether calls from a warm phone can *(a)* receive an engaged tone and *(b)* be put into a queue to be answered. [41850]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 23 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005 on Jobcentre Plus, concerning if he will carry out a sample survey of calls from warm phones; and whether calls from a warm phone can receive *(a)* an engaged tone and *(b)* be put into a queue to be answered. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Calls made from warm phones to Jobcentre Plus contact centres cannot receive an engaged tone, however they can be put into a queue for the call to be answered by an agent.

After consideration, Jobcentre Plus has decided not to undertake a sample of calls from warm phones. Our call handling performance has improved significantly over recent months and to undertake such an exercise would not deliver sufficient benefit from the cost incurred.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost has been of creating Jobcentre Plus offices in each year since 2001–02; and what the estimated costs are for each year to 2007–08. [42766]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 23 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the cost of creating Jobcentre Plus offices in each year since 2001–02 and the estimated costs for each year to 2007–08. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The creation of the Jobcentre Plus network of newly designed offices began in 2001 with a number of Pathfinder offices. This phase was followed by the set up of a project in 2002 to rollout the new designs and infrastructure.

In answer to your specific question, the overall cost of creating Jobcentre Plus offices over the period is broken down as follows:

	Expenditure (£ million)
2001–02[1]	36.7
2002–03[1]	259.6
2003–04[1]	450.6
2004–05[1]	384.1
2005–06[2]	626.5
2006–07[2]	283.3
2007–08[2]	5.4
Total	2,046.2

[1] Actual
[2] Forecast

I hope this is helpful.

Kvaerner Pension Fund

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with Kvaerner on the Kvaerner pension fund. [38470]

Mr. Timms: None.

Leaked Letter

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what evidence his Department has given to the Treasury inquiry into the leaking of a letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Lord Turner in November 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41343]

Mr. Timms: The Department has undertaken an investigation and provided a report for the Treasury inquiry.

New Deal

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on the New Deal in each year from 1997–98; how much has been allocated for each year to 2008–09; and if he will make a statement. [41289]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 807W.

Occupational Health

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress on the implementation of the national strategy for occupational health. [37169]

Mrs. McGuire: We published, in conjunction with the Secretary of State for Health and the Chair of the Health and Safety Commission, the strategy "Health, Work and Well-being—Caring for our future" on 19 October. This strategy is a crucial part of delivering on the Government's commitment to improving the health and well-being of the working age population.

Since its publication, ministerial colleagues and officials from all three organisations have been working hard to turn the strategy into actions which will make a real difference.

Central to the strategy's success is a commitment to partnership working and one of the three key themes is "Engaging Stakeholders". Plans for a range of stakeholder activities are well under way, including the organisation of a stakeholder summit involving all those with a part to play in improving and promoting the health and well-being of people of working age.

We are also finalising arrangements for the recruitment of a national Director for Occupational Health which we intend to advertise shortly.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what work mental health workers in Pathways to Work pilot areas undertake with participants; and if he will make a statement. [38252]

Margaret Hodge: A key aim of the Condition Management Programme (CMP) is to help customers to manage their own condition and help them to focus on their potential to work. It is a cognitive educational programme rather than a treatment regime.

All customers receive an individual assessment and are informed about the options available to them. A personal action plan is also developed with the customer and includes information on the available health interventions.

Customers with mental health conditions typically receive support through cognitive behavioural therapy programmes. These are supported across the pilots by specific programmes such as 'Beating the Blues' in West Lancashire.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what feedback he has received from those involved in the Pathways to Work Scheme on the scheme's effectiveness in getting those on incapacity benefit back to work. [40762]

Margaret Hodge: The Department has undertaken qualitative research with Personal Advisers (PAs) and incapacity benefit claimants. The results of that research are set out in the reports 'Incapacity Benefit Reforms; the Personal Adviser Role and Practices: Stage Two', 'National Centre for Social Research, DWP report no. 268, September 2005' and 'IB Reforms Pilot: Findings from a longitudinal panel of clients, Social Policy Research Unit, DWP report no. 259, July 2005', copies of which are in the Library.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the companies operating pension schemes which are now in an assessment period for the Pension Protection Fund had experienced an insolvency event before 6 April 2005; and how many individuals are members of those schemes. [42531]

Mr. Timms: The board of the Pension Protection Fund Board advises that of the 40 schemes currently in assessment, six had insolvency events prior to 6 April 2005, and entry to the assessment period was obtained via a second insolvency event. Every scheme that is in assessment has had an insolvency event later than 5 April 2005.

These six schemes have 2,154 members (about ten per cent. of members in assessment).

Pensioners

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average age of retirement in the Ribble Valley was in each of the last 10 years. [43163]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single women pensioners in Stroud constituency are receiving assistance to bring them up to the minimum pension level. [35113]

Mr. Timms: At the end of September 2005 there were 2,000 single women pensioners in receipt of guarantee credit element of pension credit in the Stroud constituency.

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Data from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS) 100 per cent. scan taken on 16 September 2005. The figure has been rated up to give month-end estimates.
3. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.
4. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate 100 per cent. data.

Pensions

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of mean average earnings the single person's basic state pension represented in each year since the link between uprating and earnings was broken. [34643]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table.

	Full basic state pension as a percentage of mean average earnings
1980	24.6
1981	23.7
1982	24.1
1983	23.0
1984	22.5
1985	22.4
1986	21.0
1987	19.9
1988	18.8
1989	18.2
1990	17.8
1991	18.3
1992	17.8
1993	17.7
1994	17.7
1995	17.4
1996	17.4
1997	17.0
1998	16.5
1999	16.4
2000	15.9
2001	16.1
2002	16.0
2003	15.9
2004	15.8

Notes:
1. The link with earnings was broken in November 1980.
2. The average earnings figure is for full-time employees in the April of that year and has been taken from the New Earnings Survey prior to 1998 and from Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings since 1998.
3. The year refers to the year of uprating. From 1980 to 1985 this took place in November, in 1986 it occurred in July and since 1987 annual uprating has taken place in April.

Source:
2004 Annual Abstract of Statistics published by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of using the same rules to credit people into entitlement to the state second

pension as exist to credit people into entitlement for the basic state pension in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2010, *(c)* 2020, *(d)* 2030, *(e)* 2040 and *(f)* 2050; and how many (i) men and (ii) women he estimates would benefit in each year. [35376]

Mr. Timms: The information is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1374W, on pensions, to the right hon. and learned Member for Kensington and Chelsea (Sir Malcolm Rifkind), if he will provide his latest estimate of the number of *(a)* pension scheme members who have lost pension savings as a result of their pension scheme winding up, *(b)* pension schemes which have completed the wind-up process since 1997 and which are not included in these figures and *(c)* people who have lost pension savings as a result. [38895]

Mr. Timms: With regard to part *(a)* and *(c)* of the question, the information is not available. The Government is currently inviting notifications from affected pension schemes to the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS), and is therefore obtaining some information on the number of members facing pensions losses due to company insolvency. In due course, information will also be collected on individual members in schemes qualifying for FAS. Based on our most recent data collection for the FAS, we know of around 70,000 non pensioner members in schemes that are potentially eligible for assistance from the FAS as a result of their schemes being wound up in circumstances of insolvency or where the employer no longer exists.

With regard to part *(b)* of the question, information in the following table was provided by the Pensions Regulator and shows the number of schemes that have wound up each year since 2 April 1997. This includes all schemes that have wound up, whether fully funded or under funded. The Pensions Regulator only holds the present status of a scheme and only those schemes that have completed winding up procedures are included in these figures.

Effective date scheme status was changed register to 'wound up'	*Number of schemes*	*Total membership*
2 April 1997 to 31 March 1998	8,248	54,439
1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999	7,708	71,351
1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000	8,462	64,608
1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001	6,720	65,510
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	5,822	128,060
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	6,250	145,039
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	6,316	127,839
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	4,328	78,878
Total	53,854	735,724

Notes:

1. A wound up scheme is one which has notified the Pensions Regulator (or its predecessor the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority) that it has completed winding up procedures.
2. Schemes are required to notify the Pensions Regulator of changes in scheme status as soon as is reasonably practical. This means that the data for the year ended 31 March 2005 is provisional.
3. The figures are based on information held on the register as at 11 January 2006. The effective date for the completion of wind up is based on the last scheme status change date.
4. Figures for 1997–8 commence on 2 April 1997 because, where the date at which the scheme completed winding up procedures, prior to 1 April 1997 cannot be ascertained, a default value of 1 April 1997 is used as the date on which the scheme wound up. As a result a very large number of schemes are recorded as wound up with a scheme status change date of 1 April 1997, even if they had wound up at some earlier date. Including schemes with this default date in the table would significantly overstate the number of schemes that wound up during 1997, so a start date of 2 April has been used for 1997–98.
5. Total membership includes active, deferred and pensioner members. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of these numbers.
6. During 2005–06 the Pensions Regulator will continue with its plans to issue a scheme return form to all occupational pension schemes that are registered in the UK. This will provide the Pension Regulator with access to enhanced data in future years.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with the *(a)* Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on transferring responsibility for overseeing public sector pensions to his Department. [44501]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend has had no such discussions.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of paying the basic state pension to all pensioners aged 75 years and above regardless of contributions *(a)* assuming an earnings link from 2010–11 and *(b)* continuing the present uprating policy in (i) each of the next four years, (ii) 2010, (iii) 2020, (iv) 2030, (v) 2040 and (vi) 2050. [37114]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is as follows:

Part *(a)*

Great Britain

£ billion[1]

	Gross cost	*Net of IRBs*	*Net of IRBs and tax*
2006	2.0	1.4	1.4
2007	2.0	1.5	1.4
2008	2.1	1.5	1.5
2009	2.2	1.6	1.5
2010	2.6	1.8	1.7
2020	8.4	4.7	4.2
2030	18.1	9.2	8.0
2040	34.0	16.6	14.2
2050	55.4	26.7	22.8

[1] 2005–06 price terms.

Part *(b)*

Great Britain

£ billion[1]

	Gross cost	*Net of IRBs*	*Net of IRBs and tax*
2006	2.0	1.4	1.4
2007	2.0	1.5	1.4
2008	2.1	1.5	1.5
2009	2.2	1.6	1.5
2010	2.2	1.6	1.5
2020	2.7	1.9	1.9
2030	2.2	1.6	1.6
2040	2.1	1.5	1.5
2050	2.3	1.7	1.6

[1] 2005–06 price terms.

Notes:

1. The policy change is assumed to take place from 2006–07. In part *(a)* the Basic State Pension (BSP) is assumed to be uprated by prices growth (including underpin) in 2006–07, 2007–08, 2008–09, 2009–10 and uprated by earnings growth from 2010–11. In part *(b)* it is assumed that the BSP would be uprated by prices growth (plus underpin).

2. Gross costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with the pre-Budget report 2005 assumptions.

3. Savings in income-related benefit (IRBs) such as pension credit and housing benefit, and potential increases in tax revenue, are estimated using the DWP policy simulation model and April 2006 benefit rates. Savings are assumed to be a constant proportion of the estimated gross cost over time.

Poverty

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measure of poverty his Department uses; and how many people his Department defined as poor in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Stroud constituency in each year since 1997. [39184]

Margaret Hodge: Poverty is about more than low income. It is also about health, housing, education and the quality of the environment. The seventh annual "Opportunity for all" report (Cm 6673), published in October 2005, sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Specific information regarding individuals living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04", available in the Library. The report includes estimates of relative low income, absolute low income, and persistent low income. A household is defined as experiencing relative low income if it has an income below a relative low income threshold, such as the commonly used relative threshold of 60 per cent. of contemporary median. A household is defined as experiencing absolute low income if it has an income below an absolute low income threshold, such as the commonly used absolute threshold of 60 per cent. of median from an historic year that has been adjusted for inflation. The Households Below Average Income report currently uses the 1996–07 median for absolute low income estimates. A household is defined as experiencing persistent low income if it has experienced relative low income for three or four years out of four consecutive years.

The number and percentage of individuals living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of median income—known as "relative" low income—from 1996–07 to 2003–04 are presented in the following table. Figures are presented for Great Britain as results for the United Kingdom are only available from 2002–03 onwards and are not available below regional level.

Number and percentage of individuals with incomes less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median, Great Britain

	Before housing costs		*After housing costs*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
1996–97	10.2	18	13.8	25
1997–98	10.2	18	13.3	24
1998–99	10.2	18	13.2	24
1999–2000	10.0	18	13.2	24
2000–01	9.6	17	12.7	23
2001–02	9.6	17	12.3	22
2002–03	9.7	17	12.2	22
2003–04	9.6	17	12.0	21

Note:
The table shows percentages rounded to the nearest percentage point, and numbers in millions rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Staff Allocations

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff were employed to work on *(a)* crisis loans, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in each of the past 24 months. [41821]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available.

Jobcentre Plus, in line with other parts of the Department for Work and Pensions, collect staffing information by grade/location and not job role.

Staff Discipline

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many employees have been dismissed by his Department in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [29138]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department informs staff what is expected of them and the consequences of non-compliance through the Department's Standards of Behaviour policy. The Department has procedures in place in accordance with the Dispute Resolution Regulations 2004 to deal with issues of misconduct, unsatisfactory performance or attendance and where it is deemed appropriate this could lead to dismissal. All of the policies and procedures are available to staff through the Department's internal HR website.

Information on the numbers of dismissals from the Department for each of the financial years from March 2002 to March 2005 is in the following table.

Financial year	*Number of dismissals*
2001–02	524
2002–03	367
2003–04	416
2004–05	497

Note:
Numbers of dismissals are permanent staff expressed as headcount

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Administrative Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39827]

Bridget Prentice: The total administration costs outturn of the core Department, which includes the Court Service and Public Guardianship Office, in 2004–05 was £915 million. It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information of the administration costs of the functions carried out by the core Department in *(a)* England and *(b)* London in the last year without incurring disproportionate costs.

The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. The Department does not monitor national, regional or

London administration costs separately and it is a matter for the devolved Administrations how they control their own administration costs.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which functions of her core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39950]

Bridget Prentice: The total administration costs outturn of the core Department, which includes the Court Service and Public Guardianship Office, in 2004–05 was £915 million. It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information of the administration costs of the functions carried out by the core Department in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales in the last year without incurring disproportionate costs.

The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. The Department does not monitor national or regional administration costs separately and it is a matter for the devolved Administrations how they control their own administration costs.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what has been the annual expenditure on vehicles for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40003]

Ms Harman: Since its inception in June 2003, my Department's annual expenditure on vehicles was as follows:

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
(a) DCA and Court Service/HMCS[1]	1,722,281	1,629,818	2,350,236
(b) (i) Legal Services Commission	0	0	0
Information Commissioner	0	0	0
ii) Public Guardianship Office	0	0	0
(iii) Information on annual expenditure by other public bodies for which the Department is responsible is not held centrally and could be obtained now only at disproportionate cost.	—	—	—

[1] Expenditure for CS/HMCS cannot be separated without incurring disproportionate cost.

For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of her (i) Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40093]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information as requested in the question without incurring disproportionate costs.

The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. The Department does not monitor national, regional or London administration costs separately and it is a matter for the devolved Administrations how they control their own administration costs.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40094]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information as requested in the question without incurring disproportionate costs. However, the Department does not incur any costs to insure any of its buildings as the Crown carries the risk.

The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. The Department does not monitor national or regional London administration costs separately and it is a matter for the devolved Administrations how they control their own administration costs.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) her Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which her Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by her Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40134]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible for the Department to provide full detailed information as requested in the question without incurring disproportionate costs.

Departmental Phone Directories

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the most recent internal phone directory for the Department was published; how often it is updated; and if she will place a copy in the Library. [41748]

Ms Harman: My Department no longer produces a paper copy departmental telephone directory so I am unable to place a copy in the Library. Since 1999, our

telephone directory has been available electronically on the Department's intranet site and it is updated on a regular basis.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by her Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41355]

Ms Harman: My Department currently uses a fleet of 685 leased and owned vehicles as detailed in the following tables.

The fuel efficiency of all models listed are in accordance with the relevant manufacturers published guidelines. The Department has not collected a complete listing for each model and could be obtained now only at disproportionate cost.

For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport has asked the Chief Executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

(a) Cars Owned by Department

Make	Model	Quantity	Fuel: Diesel	Fuel: Hybrid
Ford	Focus	7	7	0
	Fiesta	22	22	0
	Mondeo	1	1	0
Citroen	Xsara Picasso	15	15	0
Renault	Laguna	3	3	0
	Megane	1	1	0
Toyota	Prius	2	0	2
Mercedes	Vito	2	2	0
Peugeot	806	7	7	0
	307	2	2	0
	308	1	1	0
	Partner Van	1	1	0
Vauxhall	Movano Van	1	1	0
Totals		65	63	2

(b) Cars Leased by Department

Make	Model	Quantity	Fuel: Diesel	Fuel: Unleaded	Fuel: LPG
Audi	A3	9	9	0	0
Citroen	Berlingo	7	7	0	0
	C3	76	60	16	0
	C4	7	6	1	0
	C5	44	41	3	0
	Saxo	5	5	0	0
	Xsara Picasso	301	276	25	0
Ford	Focus	20	20	0	0
	Fusion	4	4	0	0
	Galaxy	3	2	1	0
	Mondeo	11	11	0	0
	Transit	6	6	0	0
	Fiesta	4	4	0	
Mercedes	Sprinter Van	1	1	0	0
	Vito	2	0	0	2

(b) Cars Leased by Department

Make	Model	Quantity	Fuel: Diesel	Fuel: Unleaded	Fuel: LPG
Peugeot	206	4	2	2	0
	307	11	11	0	0
	407	3	3	0	0
	406	3	3	0	0
	607	1	1	0	0
Renault	Laguna	2	2	0	0
	Modus	1	1	0	0
	Clio	1	1	0	0
	Megane	3	3	0	0
Skoda	Octavia	4	4	0	0
	Fabio	6	6	0	0
Toyota	Corolla	3	3	0	0
Vauxhall	Astra	35	28	0	7
	Corsa	6	6	0	0
	Meriva	1	1	0	0
	Vectra	5	5	0	0
	Zafira	1	1	0	0
	Omega	1	0	1	0
Volvo	S40	1	1	0	0
	S80	1	1	0	0
	V40	1	1	0	0
Volkswagen	Golf	10	10	0	0
	Polo	2	2	0	0
	Passat	1	1	0	0
	Beetle	1	1	0	0
BMW	3.16	1	1	0	0
	3.18	1	1	0	0
Mini	Cooper	1	0	1	0
Mazda	Mazda 6	1	0	1	0
	RX8	1	0	1	0
Saab	Saab 93	2	0	2	0
Nissan	X-Trail	1	0	1	0
Rover	75	2	0	2	0
	25	1	0	1	0
	MG	1	0	1	0
Totals		620	552	59	9

Dukedom of Leinster

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the disputed claim to the Dukedom of Leinster. [43683]

Ms Harman: The Dukedom of Leinster is the Premier Dukedom of Ireland created by Letters Patent in 1766. Gerald Fitzgerald the late 8th Duke of Leinster formerly sat in the House of Lords by virtue of a Viscountcy of Great Britain. This Viscountcy was created by Letters Patent in 1747.

The late 8th Duke had proved his succession to the Viscountcy of Great Britain and took his seat on 21 October 1976 on the death of his father Edward the 7th Duke who died in March 1976. The late 8th Duke subsequently established formally his succession to the Dukedom in March 1977. Following the 8th Duke's death in December 2004, his only son Maurice Fitzgerald submitted a claim through the Crown Office, to prove his succession to the peerage.

A competing claim to the title has also been submitted on behalf of Paul Maurice Fitzgerald who claims to be the true heir apparent of the 5th Duke.

Both claims are presently under consideration by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs.

Electoral Administration

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 236W, on electoral administration, whether, when the Electoral Administration Bill is enacted, political parties will continue to have access to the data from marked registers *(a)* during and *(b)* after elections. [43544]

Ms Harman: The marked register of electors is compiled on the day of poll. Access to this, therefore, is limited to after an election. Political parties will continue to have access to the marked registers, following an election, under the provisions within the Electoral Administration Bill.

Judicial Appointments Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made with the setting up of the Judicial Appointments Commission in Northern Ireland. [44890]

Bridget Prentice: The Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission was established on 15 June 2005. It is chaired by the Lord Chief Justice for Northern Ireland with 12 other members, including five members of the Judiciary, five lay members, a barrister and a solicitor.

Magistrates Courts (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether magistrates courts staff in Gravesham took strike action in December 2005. [43253]

Ms Harman: The Department has been engaged in discussions on pay throughout 2005 with the unions representing staff subject to former magistrates courts service (MCS) terms and conditions of service. The Department made a pay offer which officials believe is fair given the current economic circumstances, public sector pay awards generally and what the Department could afford. The unions rejected this, and industrial action commenced with a one-day strike on 20 December 2005.

Union members at Chatham magistrates court did take action, although no staff took action at Dartford. Contingency plans worked well with both courts remaining open to the public. All essential services continued to be delivered.

Prisoners (Right to Vote)

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the timetable is for the Government's formal response to the European Court of Human Rights ruling on giving prisoners the right to vote; and if she will make a statement. [43543]

Ms Harman: The judgment raises a number of complex issues which will need careful consideration, including, in particular, what specific measures may need to be taken to implement it. The Government are giving urgent consideration to the judgment, and will indicate what steps it intends to take next shortly.

Small Claims

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what research has been *(a)* conducted and *(b)* commissioned into the impact of the recommendation of the Better Regulation Task Force to raise the small claims limit for personal injury claims. [44940]

Bridget Prentice: The Better Regulation Task Force in its report, 'Better Routes to Redress' recommended that research should be carried out into the potential impact of raising the small claims limit for personal injury cases from the current limit of £1,000. The Government indicated that it would carry out this research and would also consider other options for dealing with these claims in a more proportionate and cost effective way. This work is currently under way.

Suspicious Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether a coroner can make a recommendation that the police re-open their inquiries in the case of a suspicious death where no charges have previously been brought. [44398]

Ms Harman: Where a coroner considers from evidence given at the inquest that a person might be charged with a homicide offence, rule 28 of the Coroners Rules 1984 provides that he must adjourn the inquest for 14 days and send particulars of the evidence to the Director of Public Prosecutions or Crown Prosecution Service. If a coroner or jury returns an unlawful killing verdict at the inquest there will an expectation that the matter will be referred to the CPS for consideration.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many children under the age of five attended the accident and emergency department in hospitals in England in each of the last five years; [41364]

(2) what proportion of children under the age of five admitted to accident and emergency departments in hospitals in England in the last 12 months were subsequently taken into care by social services; [41377]

(3) what proportion of children under the age of five who attended accident and emergency departments in hospitals in England in the last 12 months were treated for conditions related to the consumption of inappropriate objects; [41381]

(4) how many children under the age of five years attended the accident and emergency department in hospitals in *(a)* Hull and *(b)* the East Riding in each of the last five years. [41382]

Mr. Byrne: The comprehensive data requested are not currently collected centrally.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she used when setting the target of 98 per cent. of patients being seen within four hours of attendance at accident and emergency departments. [43016]

Mr. Byrne: Studies show that almost all patients, with no non-clinical delays, should be able to complete their treatment in an accident and emergency (A&E) department within four hours.

The 98 per cent. minimum operating standard was set to allow for the minority of patients who clinically require more than four hours in A&E. It followed a wide consultation with clinicians and their representative organisations.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many emergency calls were answered within the Staffordshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust in each of the last five years; [42094]

(2) what proportion of emergency calls resulted in an ambulance arriving at the scene of the reported incident within the Government's target response times in Staffordshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust in each of the last five years. [42095]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The numbers of emergency calls answered by each ambulance service from 2000–05 are published in table 3 of the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2004–05". This is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/36/79/04113679.pdf.

Reported performance for Staffordshire Ambulance Services National Health Service Trust, for the years 2000–01 to 2004–05 is shown in the table.

	Percentage of category A calls responded to within 8 minutes	*Percentage of category A calls responded to within 19 minutes*	*Percentage of category B/C calls responded to within 19 minutes*	*Percentage of arrivals not more than 15 minutes late, for urgent journeys*
2000–01	87.4	99.8	99.6	93.3
2001–02	87.5	99.6	99.6	91.1
2002–03	86.4	99.8	99.7	92.6
2003–04	86.6	99.7	99.7	95.1
2004–05	88.3	99.8	[1]99.8	95.1

[1] Data for category B calls for the period October 2004 to March 2005.

Further information can be found in the statistical bulletin.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will encourage ambulance services to promote the use of the In Case of Emergency contact numbers stored in mobile handsets. [42579]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is supportive of initiatives that encourage members of the public to carry with them emergency contact details in case of need. As there are a number of such initiatives, it is for ambulance trusts to make local decisions on whether to promote an initiative and whether to endorse one initiative over another.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she issues to ambulance trusts on the purchase of ambulances. [42322]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* For the outright purchase of accident and emergency ambulances, the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency has the accident and emergency national framework agreement to provide ambulances at nationally negotiated discounted rates.

The framework commenced in June 2003 and expires in May 2006. However, an extension period of one year has already been agreed with key stakeholders. Suppliers awarded to the framework are compliant with the Committee for European Standardisation, which incorporates number BS EN 1789 of the British Standards Institute list as best practice and relates to any stretcher-bearing vehicle. Achievement of compliance requires a supplier to undertake extensive engineering testing and investment via an independent United Kingdom test house.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many ambulances are available to each hospital in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* Hertfordshire; and how many were available in (i) 1990, (ii) 1995, (iii) 2000 and (iv) 2003. [41726]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Assessment Care Plans

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account her Department takes of the supporting people assessment in the guidance for the single assessment process; and how the resulting single assessment care plan operates in relation to the support plan. [41900]

Mr. Byrne: Guidance on the single assessment process (SAP) does not formally extend to housing authorities or other statutory agencies. However, it is recognised that, for many older people, housing services can make important contributions to promoting independence and well-being. Where possible, local national health service bodies and councils are encouraged to engage with housing authorities as they implement the SAP. In addition, where local assessment for housing services has been incorporated into the SAP for older people, it is also expected that all services which are provided are reflected in the care plan and any associated support plan.

Furthermore, as the hon. Member will be aware from replies given by the Minister for Local Government, the hon. Member for Oldham, East and Saddleworth (Mr. Woolas) on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1970–71W, there is no standardised process for supporting people assessments.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role her Department has in assessment of people applying for access to an Extra Care scheme under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Supporting People scheme. [41905]

Mr. Byrne: Extra care housing is available through local authorities (LAs), housing associations and private providers. Access to extra care housing is not governed or determined by the supporting people programme, although supporting people funding may contribute to an individual's ongoing extra care costs, where housing related support is needed.

Housing related support is not assessed through the single assessment process. LAs consider individual needs depending on each set of personal circumstances. If accommodation is required as part of a needs assessment or a change in needs, decisions are made following consultation with the individual about their preferences, housing provision in the area and any statutory obligations that arise.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to revise single assessment process guidance to cover *(a)* housing-related needs and *(b)* housing-related service options. [41906]

Mr. Byrne: There are no plans at this time to revise the single assessment process (SAP) guidance to cover housing-related needs and housing-related service options. However, as set out in the Office of Deputy Prime Minister consultation, "Creating Sustainable Communities: Supporting People", work is planned to consider how housing-related support might be made part of integrated assessment processes. We will consider at the appropriate time whether this work might require changes to SAP or other relevant guidance.

Barts and the London NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will decide whether to support the redevelopment of Barts and the London NHS Trust by 31 January. [43448]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* North East of London strategic health authority have commissioned a review of the proposed redevelopment of St. Bartholomew's in the context of the existing cancer and cardiac services in London. They should be in a position to make a recommendation once they have had the opportunity to consider its findings.

Brain Tumours (Treatment)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by her Department to improve access to rehabilitation services for brain tumour patients. [42487]

Mr. Byrne: The Department scoping study is looking at rehabilitation services, including those for brain tumour patients, currently provided by the national health service and social care, with the aim of:

mapping levels of provision and models of service and, where possible, the cost-effectiveness of rehabilitative services;

identifying any gaps in provision;

identifying good practice exemplars; and

identifying opportunities to improve services

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is producing guidance on "Improving Outcomes in Brain and Other Central Nervous System Tumours". It will include advice on rehabilitation services for patients with these forms of cancer. A second draft of this guidance has recently been consulted on and the final guidance is due to be issued in June 2006.

Child Health (West Cheshire)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children under the age of 10 years in *(a)* West Cheshire Primary Care Trust and *(b)* Eddisbury constituency have (i) osteogenesis imperfecta and (ii) ligamentous laxity. [42670]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Children's Hospices

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance has been issued to primary care trusts about commissioning care from children's hospices; [31474]

(2) what assessment she has made of the funding of children's hospices, [31475]

(3) if she will list the sums paid to children's hospices by each primary care trust in the last year for which figures are available. [31478]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 November 2005]:* In our guide "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services", launched on 29 November 2005, we give commissioners important advice about the key aspects of children's palliative care which will improve the quality of commissioning and provision of services. This practical guide will stimulate improvements in commissioning and promote quality care for children, young people and their families in a range of settings, for example, palliative care at home, in hospital or in a hospice.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) working with their local authority partners and stakeholders, remain best placed to decide the level and range of palliative care needed by the children and young people in their locality and are able to respond directly to their needs. We have extended our manifesto pledge to increase funding for end of life care to include care for children and young people. We will make further announcements on this funding as soon as we can.

Information is not collected centrally on the amount of funding children's hospices receive from PCTs.

Continuing Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 574W, on continuing care, for what reasons the number of people in receipt of continuing care has increased. [43635]

Mr. Byrne: Work by the national health service to improve consistency and equity of access to NHS funded continuing care, coupled with increases in population needs, are thought to be the reasons for this increase.

Contracting for Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures her Department has taken to ensure that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 'Guidance on Contracting for Services in the light of the Human Rights Act 1998' published in March has been brought to the attention of *(a)* chief executives, *(b)* directors of social services, *(c)* NHS trusts and *(d)* those who contract with independent care homes and domiciliary providers. [32585]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 'Guidance on Contracting for Services in the light of the Human Rights Act 1998' is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/38/46/04123846.pdf In addition, the 'Chief Executive Bulletin' (issue 297, 26 November-1 December 2005) alerted all national health service and council chief executives and directors of social services that guidance had been published. This is also available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/Publications AndStatistics/Bulletins/ChiefExecutiveBulletin/BulletinCE/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4123953&chk=56chNG#5531805

Correspondence

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department will reply to the letter of 19 October from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding the campaign on rehabilitation services for blind and partially sighted people. [36700]

Jane Kennedy: A reply was sent on 12 December 2005.

Dentistry

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of dental health; what the rate of tooth decay is in *(a)* adults and *(b)* children; and if she will make a statement. [38907]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The Department commissions decennial surveys of the dental health of adults and children, which show major improvements in the oral health of the population.

The 1998 National Adult Dental Health showed that the proportion of adults with no natural teeth had fallen from 37 per cent, in 1968 to 12 per cent. in 1998. The 2003 National Child Dental Health Survey showed that the proportion of 12 year old children with decayed, missing and filled teeth had fallen from 93 per cent. in 1973 to 38 per cent. in 2003. 12 year old children in England now have the best oral health of their age group in Europe.

The Government recognises that major inequalities in oral health remain. For example, in 2003, the probability of having obvious decay experience of the primary teeth was about 50 per cent. higher in the lowest social group than in the highest social group. The Department published a new oral health plan for England, 'Choosing Better Oral Health,' in November 2005. This sets out a range of measures that have the potential to reduce these inequalities including the fluoridation of water supplies. The Government have amended the legislative framework governing fluoridation to give people in areas with high levels of dental decay a real option of having their water fluoridated.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were practising in England in each of the last eight years, broken down by *(a)* county and *(b)* London borough. [40613]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested, provided by local health authority or London borough, has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of people in Beverley and Holderness were registered with an NHS dentist in each of the last 10 years for which records are available. [41366]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information, at primary care trust (PCT) level, is shown in the table.

Proportion of patients registered in PCTs serving the Beverley and Holderness constituency as at 30 September each year

Percentage

	East Yorkshire PCT	*Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT*
1997	46.8	45.0
1998	44.2	38.0
1999	42.9	40.8
2000	43.1	41.4
2001	43.1	41.0
2002	43.6	39.5
2003	42.6	38.8
2004	39.6	39.6
2005	40.1	35.7

Notes:

1. 2004 and 2005 data includes General Dental Service (CDS) and Personal Dental Service (PDS) registrations/PDS patients seen (counts patients seen in the past 15 months for some PDS schemes).
2. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations (eg Dental Access Centres), and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
3. Most PDS schemes that have registrations have re-registration periods in excess of fifteen months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under GDS.
4. Proxy registrations are not available at constituency level.
5. 1997-2000 percentages have been calculated using 2001 population data.
6. 2005 percentages have been calculated using 2004 population data.

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of children in Beverley and Holderness constituency are registered with an NHS dentist. [41369]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on children registered with a dentist at constituency level is not available as a percentage of the total number of children because population data is not available at constituency level.

Table one gives the total number of children registered with a dentist since 1997 in Beverley and Holderness.

Table 1: General Dental Services (GDS) and Personal Dental Services (PDS)

Number of children registered with a national health service dentist in Beverley and Holderness constituency, East Yorkshire primary care trust (PCT) and Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT as at 30 September each year. Beverley and Holderness constituency is served by both PCT's.

	Beverley and Holderness constituency	East Yorkshire PCT	Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT
1997	10,915	23,669	16,558
1998	10,614	22,747	14,802
1999	10,956	22,306	15,442
2000	12,258	23,488	15,752
2001	12,476	22,644	16,038
2002	12,312	22,730	15,439
2003	12,087	22,005	15,210
2004	11,676	21,650	15,048
2005	11,277	21,819	13,921

Table two shows the percentage of children registered in each of the local PCTs.

Table 2: Proportion of children registered with a dentist in East Yorkshire PCT and Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT as at 30 September in each specified year

Percentage

	East Yorkshire PCT	Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT
1997	64.6	54.5
1998	62.1	48.8
1999	60.9	50.9
2000	64.1	51.9
2001	61.8	52.9
2002	62.1	50.4
2003	60.2	49.7
2004	59.3	49.2
2005	59.8	45.5

Notes:

1. 2004 and 2005 data include GDS and PDS registrations/PDS patients seen (counts patients seen in the past 15 months for some PDS schemes).
2. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations (e.g. dental access centres), and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
3. Most PDS schemes that have registrations have re-registration periods in excess of fifteen months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under GDS.
4. Proxy registrations are not available at constituency level.
5. 1997 to 2000 percentages have been calculated using 2001 population data.
6. 2005 percentages have been calculated using 2004 population data.

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the report Meeting the Challenges of Oral Health for Older People: A Strategic Review, published in December 2005. [41380]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The review undertaken by the British Society of Gerodontology provides welcome guidance on ways of improving education, training and service provision to meet more effectively the oral health care needs of older people. This is likely to help the national health service build on the major improvements already achieved in the oral health of older people.

The 1998 National Adult Dental Health showed that the proportion of adults with no natural teeth had fallen from 37 per cent. in 1968 to 12 per cent. in 1998. However, as recognised in the report of the Primary Care Dental Workforce Review published in 2004, people who keep their teeth have a greater need for oral hygiene advice and support and for restorative dental treatment.

This additional demand was one of the reasons why, in response to the report, the Government undertook measures to expand the dental workforce by recruiting the equivalent of an extra 1,000 whole-time NHS dentists and providing for an extra 170 dental training places each year from 2005.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Westmorland and Lonsdale were registered with an NHS dentist in each of the last 10 years for which records are available. [42387]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS), number of people registered with a national health service dentist in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency in September each year

	Number of patients
1997	58,994
1998	54,923
1999	56,870
2000	58,751
2001	59,400
2002	58,926
2003	54,793
2004	53,642
2005	45,857

Notes:

1. 2004 and 2005 data include GDS and PDS registrations/PDS patients seen (counts patients seen in the past 15 months for some PDS schemes).
2. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations, for example, dental access centres, and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
3. Most PDS schemes that have registrations have re-registration periods in excess of 15 months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under GDS.
4. This information was provided by the Dental Practice Board and relates to patients registered with dentists whose practice address postcodes are within the constituency boundary.

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the population in the area served by Croydon Primary Care Trust was registered with an NHS dentist in each year since 1997. [42793]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is provided in the table.

General dental services and personal dental services—estimated percentage of the population registered in Croydon primary care trust as at 30 September each year

	Estimated percentage of population
1997	56
1998	45
1999	47
2000	44
2001	44
2002	44
2003	45
2004	41
2005	42

Notes:

1. The percentages of the population registered with a dentist (or registration rate) have been estimated by including patient registrations in the area of the dentist, that is according to the postcode of the dental surgery and not the patient's address. So the registration rates for some areas may be affected by some patients receiving dental treatment in a different area from the one in which they live.

2. Estimates have been calculated using population estimates for the nearest year for which data are available. 1997–2000 percentages have been calculated using 2001 population estimates. 2005 percentages have been calculated using 2004 population estimates.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been allocated to training dentists in each of the last 30 years at 2005–06 prices. [36872]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The historical information requested is not held centrally.

The Higher Education Council for England is responsible for the academic costs of training and the Department is responsible for the clinical costs. At current prices the average cost, which includes the cost of academic and clinical training, is £160,000 over the five-year course, or £32,000 per year.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists per head of the population were practising in Lancashire in each year since 1997. [43161]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services and personal dental services Dentists per 10,000 population in Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority as at 30 September each year

	Dentists per 10,000 population
1997	3.43
1998	3.53
1999	3.59
2000	3.52
2001	3.64
2002	3.58
2003	3.60
2004	3.76
2005	4.10

Notes:

1. 2005 data calculated using Office for National Statistics 2004 mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 census.

2. Figures have been rounded to two decimal places.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Departmental Data

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what methods her Department employs to ensure that its data are up-to-date, with particular reference to information on people who have *(a)* moved house and *(b)* died. [37793]

Jane Kennedy: The Department employs a variety of methods to ensure that it keeps its personal data up-to-date. These include:

checking the same items of information held in different sources and following up discrepancies;

issuing occasional reminders to staff to check that specific information is correct;

putting in place business processes that encourage or force necessary changes to data where circumstances change;

communicating to staff on why accurate information is important for them as well as for the Department;

developing technology that allows staff and line managers to make changes to data directly themselves, rather than relying on Human Resource staff or others to do so on their behalf. This is the case in the specific circumstance of moving house; and

increasingly moving towards having a single source of personal data that is transferred automatically between information systems, rather than collecting the same data in more than one system.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39070]

Jane Kennedy: The table shows the expenditure on major information campaigns and advertising commissioned by the Department's Communications Directorate in each year since 1997.

£ million

Financial year	*Advertising expenditure*
1997–98	2.04
1998–99	8.53
1999–2000	15.17
2000–01	20.80
2001–02	20.40
2002–03	23.13
2003–04	38.98
2004–05	32.7
2005–06[1]	23

[1] Estimate.

We have no central record of advertising spend by non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies or independent statutory bodies or organisations financially sponsored by the Department and could not obtain these without incurring disproportionate costs.

Doctors (EU Working Time Directive)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of the

European working time directive on doctors working in the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [39737]

Mr. Byrne: The working time directive (WTD) was implemented for the vast majority of national health service staff groups in 1998 in accordance with regulations. The Government negotiated an extension to the WTD for doctors in training to enable phased implementation from August 2004.

Implementation of the WTD is the responsibility of local NHS trusts, and all employees are entitled to appropriate working hours and rest breaks.

The Department in England has worked with the health professions and NHS employers to provide joint guidance and invested an extra £46 million to support WTD implementation, including 20 national pilots and the hospital at night project. We are also funding independent research on the impact of WTD on medical training.

General Practitioners

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners were paid *(a)* £130,000 to £150,000, *(b)* £110,000 to £129,999, *(c)* £90,000 to £109,999, *(d)* £70,000 to £89,999 and *(e)* £50,000 to £69,999 in 2004–05; and how many in each category worked (i) full-time and (ii) part-time. [40354]

Mr. Byrne: Data on general practitioners paid between £150,000 and £50,000 in 2004–05 and split between full-time and part-time are not available centrally.

Health Expenditure

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent by the NHS on treatment by *(a)* psychiatrists, *(b)* clinical psychologists, *(c)* psychotherapists, *(d)* cognitive and behavioural therapists and *(e)* other therapists in each of the last five years, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40889]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available.

Hospital Treatment (Lincolnshire)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients from *(a)* North Lincolnshire and *(b)* North East Lincolnshire received hospital treatment in Hull in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [43064]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the counts of finished consultant episodes and patients at the Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust where the patients are resident within the North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the North East Lincolnshire PCT.

Counts of finished consultant episodes and patients provider of treatment: Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust NHS Hospitals, England 2002–03 to 2004–05

PCT of residence	*Finished consultant episodes*	*Patient counts*
(a) North Lincolnshire PCT		
2002–03	3,127	2,031
2003–04	3,288	2,074
2004–05	3,550	2,112
(b) North East Lincolnshire PCT		
2002–03	1,559	1,088
2003–04	1,762	1,170
2004–05	2,085	1,308

Notes:

1. Finished consultant episode (FCE)

A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

2. Patient counts

Patient counts are based on the unique hospital episode statistics (HES) patient identifier (HESID). This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data are incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

3. Primary care trust (PCT) and strategic health authority (SHA) data quality

PCT and SHA data were added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. The quality of the data on PCT of treatment and SHA of treatment are poor in 1996–97, 1997–98 and 1998–99, with over a third of all finished episodes having missing values in these years. Data quality of PCT of general practitioner (GP) practice and SHA of GP practice in 1997–98 and 1998–99 are also poor, with a high proportion missing values where practices changed or ceased to exist. There is less change in completeness of the residence-based fields over time, where the majority of unknown values are due to missing postcodes on birth episodes. Users of time series analysis including these years need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.

4. Ungrossed data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics, Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likelihood of a pandemic strain of influenza developing resistance to oseltamivir; and whether she intends to stockpile *(a)* M2 inhibitors and *(b)* other antivirals as an alternative strategy. [42018]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Antiviral resistance is a general concern and we are supporting and monitoring research on levels of viral resistance to antivirals—including oseltamivir. Recent anecdotal reports suggest a few patients treated for avian influenza have developed resistance to oseltamivir. These particular cases are specific to avian, not pandemic virus, and the data, for now, do not affect our current strategy. At present the experience is that these drugs do work and that they

should work against a pandemic strain. They need to be used carefully and appropriately to minimise the risk of resistance.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has completed tests of viruses recovered from the first two fatal cases in Turkey. These analyses indicate that the Turkish viruses are sensitive to both classes of antiviral drugs including oseltamivir. Oseltamivir remains the drug of first choice recommended by the WHO.

Our scientific advisory group reviews our antiviral strategy at their regular meetings and will keep under review the option of stockpiling alternative antivirals.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible people received free influenza vaccinations in Cleethorpes constituency in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [42970]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is available only at primary care trust level. The percentage of people aged 65 and over receiving free influenza vaccinations from 2002 to 2005, in North East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) is shown in the table.

Flu vaccine uptake by North East Lincolnshire PCT, 2002–05

	Total percentage uptake
2002–03	71
2003–04	72
2004–05	72

Learning Disabilities Services

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of *(a)* the recent report by the Association of Directors of Social Services on learning disabilities services and *(b)* the likely impact of its recommendations on social care in Staffordshire. [42081]

Mr. Byrne: The Department welcomes this report as a useful piece of work, particularly in its emphasis on the importance of maintaining support for people with learning disabilities to lead their lives as independently as possible.

It is for Staffordshire council to consider the contents of the report in relation to its local service provision.

Little Haven Children's Hospice

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will visit Little Haven Children's Hospice in Castle Point to review the work of the hospice and its funding levels. [42220]

Mr. Byrne: We greatly value the work undertaken by children's hospices, such as Little Haven, in providing hospice care as part of the mix of palliative care services needed by families with a child who has a life-threatening condition. I am pleased to have already been able to visit a number of palliative care settings, including children's hospices.

Our guide "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services", launched on 29 November, has given commissioners important advice about the key aspects of children's palliative care which will improve the quality of commissioning and provision of services. This practical guide will stimulate improvements in commissioning and promote quality care for children, young people and their families in a range of settings, for example, palliative care at home, in hospital or in a hospice.

The funding Little Haven may receive from the national health service is a matter for negotiation between the hospice and the local primary care trusts who contract for their services. I understand an agreement is in place.

Maternity Services

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to ensure that ambulance services are able to transport mothers further whilst in labour as a result of the closure of local maternity services. [39699]

Mr. Byrne: The Department sets national response time requirements for ambulance trusts. It is for ambulance trusts, together with primary care trusts as commissioners of ambulance services, to ensure that these requirements are met. This includes ensuring that sufficient numbers of vehicles and staff are available to respond to 999 calls.

It is for national health service maternity care providers and primary care trusts to ensure that women have easy access to supportive, high quality maternity services, designed around their individual needs and those of their babies, and that care is provided within a framework that enables easy and early transfer of women and babies who unexpectedly require specialist care.

The maternity standard of the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services, which was published in September 2004, asks all NHS maternity care providers and primary care trusts to ensure that:

formal local multi-disciplinary arrangements are in place for emergency situations, including transfer-in labour for all out of hospital or intra-hospital settings;

in all out-of-hospital labours/births, the midwife is responsible for transfer and continues to care for the woman on transfer where possible; and

for all transfers to hospital, midwives refer directly to the most senior obstetrician on call.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many maternity units there are in each primary care trust in England. [42050]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally by the Department. However, a recent analysis, using data (covering the period April 2003 to March 2004) collected by Dr. Foster in their role as an independent health care information provider, shows the number of maternity units, both shared and midwife-led, by primary care trust. This has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many obstetrician-led maternity units there have been in England in each year since 1997; and how many maternity units delivered *(a)* fewer than 2,000 births,

(b) between 2,001 and 4,000 births annually and *(c)* over 4,001 births in the last five years for which figures are available. [42937]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally.

The maternity records collected through the Hospital Episodes Statistics system are usually identified only to trust level, rather than to any specific unit within the trust. Some trusts provide information regarding the staff group with lead responsibility for care for example, midwife-led or consultant-led, but this does not allow the identification of consultant-led units.

Mental Health Treatment

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of referrals to therapists have been for *(a)* individual treatment and *(b)* group therapy in each of the last five years, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40892]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally by the Department.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the number of full-time equivalent *(a)* psychotherapists, *(b)* cognitive and behavioural therapists and *(c)* other therapists working in the NHS, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40894]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of consultants and registrar group doctors within psychotherapy and the number of qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff within each specified area of therapy work including psychotherapy at strategic health authority and trust level in England, as at September 2004 has been placed in the Library.

Information on the number of cognitive and behavioural therapists is not collected centrally.

Midwifery-led Birthing Centres

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwife-led birthing centres there are in Coventry South. [42784]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Midwives

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent midwives there are in each maternity unit; and how many vacancies there are in each unit. [41499]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect information at maternity unit level. Information is collected at trust level, which has been placed in the Library. At September 2005, the rate of vacancies lasting three months or more for midwives has fallen to 1.8 per cent, compared to 3.3 per cent, year earlier and the number of vacancies at 348 was the lowest since before 1999.

Ministerial Visits

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times she has visited *(a)* Dacorum and *(b)* Hertfordshire in her official capacity in the last 12 months; and what the purpose was of each visit. [29925]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State for Health has not visited Dacorum or Hertfordshire in an official capacity in the last 12 months.

New Drugs

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to make additional funding available to primary care trusts to pay for newly licensed drugs; and if she will make a statement. [43374]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* No additional funding will be made available to primary care trusts (PCTs) in relation to newly licensed drugs.

PCTs have been informed of their revenue allocations up to the end of 2007–08. The 2006–08 allocations represented £135 billion investment in the national health service. Over the two years covered by this allocation, PCTs will receive an average increase of 19.5 per cent.

It is for PCTs to determine how to use the funding allocated to them to meet the health care needs of their local populations, including providing for innovations in treatment and health care.

NHS Air Ambulance Services

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the funding arrangements for NHS air ambulance services in *(a)* the East Midlands and *(b)* England. [40817]

Mr. Byrne: Air ambulances are funded by charities. Since 1 April 2002, the cost of clinical staff on air ambulances has been met by the national health service on a continuing basis. It is for NHS trusts to decide whether they provide any additional funding to air ambulance charities.

NHS Consultants

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sabbaticals for NHS consultants were arranged during 2005. [40670]

Mr. Byrne: There is no national sabbatical scheme for consultants. Consultants may apply for sabbatical leave in accordance with the employing organisation's arrangements. Information on numbers would be held locally by individual employers.

NHS Direct

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of callers to NHS Direct have been advised to go to their GP. [39665]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not centrally held. It may be available from NHS Direct special health authority.

NHS Private Finance Initiative Schemes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the total expenditure on NHS private finance initiative schemes in each year until 2013–14. [39356]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire to the answer I gave on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 988–989W, which stated that detailed unitary payment for schemes which have reached financial close had been placed in the Library. This list has now been updated to reflect the four private finance initiative hospital schemes which have reached financial close since then and which are over £20 million in capital value. The updated list has also been placed in the Library.

NHS Trusts (Finance)

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cumulative deficit is of each NHS trust in England which has a deficit that it is required to clear to reach a break even financial position. [39811]

Mr. Byrne: National health service trusts are expected to plan for and achieve financial balance each and every year.

All NHS trusts with a cumulative deficit have a statutory duty to breakeven over a three, or exceptionally up to a five-year period.

The latest year for which audited financial data is available is 2004–05, which has been placed in the Library.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health over what time period an NHS trust which runs up a deficit during the 2005–06 financial year is required to repay the amount overspent; and if she will make a statement. [40903]

Mr. Byrne: National health service trusts are expected to plan for and achieve break even every year. NHS trusts have a statutory financial duty to achieve a break even position on income and expenditure taking one year with another. This is interpreted as needing to break even over a period of three, and in exceptional cases, up to five years. Where NHS trusts overspend, this would require other NHS organisations, within the health economy, to under spend over the same period.

NHS Walk-in Centres

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much NHS walk-in centres have cost in each year since their establishment; [41960]

(2) how many attendances there have been at walk-in centres in each quarter since 1 January 2003. [41997]

Mr. Byrne: National health service walk-in centres are managed locally by their host primary care trust or NHS trust. They are not separate accounting entities and their running costs are not routinely collected or held centrally by the Department.

Data on the number of visits to NHS walk-in centres in each quarter from January 2003 to September 2005, the latest full quarter for which data are available, are shown in the table.

Visits to NHS walk-in centres

Period	*Number*
January to March 2003	335,358
April to June 2003	391,940
July to September 2003	412,829
October to December 2003	387,570
January to March 2004	389,784
April to June 2004	477,667
July to September 2004	503,144
October to December 2004	516,406
January to March 2005	571,305
April to June 2005	652,367
July to September 2005	667,045

Source:
Department of Health

Nurses

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole-time equivalent nurses are employed by *(a)* general practitioners, *(b)* other primary care NHS organisations and *(c)* acute sector NHS organisations in (i) England and (ii) each primary care trust area in Kent, broken down by nursing specialty. [42202]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of full-time equivalent nurses by primary care trust (PCT) and national health service trust in Kent and England broken down by specified specialty is shown in the table.

It is not possible to provide NHS trust (acute sector) staff by PCT area.

National health service hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in England and the Kent and Medway strategic health authority area by organisation and by area of work as at 30 September 2004 full-time equivalent

		Total qualified nursing staff	*Acute, Elderly and General*	*Paediatric Nursing*	*Maternity Services*	*Community Psychiatry*	*Other Psychiatry*
England		315,440	166,098	15,258	24,463	13,627	27,959
of which:							
Kent and Medway SHA total		7,617	3,970	292	726	338	538
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT	5CM	275	39	4	0	0	1
South West Kent PCT	5FF	228	54	0	0	1	0
Maidstone Weald PCT	5L2	225	11	3	0	0	0
Medway PCT	5L3	349	74	1	0	7	13
Swale PCT	5L4	161	63	0	0	0	12
Ashford PCT	5LL	137	11	0	0	1	0
Canterbury and Coastal PCT	5LM	224	53	0	0	0	0
East Kent Coastal PCT	5LN	228	21	39	0	0	0
Shepway PCT	5LP	117	4	0	0	0	0

National health service hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in England and the Kent and Medway strategic health authority area by organisation and by area of work as at 30 September 2004 full-time equivalent

		Total qualified nursing staff	Acute, Elderly and General	Paediatric Nursing	Maternity Services	Community Psychiatry	Other Psychiatry
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	RN7	611	485	31	93	0	0
Medway NHS Trust	RPA	884	605	62	177	0	0
East Kent NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust	RTM	348	0	1	0	147	196
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	RW	2,041	1,627	92	277	3	0
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	RWF	1,156	910	58	179	0	0
West Kent NHS and Social Care Trust	RXJ	634	13	0	0	184	317

		Community Learning Disabilities	Other Learning Disabilities	Community Services	Education staff	School nursing	GP practice nurses	Unspecified
England		3,325	4,201	43,369	1,140	1,619	13,563	820
of which:								
Kent and Medway SHA total		79	103	1,174	29	35	334	0
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT	5CM	0	0	176	1	4	49	0
South West Kent PCT	5FF	0	0	120	0	8	45	0
Maidstone Weald PCT	5L2	0	0	148	3	6	53	0
Medway PCT	5L3	0	0	210	0	0	50	0
Swale PCT	5L4	0	0	66	0	0	20	0
Ashford PCT	5LL	42	2	57	0	0	23	0
Canterbury and Coastal PCT	5LM	0	0	137	0	0	34	0
East Kent Coastal PCT	5LN	0	0	128	0	4	35	0
Shepway PCT	5LP	0	0	88	0	0	25	0
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	RN7	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Medway NHS Trust	RPA	0	14	7	6	13	0	0
East Kent NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust	RTM	1	0	3	0	0	0	0
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	RW	7	0	28	7	0	0	0
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	RWF	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
West Kent NHS and Social Care Trust	RXJ	29	87	4	1	0	0	0

Note:
Full time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Nursing and Midwifery Council

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have proceeded to hearing before the Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing and Midwifery Council in the last five years; and how many of such cases led to a removal from the register. [41107]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally. Data about complaints referred to the Professional Conduct Committee can be obtained directly from the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Nye Bevan Awards

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received Nye Bevan awards in each year since they were instituted. [38328]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Nye Bevan awards were allocated to eight national health service healthcare teams from around the country who were key pioneers of NHS modernisation. From the eight regional awards, one national award was given.

Nye Bevan National Modernisation award winner 1999 was NHS South East Region-Trinity Project, Wellington Square Medical Centre, Hastings.

The eight regional Nye Bevan award winners for 1999 were:

NHS Northern and Yorkshire Region-The North Kirklees Mental Health Service

For nationally renowned joint working, offering local people a single gateway to all local health, social care and housing, in particular helping young people and others suffering from mental health problems to find jobs, housing, care and support.

NHS Eastern Region-The Lynda Jackson McMillan Cancer Support and Information Centre at Mount Vernon Hospital, London

For leading the national drive to make Britain's cancer services the best in the world.

NHS North West Region-Preston Acute Trust

State of the art waiting list management system, covering all specialties and providing instant access to information for managers and clinicians.

NHS South and West Region-The Beacon Project, Falmouth, Cornwall

Out-standing community based care in Penwerris, Falmouth-an area of high deprivation-halving the number of children on the local at-risk register, cutting childhood accidents and crime and slashing by two thirds the number of women requiring treatment for post-natal depression.

NHS London Region-The Central Middlesex Hospital, London

Britain's first combined day case and outpatient treatment centre, incorporating new airline style booking systems for patient appointments, enabling the hospital to slash in-patient and out-patient waiting lists and times through improved access and convenience for patients.

NHS Trent Region-The Nottingham City NHS Hospital Trust

Leading the national drive for health workplaces and staff involvement in the NHS, with superb staff involvement in work force planning, training, design and consultation.

NHS West Midlands Region-The Small Heath Locality Mental Health Service, Birmingham

For unique success in delivering local mental health services, within a multi-faceted NHS high street walk-in centre, working alongside district nurses, health visitors, chiropodists and other voluntary organisations.

NHS South East Region-Trinity Project, Wellington Square Medical Centre, Hastings

Leading joint work between the NHS, police, probation and social services and local volunteers and charities, tackling drug misuse and dependency, helping local drug users overcome their addiction.

Nye Bevan National Modernisation award winner 2000 was The National Refractory Angina Centre, Cardiothoracic Centre Royal Liverpool NHS Trust.

The eight regional Nye Bevan award winners for 2000 were:

NHS Eastern Region-nurse led out-patient management of veno thromboembolism, Norfolk and Norwich Healthcare NHS Trust

A pioneering system of treating deep vein thrombosis patients at home, rather than in a hospital setting.

NHS London Region-Soho Centre for Health and Care, Parkside Health Trust

A one stop centre that has brought together local authority, NHS and voluntary sector services under one roof.

NHS Northern and Yorkshire Region-OPUS employment project for people with mental health problems, Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust

Created in 1994, this innovative service has the very clear aim of 'assisting people with a mental health problem to achieve their maximum potential in worthwhile work'.

NHS North West Region-The National Refractory Angina Centre, Cardiothoracic Centre Royal Liverpool NHS Trust

State of the art multi-disciplinary patient centred management model, with the primary objective of improving and harmonising the standard of care to patients and their carers.

NHS South Eastern Region-Working Out-Aylesbury Vale Community Healthcare NHS Trust

The Working Out programme bridges the gap between rehabilitation and employment through a graded preparation for (and a supported return to) work or alternative occupation.

NHS South West Region-Action on Cataract Together, East Gloucestershire NHS Trust

The action on cataracts programme is spearheading the development of a high quality, patient focused service.

NHS Trent Region-Respiratory Home Care Service University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Current trend in respiratory care is towards supporting the patient in the community and preventing hospital admission. The role of the respiratory nurse practitioner has evolved to incorporate the acute assessment unit, the home intravenous antibiotic programme, the support of patients on long term oxygen therapy at home and the provision of an early discharge scheme.

NHS West Midlands Region-Interpreting Service Sandwell Healthcare NHS Trust

This service enables patients or users accessing the services of the trust to communicate with staff in a language they choose.

In 2000, the following Nye Bevan Awards were also given:

The lifetime achievement award joint winners:

Jenni Thomas, maternity and neonatal bereavement facilitator, South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust.

Developed bereavement counselling services for parents and has set up national charity, The Child Bereavement Trust.

Professor Jillian Mann, Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH) NHS Trust, leading childhood cancer expert.

Established Regional Paediatric Oncology Services and Research at BCH.

David James Kerr, Professor of Clinical Oncology, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust Gene and Immunotherapy for Cancer

Professor Kerr leads a team of laboratory and clinical scientists who have developed a number of highly innovative new treatments for cancer patients, which have just entered clinical trials in the trust.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will answer the questions from the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South tabled on *(a)* 11 November 2005 reference 28284 and *(b)* 17 November 2005 reference 29840. [43877]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the replies sent on 16 and 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1063W and 1302W.

Patient and Public Involvement Resource Centre

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have responsibility for *(a)* setting up and *(b)* running the patient and public involvement resource centre; and on what date she expects the resource centre to begin its work. [42137]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Department is responsible for the setting up of the patient and public involvement resource centre. We are currently finalising the contract details but until the procurement process is complete, we are unable to provide further details as they are commercially sensitive.

We expect the successful provider to commence work in early February.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the allocations to each primary care trust within the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority were in each of the last three years; and what the capital allocations to each primary care trust were in each year. [41816]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The 2003–04 to 2005–06 revenue allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs) were announced in December 2002. The table shows the revenue allocations made to PCTs within the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for this period.

PCT	Allocation			Three year total increase	
	2003–04 (£000)	*2004–05 (£000)*	*2005–06 (£000)*	*£000*	*Percentage*
Bath and North East Somerset	140,354	153,237	167,238	38,915	30.33
Bristol North	204,387	223,245	243,728	56,928	30.48
Bristol South and West	171,215	186,424	202,688	45,779	29.18
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury	124,221	136,208	148,726	35,685	31.57
Cotswold and Vale	159,474	173,643	188,390	42,208	28.87
Kennet and North Wilts	150,973	164,383	178,727	40,380	29.19
North Somerset	151,428	166,342	182,185	44,653	32.47
South Gloucestershire	172,121	188,320	205,893	48,895	31.14
South Wiltshire	99,642	108,493	117,958	26,642	29.18
Swindon	152,323	166,721	182,319	43,428	31.27
West Gloucestershire	188,232	206,016	224,782	53,137	30.96
West Wiltshire	90,474	99,238	108,621	26,316	31.97

In addition, revenue allocations, covering 2006–07 and 2007–08 were announced in February 2005. The revenue allocations made to PCTs in the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA for 2006–07 and 2007–08 are shown in the table.

PCT	*Allocation*		*Two year total increase*	
	2006–07 (£000)	*2007–08 (£000)*	*£000*	*Percentage*
Bath and North East Somerset	206,371	224,569	34,023	17.9
Bristol North	287,627	312,296	46,649	17.6
Bristol South and West	239,350	258,885	37,583	17.0
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury	181,446	198,605	32,341	19.5
Cotswold and Vale	222,132	240,253	34,858	17.0
Kennet and North Wiltshire	211,111	231,784	38,344	19.8
North Somerset	225,201	251,427	45,126	21.9
South Gloucestershire	250,189	275,190	45,949	20.0
South Wiltshire	145,066	156,897	22,757	17.0
Swindon	223,813	243,943	37,330	18.1
West Gloucestershire	266,091	292,350	48,551	19.9
West Wiltshire	134,671	150,935	31,015	25.9

Comparisons between allocations rounds cannot be made, for the following reasons:

revenue allocations were made to health authorities for the period 2000–01 to 2002–03;

changes are made to the weighted capitation formula for each allocations round, therefore, comparisons would not be on a like with like basis;

2003–06 revenue allocations were made direct to PCTs, for the first time, and were on a three yearly basis; and

2006–08 is the first year that primary medical services were incorporated onto revenue allocations.

Capital allocations to PCTs in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA are shown in the table. Capital allocations for 2006–07 have not yet been announced.

£000

PCT	*Operational capital allocation*		
	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Bath and North East Somerset	1,164	1,245	1,333
Bristol North	153	174	197
Bristol South and West	180	205	232
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury	177	189	202
Cotswold and Vale	692	741	800
Kennet and North Wilts	1,124	1,202	1,286
North Somerset	102	109	116
South Gloucestershire	122	131	140
South Wiltshire	33	35	38
Swindon	224	239	256
West Gloucestershire	255	272	292
West Wiltshire	488	522	559

Podiatrists

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many vacancies there were within the NHS for podiatrists on average in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005; [41089]

(2) how many NHS podiatrists successfully completed their training in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005; [41090]

(3) how many people began training in podiatry in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005. [41091]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of people beginning or completing training in podiatry is not available centrally.

Information on the number of training places commissioned in chiropody and podiatry from 2002–03 to 2004–05 is shown in the table.

Commissioned training places in chiropody and podiatry

	Number of training places
2002–03	427
2003–04	451
2004–05	559

Notes:
QMR = NMET quarterly monitoring reports
Source:
QMR Q4, Department of Health

Information on the number and rate of vacancies for chiropodists/podiatrists lasting three months or more in each of the last three years is shown in the table.

Three-month vacancy rate and number for all chiropodists/podiatrists in England as at 31 March 2003–05

	Number	*Percentage*
2005	97	3.0
2004	60	1.9
2003	37	1.3

Notes:
1. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full-time equivalents).
2. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
Source:
NHS Vacancy Survey

There has been considerable growth in the national health service chiropody/podiatry workforce. In September 2004, there were 3,941 qualified NHS chiropodists/podiatrists; this represents an increase of 655 or 20 per cent. since 1997.

PR Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by her Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39069]

Jane Kennedy: It is not possible to list the public relations companies that have had contracts with the Department, each non-departmental public bodies, or executive agencies for which the Department is responsible or independent statutory bodies, organisation and bodies financially sponsored by the Department since May 1997. This information can be supplied only at disproportionate costs.

Publications (Languages)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make all published departmental materials intended for families available in languages other than English; and if she will make a statement. [29561]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not publish material specifically for families though it does produce a small selection of public health literature aimed at audiences within family groups. Of these, 35 titles are published across a range of 27 languages with many more available on the Department's internet sites.

The Department's Communications Directorate is reviewing how to better meet the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME) in departmental publications.

Respiratory Diseases

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people suffered from *(a)* asthma and *(b)* other respiratory illnesses in each year since 1997. [43129]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of people living with asthma and other respiratory illnesses is not collected.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals whose names appear on the *(a)* Protection of Children Act list and *(b)* Protection of Vulnerable Adults list are employed by (i) NHS organisations and (ii) social services departments; and how many individuals employed by (A) NHS organisations and (B) social services departments have committed an offence listed under Schedule 1 to the Sex Offenders Act 1997. [43451]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The responsibility for carrying out pre-employment checks, including Criminal Records Bureau, Protection of Children Act and Protection of Vulnerable Adults checks where applicable, rests with the relevant employer, whether a national health service organisation or social services department or other regulated provider of health or social care. The NHS is required to follow the guidance, "Safer Recruitment" issued in May 2005 which covers all the pre and post-appointment checks that NHS employers are required to make before appointing anyone—including employees, volunteers, students and trainees—to a position in the NHS. In regulated social care, providers must comply with regulations on pre-employment checks made under the Care Standards Act 2000 which came into force in April 2002.

Part two of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 replaced part one of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 and schedule three to the 2003 Act came into force on 1 May 2004. The Act requires convicted sex offenders to report each year to their local police and inform the police if they change their name and address within three days instead of the previous 14 days.

The Department does not hold information about NHS and social care employees of the kind requested.

Shipman Inquiry

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether she has accepted the recommendations in the Report of the Shipman Inquiry on amending the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, with particular reference to the recommendations that the Government

should *(a)* promote awareness of the role of whistleblowing and *(b)* ensure that people in whistleblowing dilemmas have access to confidential advice; [29083]

(2) when she will give a full answer to the question on the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 tabled by the hon. Member for Orpington to which she gave a holding answer on 21 November 2005. [41981]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* The Department has been discussing the Shipman Inquiry's recommendations with the Department for Trade and Industry, which is the lead Department for the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), and with relevant stakeholders, and we will continue to do so.

We agree that it is important that national health service staff who have genuine concerns are able to get informed advice on their options and next steps and, where appropriate, support when raising those concerns. However, we are not yet persuaded that amendment to PIDA is necessary to achieve this.

There are many related issues contained within the Shipman Report, and we will respond in full to this point as part of the Government's formal response to the Shipman Inquiry.

Specialist Gastric Care

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to ensure that patients with *(a)* colitis and *(b)* Crohn's disease receive adequate healthcare. [42088]

Mr. Byrne: It is for primary care trusts to commission appropriate local services, according to local need, in order to provide adequate health and social care for people with long-term conditions, as set out in the NHS Improvement Plan.

Standing Frames

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts do not provide a grandstand standing frame to patients who require one on discharge. [41678]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally.

The provision of support and services for people with an assessed need is the responsibility of the local national health service and social care services. It is for those services to determine what to provide to meet the needs of individuals.

Student Grants Unit

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether automated responses are recorded by her Department as replies to questions put to the Student Grant Unit by email. [41038]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not record information about email responses from the NHS Student Grants Unit. The NHS Pensions Agency, who are responsible for the NHS Student Grants Unit, does record automated responses as replies to questions put to them by email.

Treatment Costs

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was per patient per bed of treatment in *(a)* the Royal Shrewsbury hospital, *(b)* the Princess Royal hospital in Telford and *(c)* the community hospital in (i) Bridgnorth, (ii) Ludlow and (iii) Bishop's Castle in (A) 2003, (B) 2004 and (C) 2005. [38635]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* There are no data collected centrally at individual patient per bed level. Data are collected on a finished consultant episode basis and at national health service trust level, within which one or more hospitals will operate.

Urosotomy Prescriptions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the number of suppliers of urosotomy prescriptions is due to be reviewed under the current consultation; and if she will make a statement. [41986]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The Department is currently seeking views on the arrangements for the provision of dressings, incontinence appliances, stoma appliances, chemical reagents and other appliances to primary and secondary care.

These views are being sought through a formal consultation that closes on 23 January 2006. We anticipate that suppliers of urosotomy prescriptions will respond to this consultation.

Once the consultation closes, on 23 January 2006, we will review all the responses and—where necessary—seek clarification from responders. Only then will the Department be in a position to make any decisions about the way forward.

Waiting Times

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how long a patient had to wait on average for a *(a)* heart bypass, *(b)* breast cancer, *(c)* hip replacement, *(d)* cataract and *(e)* kidney transplant operation in each year since 1997 in Sunderland Royal hospital. [28306]

Mr. Byrne: There were no kidney transplant operations undertaken at the Sunderland Royal hospital during this period. The remaining information requested is shown in the table. Latest figures show that all breast cancer patients at the trust meet the national target of receiving treatment within one month of diagnosis.

Media time waited by selected procedures: City Hospital Sunderland National Health Service Foundation Trust, 1997–98 to 2003–04

	Breast cancer	*Cataract*	*Heart bypass*	*Hip replacement*
1997–98	7	276	—	307
1998–99	5	278	—	242
1999–2000	7	170	133	294
2000–01	9	146	—	341
2001–02	9	118	—	330
2002–03	10	126	—	297
2003–04	10	143	—	223

Notes:

Ungrossed data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls In data, that is, the data is ungrossed.

Main operation

The main operation is the first recorded operation in the Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, for example, time waited, but the figures for all operations count of episodes give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.

Time waited (days)

Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical or social suspension.

Source:

Hospital Episodes Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards ensuring a maximum wait of three months for an out-patient appointment; and what assessment she has made of the impact on other NHS patients as a result. [40264]

Mr. Byrne: Latest data shows that the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for a first out-patient appointment has fallen from around 340,000 in June 1997 to under 40,000 at the end of September 2005. We remain confident that out year-end targets for national health service waiting for admission times will have been met.

The Department has issued very clear guidance that clinical priority must be the main determinant of when patients should be seen and we are not aware of any evidence to suggest that delivering shorter out-patient waits has had any adverse impact on other NHS patients.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients had been waiting for hospital operations for more than six months on 1 December 2005 *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each NHS hospital trust. [40542]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients will have to wait more than six months for their NHS operation as of 1 January 2006 *(a)* broken down by NHS hospital trust and *(b)* in total. [40873]

Mr. Byrne: The national health service now operates a maximum waiting for admission time of six months for an inpatient operation. The NHS has rigorous monitoring and performance management systems in place to enable it to deliver this. We remain confident that our year-end target of a maximum NHS waiting for admission time of six months will have been met.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Chewing Gum

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assistance has been provided by his Department to each district and borough council in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years to fund the removal of chewing gum from public areas. [44563]

Angela E. Smith: The removal of chewing gum from public areas is a matter for district and borough councils themselves and the Department of the Environment does not provide funding for this service. From 1 November 2005 councils are permitted to retain receipts from fixed penalty notices issued for littering and dog fouling and may use the sums received for the purposes of its functions under Articles 5 and 6 of the Litter (NI) Order 1994.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Department of Agriculture and Rural Development staff are engaged in a monitoring role for each leader company in Northern Ireland; and at what cost in the last period for which figures are available. [44917]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Rural Development Division (RDD) has 2 Monitoring Officers, which equates to 1.8 full time equivalent posts. In 2005 the 12 Local Action Groups (LAGs), which deliver LEADER + funding, received one monitoring visit each. This visit was comprised of the following:

two days preparation

one day visit to the LAG

four days resolving outstanding issues and preparing a report.

This is a cost per LAG of £792.51.

Dog-fighting

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to prevent organised dog-fighting in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [43756]

Angela E. Smith: Under the Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 1972, it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal by causing, procuring or assisting at the fighting or baiting of an animal or to take part in such an episode. It is also an offence to keep, use, manage, permit or assist in the keeping use or management of any premises for the purpose of fighting or baiting any animal contrary to the above.

The PSNI enforce the Welfare of Animal Act (NI) 1972, where breaches are reported or detected. The PSNI will deal with any report of such activity and act accordingly. Recent media reports have highlighted the problem, but the level of such activity remains relatively low. This does not excuse or condone such cruel behaviour, and the service treats all such reports with the utmost seriousness.

Other agencies such as local councils and the USPCA also play a role in dog welfare issues. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland in recent weeks has assisted these agencies in raids on premises where it is suspected that dogs were being trained for fighting and baiting. On the basis of evidence gathered consideration is being given to prosecutions for breaches of the legislation.

As part of the current review of Northern Ireland Welfare of Animals legislation the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is considering what measures may be necessary to strengthen powers to deal with abuses of animal welfare, including, in respect of organised dog-fighting.

Drug-related Offences

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been prosecuted for drug-related offences in Northern Ireland in each of the last seven years. [43722]

Mr. Hanson: The following table provides prosecutions for drug-related offences, broken down by category, in Northern Ireland for the calendar years 1997 to 2003. Figures for 2004 are not yet available.

Prosecutions for drug-related offences in Northern Ireland 1997–2003

Offence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Unlawful possession	353	460	493	495	346	327	417
Possession with intent to supply unlawfully	216	183	156	181	153	110	113
Unlawful supply	75	32	31	38	27	9	21
Unlawful production	7	17	14	5	3	1	6
Permitting premises to be used for unlawful purposes	14	6	2	1	1	4	0
Unlawful import or export	8	5	3	3	0	0	0
Other misuse of Drugs Act offences	1	4	13	9	9	4	11
Total	674	707	712	732	539	455	568

Education

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many and what percentage of 16 to 25-year-olds in each ward in Northern Ireland are in further education, listed in descending order and indicating in which constituency each ward lies; [44525]

(2) how many and what percentage of 18 to 25-year-olds are in higher education in each ward in Northern Ireland, broken down by constituency. [44528]

Angela E. Smith: The information has been placed in the Library.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of pupils in Northern Ireland's schools in receipt of free school meals achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-C in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [44299]

Angela E. Smith: Information is not available in the format requested. However, of pupils leaving school in 2003–04, 33 per cent. of those entitled to free school meals achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-C. Figures for 2004–05 will be available by July 2006.

Employment (Republic of Ireland)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many adult workers in each constituency in Northern Ireland are employed in the Republic of Ireland, listed in descending order. [44422]

Angela E. Smith: Estimates of the number of Northern Ireland residents working in the Republic of Ireland are not available. However for information, the Autumn (September-November) 2005 Labour Force Survey estimated that 11,000 Northern Ireland residents were currently employed outside of the UK.

Giant's Causeway

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the new visitor centre at the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland. [43715]

Angela E. Smith: Good progress toward the provision of new visitor facilities continues to be made. The design of the new facilities has recently been selected following a successful international architectural competition; and a firm of designers have also now been appointed to design the interpretation and fit out of the new facilities. Work is currently under way to appoint the remainder of the project team to work with the winning architects to develop the detailed design and submit a planning application.

High Hedges

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many responses were received from each district council area to the consultation paper on nuisance high hedges released on 10 August 2005; and when the Environment Minister is expected to report on the result of the consultation. [44913]

Angela E. Smith: A report on the outcome of the Department of the Environment's recent public consultation to collect information about the number of nuisance high hedges in Northern Ireland will be published by April 2006.

The number of responses received from each district council area to the nuisance high hedges consultation released on 10 August 2005 is as follows:

Council area	*Consultation responses*
Antrim	17
Ards	54
Armagh City	22
Ballymena	30

Council area	Consultation responses
Ballymoney	11
Banbridge	24
Belfast City	22
Carrickfergus	21
Castlereagh	31
Coleraine	16
Cookstown	9
Craigavon	18
Derry City	25
Down	33
Dungannon and South Tyrone	12
Fermanagh	26
Larne	8
Limavady	3
Lisburn City	51
Magherafelt	13
Moyle	3
Newry and Mourne	33
Newtownabbey	32
North Down	77
Omagh	18
Strabane	7
Total responses by district council area	[1]616

[1] The overall number of consultation responses received was 640; however 24 of these could not be associated with a specific council area.

Job Creation (East Londonderry)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much grant assistance was paid towards additional job creation in the private sector in East Londonderry constituency in 2005. [44061]

Angela E. Smith: During the financial year 2004–05 Invest NI offered £2.29 million of assistance within the East Londonderry constituency area. This contributed towards projects which have a total planned investment of over £11 million; and is comprised of over 400 offers aimed at the establishment, growth and capability development of businesses within the area, including 235 offers of support provided through the Start a Business Programme.

In addition, during 2004–05 the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development awarded £1.17 million to the private sector within the East Londonderry constituency.

Lower Back Pain

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many working days were estimated to have been lost due to lower back pain in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2005. [43626]

Angela E. Smith: Estimates of the number of working days lost due to lower back pain are not available. However for information, the autumn (September to November) 2005 Labour Force Survey estimated that there were 23,000 people in employment in Northern Ireland that have been suffering from back or neck pain for a period of one year or more. The comparable figure for autumn 2000 was 21,000.

Ministerial Meetings

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many meetings with his officials have been requested *(a)* by officials in the Fisheries Division of his Department and *(b)* by Lord Rooker since his appointment as Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development; and how many briefings he (i) has requested from officials in the Fisheries Division and (ii) has received. [44771]

Angela E. Smith: Officials are always available to meet Ministers as and when necessary. Lord Rooker has met with officials at their request, on at least five occasions and once at the request of the Minister. The Minister has received briefing on more than 30 occasions. All of these have been initiated with fisheries officials in line with their duty to keep the Minister informed in issues of significance.

MOTs

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for MOT inspections was at each vehicle testing agency site in Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available. [44567]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the average waiting time for MOT inspections at each test centre in Northern Ireland for the period 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005.

Centre	Average waiting time (days)
Armagh	37
Ballymena	39
Belfast	36
Coleraine	48
Cookstown	44
Craigavon	35
Downpatrick	32
Enniskillen	51
Larne	27
Lisburn	39
Londonderry	57
Mallusk	28
Newry	43
Newtownards	30
Omagh	57

MRSA (Hospital Deaths)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people died in Northern Ireland hospitals during 2005 where MRSA was a contributory factor. [42275]

Angela E. Smith: The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. There were 44 deaths registered in Northern Ireland where MRSA[1] was mentioned on the death certificate. Of these 34 deaths occurred where the place of death was in a hospital.

[1] In the United Kingdom, the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is used to classify cause of death. The current version of ICD does not have a specific code for methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). However statistics on deaths where MRSA was a contributing factor can be obtained. In common with England and Wales, this is done by identifying deaths with specific conditions likely to be linked with MRSA and then manually checking the cause of death on the death certificate to identify whether MRSA was recorded.

New Deal

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many young people in each ward in Northern Ireland have been helped into work under the new deal programme *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each year since the introduction of the new deal, listed in descending order and indicating in which constituency each ward lies. [44527]

Angela E. Smith: This information has been placed in the Library.

New School Buildings

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which *(a)* primary and *(b)* post-primary schools in the (i) controlled and (ii) maintained sectors in East Londonderry constituency are scheduled to have new school buildings within the next 10 years. [44063]

Angela E. Smith: In the East Londonderry constituency, there are currently 11 schemes in planning, four of which have been approved for funding—one controlled primary school scheme (Carnalridge), one maintained primary rationalisation scheme (Dungiven, Largy and Burnfoot), one controlled post-primary scheme (Coleraine college) and one controlled special schools amalgamation scheme (Glasvey and Limegrove).

There are seven schemes that have been identified by the relevant school authorities to the Department of Education as requiring a major capital works scheme and have been assessed by the Department as having a need for a scheme. These are currently in various stages of planning and the progressing of these schemes will be dependent on the availability of resources, and the planning, procurement and construction work required. These schemes are:

Controlled primary

Ballykelly

Maintained primary

St. Canice's, Dungiven

Crossroads, Kilrea

St. Patrick's, Portrush

Integrated primary

Millstrand, Portrush

Controlled post-primary

Coleraine High School

Voluntary grammar school

Dominican College, Portstewart

The relevant school authorities have also identified to the Department within their five-year plans the following schools for future assessment.

Controlled primary

Drumachose, Limavady

Millburn, Coleraine

Killowen, Coleraine

Macosquin, Coleraine

Portstewart

Gorran, Aghadowey

Culcrow, Aghadowey

Cullycapple, Aghadowey

Maintained post-primary

St. Patrick's High School, Dungiven

In examining all proposals for new school buildings it will be important that in a situation of falling pupil numbers that schools are assessed as being viable in the longer term before funding approval is given.

Olympic Games

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to help Northern Irish athletes prepare for the 2012 Olympic games. [43719]

Mr. Hanson: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is working closely with the Department of Culture Media and Sport and London Organising Committee of the Olympic games to ensure maximum benefit for Northern Ireland, from London hosting the Olympic and Paralympic games in 2012. A Northern Ireland Olympic task force is also in place to develop and implement an Olympic strategy for Northern Ireland, and a principal element of this strategy will address the preparation of Northern Irish athletes for the games.

Partially Sighted People

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to assist people in Northern Ireland who are partially sighted *(a)* to overcome barriers to employment and *(b)* into work. [44912]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Employment and Learning, through the Disablement Advisory Service, provides advice, guidance, training and a placement service for people with disabilities. This service is delivered by specialist Disablement Employment Advisers based in Jobs and Benefits Offices/Jobcentres across Northern Ireland. The Department's advisers have available a range of programmes to assist disabled people overcome barriers to employment and to help them advance in the workplace, all of which can provide assistance for partially sighted people. These programmes, include: the Job Introduction Scheme; Access to Work; Employment Support; and New Deal for Disabled People. Further, the Department has a contract with RNIB to provide assessment services to assist the advisers meet the needs of partially sighted clients.

Pensioners (Telephones)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of pensioners in each region do not have a telephone, ranked in descending order. [21184]

Angela E. Smith: For the financial year 2004–05 the proportion of pensioners in each region who do not have a telephone is as follows.

	Percentage
East of NI	3
North of NI	3
West and South of NI	2
Outer Belfast	1
Belfast	1

It is not possible to provide the number of pensioners in each region who do not have a telephone. The estimates are based on a sample survey.

Predictive Diallers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many calls were made from call centres in his Department in 2004–05 using predictive diallers; how many such calls resulted in contact being made with the recipient without a Government agent available to talk to them; and what assessment he has made of the likely impact of Ofcom's policy on silent calls on the use of predictive diallers in departmental call centres. [28174]

Mr. Hanson: No call centres were run by the Northern Ireland Office.

Primary Schools (Computer Adaptive Testing)

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether computer adaptive testing will form part of the proposed pupil profile for primary school children in Northern Ireland. [44297]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment is developing and testing the pupil profile, and is examining the use of computer adaptive tests as part of the portfolio of assessment tools which teachers could draw upon to inform and support their professional judgment when completing the pupil profile. The council will provide me with advice in due course.

Prostitution

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with his ministerial colleagues in relation to the prostitution strategy for England and Wales; and what plans he has to introduce similar reforms in Northern Ireland. [44584]

Mr. Hanson: The Home Office document presents a coordinated strategy for dealing with a range of issues related to prostitution in England and Wales, where it is estimated that 80,000 people may be directly involved in selling sex. The strategy follows a review of prostitution instigated in 2004 by the Home Secretary.

We will be looking at what needs to be done in Northern Ireland to tackle problems related to prostitution here. We will initially be liaising with the police to ensure they have the necessary powers under the criminal law to deal with problems posed by kerb crawlers. We will look at the possibility of including proposals to reform the law in a wider review of sex offences due for consultation this year.

Public Appointments

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects to announce further nominations to the Equality Commission in Northern Ireland. [43622]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires that the Equality Commission shall consist of not less than 14 nor more than 20 Commissioners. There are currently 18 Commissioners, including the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Chief Commissioner. The Government believes that the current Commission has the right balance of skills and experience and that therefore there is no need to appoint additional Commissioners at this time.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to announce the creation of Deputy Chief Commissioner posts for the Equality and Human Rights Commissions in Northern Ireland within the next three months. [43623]

Mr. Hanson: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland currently has a Deputy Chief Commissioner.

In its consultation paper on the powers of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Government discussed the possibility of creating a position of Deputy Chief Commissioner.

Following the end of the consultation period on 9 February 2006, the Government will consider all responses from consultees on this and other issues. We will consider our proposals in the light of those responses.

Rates Revaluation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether *(a)* aerial and *(b)* satellite photography (i) being and (ii) will be used by the Valuation and Lands Agency as part of the rates revaluation in Northern Ireland. [42912]

Angela E. Smith: The Valuation and Lands Agency is not and will not be using aerial or satellite photography as part of the revaluation of domestic properties in Northern Ireland.

Re-offending

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland who have served a prison sentence have been convicted of a further subsequent offence and re-imprisoned in each of the last five years. [44887]

Mr. Hanson: The table shows the number of offenders who have been discharged from prison and reconvicted with a subsequent custodial sentence. A two year reconviction period is the standard adopted in reconviction studies. Thus, those offenders discharged from prison during 2001 are followed up for a two year period to determine if a valid reconviction has occurred. Data for 2002 (i.e. reconvictions to 31 December 2004) are currently being validated.

Offenders discharged from prison and reconvicted within two years—2001

	Number	*Percentage*
Total prison discharges	703	—
Reconvicted within two years (any disposal, including prison)	317	45.1
Reconvicted within two years (subsequent prison sentence)	133	14.7

Road Safety

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will bring all road safety measures under one Government Department; and if he will make a statement. [42401]

Angela E. Smith: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 793W.

Schools

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the use of selection based on academic ability in admissions to schools in Northern Ireland. [43720]

Angela E. Smith: The Government are committed to ending academic selection in Northern Ireland, and the last transfer tests will be held in November 2008. Future transfer from primary to post-primary school will be on the basis of informed parental choice. A proposal for a draft education order which will give effect to the new arrangements and prohibit schools from using any form of academic selection to admit pupils is currently the subject of public consultation. The closing date for comments is 7 March and the draft order will be laid before Parliament by summer 2006.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidance the Department for Education, issues to schools about the employment of ex-offenders. [43554]

Angela E. Smith: In 1999 the Department of Education issued the document "Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection" but has not issued any specific guidance to schools on the employment of ex-offenders. I have asked that this is done as a matter of urgency working with the Children's Commissioner and NSPCC. Currently employers can and do take advice from the police, social services, the Probation Service, the ELBs' Child Protection officers and the Department if they are in any doubt about how to proceed in any given case.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to ensure safer journeys for children going to, and coming from schools where a decision has been taken during 2005 to remove the school crossing patrol. [43624]

Angela E. Smith: The education and library boards use guidelines, based on those produced by the Local Authorities Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA), to identify traffic hazards and provide school crossing patrols in situations where they consider there to be unacceptable risks. Boards have advised me that they only consider removing crossing patrols where a review of the location against these guidelines indicates that the hazard or level of risk has reduced or been removed.

Boards continue to work closely with their counterparts in a range of Government Departments to identify other means of ensuring that the journey children make to school is safe. These include engineering solutions such as traffic calming measures and pelican crossings as well as education in the area of road safety.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children were statemented during 2005 in each of the education and library board areas in Northern Ireland. [44060]

Angela E. Smith: The number of children who were statemented during 2005 in each of the education and library board areas in Northern Ireland is:

	Number
BELB	272
NEELB	370
SEELB	410
SELB	368
WELB	307

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Department of Education and South-Eastern Education and Library Board are taking to ensure that statemented and special needs children are not disadvantaged as a result of the deficit in the board's budget. [42260]

Angela E. Smith: In recent years, the Department of Education has made available to all education and library boards, including the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB), additional resources totalling £37.5 million over the 2005–06 to 2007–08 period for support to children with special educational needs. This has been further enhanced by the allocation of £5 million in 2006–07 and £15 million in 2007–08 in the recent Northern Ireland Budget and Priorities 2006–08.

Other earmarked allocations are also being made available to address specific areas of Special Educational Need. £2.9 million has been allocated in 2005–06 to help address need in the largest areas of growth—Autism, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, Dyslexia, as well as the increase in children identified with SEN in mainstream settings. Similar allocations will be made in 2006–07 and 2007–08.

SEELB is fully aware of its statutory responsibility to identify and assess special educational needs, and in particular those children on whom it maintains a Statement of Special Educational Need.

In order to meet those needs, SEELB has endeavoured to put in place adequate provision. To this end it has provided additional specialist support at Belvoir and Cumran primary schools, Ballynahinch high school and Killard and Tor Bank special schools.

Teachers Superannuation Scheme

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to alter the employer's contribution to the Northern Ireland Teachers' Superannuation Scheme following the recent Government Actuary's report. [42567]

Angela E. Smith: Following the publication of the Government Actuary's report on 19 December 2005, the employers' contribution rate to the Northern Ireland Teachers' Superannuation Scheme will increase from 14 per cent. to 14.15 per cent., with effect from 1 April 2006.

Tourism

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department is taking to encourage tourism in Northern Ireland. [43716]

Angela E. Smith: Responsibility for promoting tourism in Northern Ireland is shared between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB), which provides strategic direction, and Tourism Ireland Ltd. (TIL) which markets Northern Ireland as part of the island of Ireland in key overseas markets.

NITB's Strategic Framework for Action 2004–2007 provides the basis for its activities. These include the development of five Signature Projects which will provide anchor tourist attractions across Northern Ireland. In addition, NITB is developing a series of "Winning Themes" which include the promotion of business, activity and cultural tourism. These initiatives will be marketed aggressively by NITB within the island of Ireland and by TIL overseas.

Wind Farm Proposals (Tunes Plateau)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the status is of the offshore wind farm proposals for the Tunes Plateau near Portstewart, Northern Ireland. [44062]

Angela E. Smith: The development consortium has not yet made any application for the establishment of the proposed wind farm at Tunes Plateau.

Visitors from Great Britain

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of people from Great Britain that have visited Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [43713]

Angela E. Smith: Figures relating to the number of Great Britain visitors to Northern Ireland over the last five years (2000–04) and the forecast number of Great Britain visitors to Northern Ireland in 2005 are presented in the following table:

GB visitors to Northern Ireland—2000–05

	Trips (000)
2000	950
2001	1,053
2002	1,160
2003[1]	1,379
2004	1,408
2005[2]	1,339

[1] 2003 figures have been revised to reflect comparable changes to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and Failte Ireland surveys. Due to changes in methodologies 2003 and 2004 data are not directly comparable with data pre-2003.
[2] Forecast.

Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will list the websites that come under his Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year; [15900]

(2) when he will reply to question 15900, tabled by the hon. Member for Brent, East on 21 July. [40748]

Mr. Hain: I apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in providing this response. This was due to an administrative error.

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) is responsible for three websites, the NIO website, Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) website, and the Criminal Justice Services Northern Ireland (CJSNI) website. Associated costs for each website and number of visitors for the period January 2005 to December 2005 are as follows:

Website	*Design costs (£)*	*Yearly maintenance costs (£)*	*Number of unique visitors (January to December 2005)*
Northern Ireland Office	0	7,200	156,457
Organised Crime Task Force	11,406.90	400	21,811
Criminal Justice Services Northern Ireland	3,507.51	3,305	7,374

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the premises occupied by her Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42882]

Maria Eagle: All premises occupied by the Department have audible fire alarms or sounders, i.e. fire bells.

Academies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the civil servants in her Department's new projects remit who are responsible for action in respect of academies; what the *(a)* grade and *(b)* role in the Department is of each; and if she will list the actions they undertake in respect of academies. [44549]

Jacqui Smith: The disclosure of the names of civil servants in the Academies Group's New Projects Unit is not compatible with the principles of the Data Protection Act. I have therefore given the grades and responsibilities of those staff in the following table:

Title	*Grade*	*Role/actions*
Head of New Projects	Grade 5	Head of Unit; Oversight of sponsor brokering; allocates academy projects to Project Leads; reports to Ministers on progress towards 2010 target.
Project Lead (x2)	Grade 7	Lead official on early academy project negotiations; supporting development of formal expression of interest progressing to submission for ministerial approval.
Team Leader—Internal Relations	Grade 7	Management of New Projects Office; correspondence and briefing; NPU contact for internal Dept policy meetings.
Team Leader—External Relations	Grade 7	Management of sponsor relations; lead official on due diligence policy; liaison with Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.
Assistant Project Lead (× 2)	Higher Executive Officer	Support to Project lead.
Internal Relations/Sponsor Support	Higher Executive Officer	Support to Heads of Internal and External Relations.
Ministerial Priorities	Fast Streamer	Direct support to Minister, Director of Academies and Head of NPU briefing on potential academy projects and leading on early academy project negotiations.

Aylesbury Vale

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the policy implications for her Department of the growth in population in Aylesbury Vale. [39673]

Jacqui Smith: Population projections and demographic data are used to ensure our capital programmes support local responsiveness that can meet the demands and needs of forecast population changes. Additional pupils from a growing population will therefore generate extra funding for the local authority.

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time child care places have been available in each year since 1997, broken down by area. [43797]

Beverley Hughes: The Department is unable to provide details of part-time child care places available as such data have not been collected.

A list of child care places available broken down by local authority since 2003 is as follows.

Child care places

Local authority	*2003*	*March 2004*	*2005*
Barking and Dagenham	1,987	2,244	2,316
Barnet	6,371	6,666	7,567
Barnsley	2,367	3,038	3,465
Bath and North East Somerset	3,223	3,346	3,741
Bedfordshire	7,840	8,766	8,427
Bexley	2,981	3,440	3,739
Birmingham	22,378	24,927	26,106
Blackburn UA	2,714	3,693	4,078
Blackpool UA	3,091	3,435	3,693
Bolton	5,856	6,901	7,202
Bournemouth UA	2,514	3,311	4,141
Bracknell Forest UA	3,312	3,592	3,403

Child care places

Local authority	*2003*	*March 2004*	*2005*
Bradford	7,837	9,251	10,077
Brent	4,281	4,955	5,208
Brighton and Hove UA	5,276	5,758	6,211
Bristol	8,024	9,026	8,993
Bromley	5,008	5,737	6,237
Buckinghamshire	11,043	12,254	12,907
Bury	5,797	6,348	6,835
Calderdale	4,862	5,493	6,097
Cambridgeshire	13,509	15,106	16,116
Camden	4,486	4,719	4,600
Cheshire	17,026	18,605	19,485
City Of London	308	430	475
Cornwall	6,984	8,520	9,390
Coventry	6,437	7,203	7,806
Croydon	7,299	8,046	9,434
Cumbria	6,121	8,456	9,474
Darlington UA	2,371	2,666	2,829
Derby UA	5,510	6,149	6,355
Derbyshire	11,828	12,773	13,916
Devon	13,694	14,425	15,407
Doncaster	3,478	4,423	5,275
Dorset	5,894	6,372	7,036
Dudley	4,528	4,880	5,094
Durham	7,078	7,998	8,534
Ealing	5,795	6,574	6,989
East Riding of Yorkshire	5,818	6 510	6,523
East Sussex	8,190	10,040	10,667
Enfield	4,275	4,670	4,887
Essex	21,064	22,213	23,281
Gateshead	3,343	3,806	4,395
Gloucestershire	14,174	14,358	14,759
Greenwich	4,485	5,097	5,473
Hackney	2,908	3,455	5,106
Halton UA	1,960	3,164	3,327
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,835	3,158	3,799
Hampshire	27,288	31,769	33,592
Haringey	2,493	3,330	3,926
Harrow	2,905	3,397	3,456
Hartlepool UA	1,474	2,007	2,433
Havering	2,445	2,904	3,373
Herefordshire	4,126	4,498	4,530
Hertfordshire	23,256	26,983	28,254
Hillingdon	4,971	5,226	5,111
Hounslow	3,311	3,637	4,190
Isle Of Wight	3,159	3,385	3,620

Child care places

Local authority	2003	March 2004	2005
Isles Of Scilly	187	111	110
Islington	4,325	4,567	4,903
Kensington and Chelsea	3,023	3,289	3,405
Kent	24,589	27,943	30,754
Kingston Upon Hull	3,515	4,035	4,340
Kingston Upon Thames	2,932	3,428	3,778
Kirklees	7,585	8,466	9,068
Knowsley	2,763	3,239	3,826
Lambeth	4,551	5,641	6,268
Lancashire	22,538	26,391	29,008
Leeds	15,776	16,178	17,001
Leicester UA	5,886	6,028	6,216
Leicestershire	12,125	13,857	14,485
Lewisham	4,683	5,712	6,163
Lincolnshire	12,129	13,828	14,484
Liverpool	7,396	9,006	10,062
Luton UA	2,286	3,184	3,726
Manchester	9,723	11,101	11,325
Medway	5,122	5,856	6,298
Merton	3,821	4,554	4,883
Middlesbrough	3,129	2,983	3,235
Milton Keynes UA	5,874	6,536	7,682
NE Lincolnshire	1,578	2,199	2,597
Newcastle Upon Tyne	4,710	5,338	5,515
Newham	3,886	5,078	5,263
Norfolk	10,674	13,435	14,023
North Lincolnshire	2,028	2,420	2,746
North Somerset	3,084	3,766	4,326
North Tyneside	2,776	4,067	3,962
North Yorkshire	11,793	13,593	13,717
Northamptonshire	12,813	14,827	16,416
Northumberland	5,636	6,391	6,877
Nottingham UA	6,234	6,725	6,854
Nottinghamshire	15,819	18,180	18,262
Oldham	4,542	6,148	6,473
Oxfordshire	16,221	18,276	18,514
Peterborough UA	4,554	5,569	5,972
Plymouth	4,656	5,567	5,981
Poole UA	2,216	2,501	2,580
Portsmouth UA	4,432	5,002	5,631
Reading	3,656	4,614	4,619
Redbridge	3,538	4,129	5,180
Redcar and Cleveland UA	1,903	2,560	2,554
Richmond Upon Thames	4,354	4,777	5,344
Rochdale	4,957	5,662	5,334
Rotherham	3,297	3,875	3,954
Rutland UA	787	951	1,070
Salford	4,589	5,392	5,504
Sandwell	4,276	4,907	4,813
Sefton	3,573	4,472	4,719
Sheffield	9,732	11,460	12,489
Shropshire	6,118	6,893	7,320
Slough UA	2,187	2,080	2,575
Solihull	5,644	5,672	6,060
Somerset	9,846	10,635	10,815
South Gloucestershire	5,070	5,540	6,072
South Tyneside	1,934	3,746	3,195
Southampton UA	3,755	5,220	5,387
Southend UA	2,342	3,166	3,276
Southwark	6,156	7,162	8,481
St. Helens	2,534	3,045	4,028
Staffordshire	18,482	21,321	22,463
Stockport	6,322	6,915	7,361
Stockton-On-Tees UA	2,810	3,607	4,049
Stoke-On-Trent	4,544	5,150	5,560
Suffolk	8,504	11,430	12,802
Sunderland	3,155	3,645	4,317
Surrey	26,021	27,856	28,921
Sutton	3,108	3,568	4,228
Swindon	4,406	5,133	5,400
Tameside	4,564	5,252	5,810
Telford And Wrekin UA	4,540	4,733	4,476
Thurrock UA	1,861	2,565	2,660
Torbay UA	1,691	2,385	2,491
Tower Hamlets	2,688	3,343	3,538
Trafford	6,693	7,459	7,229
Wakefield	3,466	4,260	5,099
Walsall	3,885	4,757	4,665
Waltham Forest	5,189	5,555	5,501
Wandsworth	7,338	8,209	8,410

Child care places

Local authority	2003	March 2004	2005
Warrington UA	6,233	7,176	7,025
Warwickshire	11,931	13,086	14,183
West Berks	5,055	4,687	5,373
West Sussex	13,865	15,491	17,007
Westminster	3,093	3,300	3,058
Wigan	5,528	6,681	7,122
Wiltshire	10,871	11,500	12,464
Windsor and Maidenhead UA	3,817	4,370	4,710
Wirral	6,403	6,888	7,203
Wokingham UA	5,112	5,100	5,486
Wolverhampton	4,317	4,522	5,024
Worcestershire	12,739	14,451	14,365
York UA	4,149	4,186	4,393

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what target for free early education and child care for *(a)* three and *(b)* four-year-olds has been set for (i) 2007 and (ii) 2010. [43799]

Beverley Hughes: With effect from April 2006, the minimum free entitlement for three and four-year-olds of 12.5 hours a week will increase from 33 to 38 weeks. By 2010, in line with the commitments set out in the 10-Year Childcare Strategy, the free entitlement will be further extended to 15 hours per week for all three and four-year-olds and parents who wish to do so will be able to take up the entitlement more flexibly across a minimum of three days per week. No targets have been set for 2007, although the Government is considering options for a phased roll out of the extended, more flexible entitlement. Our overall target remains to secure access to a free place for every three and four-year-old whose parents want one. Take up is already high with 96 per cent. of three-year-olds and virtually all four-year-olds benefiting from some free provision.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets she has for expanding the number of child care places *(a)* in total, *(b)* for children with disabilities, *(c)* for children with special educational needs and *(d)* for minority ethnic children; and what progress has been made towards meeting each target. [43802]

Beverley Hughes: The Department's public service agreement (PSA) target 2*(a)*, owned jointly with DWP, is to increase the stock of Ofsted registered child care places by 10 per cent. by 2008. I am pleased to announce that this target has already been met. The stock of child care places rose from 1,102 million in March 2004 to 1,220 million in September 2005, an increase of 10.7 per cent.

The Department has no specific targets for children with disabilities, special education needs or minority ethnic children. However, our PSA target 2*(b)* is to increase the take by 50 per cent. of formal child care by lower income working families, and we know that families from these groups are disproportionately represented among lower income groups. Additionally, the Childcare Bill, currently before Parliament, requires local authorities to secure, so far as is practicable, sufficient child care places to meet the needs of parents. The Bill specifically requires local authorities to have regard for the needs of parents for child care which is suitable for disabled children, including children with special educational needs.

Child care for black and minority ethnic children will be met in the wider duty within the Bill to secure sufficient child care that meets the needs of all parents. The major barriers that black and minority ethnic families face in accessing child care relate to cost and information. Both of these issues are being addressed in the Bill by the focus on the needs of lower income families and the information duty respectively. Additionally, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires all listed public authorities to promote equality of opportunity and ensure they take account of race equality in their service delivery, which includes child care.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets she has in relation to the qualifications of people working in child care; and if she will make a statement. [43805]

Beverley Hughes: Our 10-year strategy for child care, published in December 2004, sets out the Government's vision of child care services in this country becoming among the best in the world. We aim to have a better qualified workforce, with more workers trained to professional level. In our Children's Workforce Strategy, published in April 2005, we propose to have an early years' professional in every children's centre by 2010 and in every full day care setting by 2015. In the workforce strategy, we also propose to have a greater proportion of the early years and child care workforce qualified to at least level 2, we aim to increase the number of childminders qualified to level 3 and we aim to work towards our long term vision of graduate managers in all full day care settings.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people worked as home child carers in each year since the home child carers scheme was established. [43942]

Beverley Hughes: Between April 2004 and April 2005 the total number of carers approved under the Home Childcarer Scheme was 300 and, since it was replaced in April 2005 by the Childcare Approval Scheme, a further 1,339 carers have been approved. We do not have records of how many people have worked as home child carers because, under both the Home Childcarer and Childcare Approval Schemes, it is the individual that is approved and details of employment are not required.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what responses she has received to the consultation on expanding the home child carers scheme. [43944]

Beverley Hughes: The consultation "Childcare: extending protection and broadening support" closed on 16 August 2004 with 149 responses having been received. Overall the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals. Details of the responses can be found on the DfES consultation website at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conResults.cfm?consultationId=1247

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the members of the Advisory Group of Key Stakeholders on Childcare. [43945]

Beverley Hughes: There is no such specific group. However, the Government are always interested in hearing the views of key stakeholders and take every opportunity to do so. We consulted widely on proposals contained in the 10-year strategy for child care and on the contents of the Childcare Bill, currently before Parliament.

In addition, the Children, Young People and Families Board of Stakeholders, which includes Ministers and senior representatives from a wide range of organisations, discusses child care from time to time.

Class Sizes

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size was in primary schools in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Hartlepool local education authority area in each year since 1997. [43761]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: average class size taught by one teacher[2]—England and Hartlepool local authority

Position as at January each year	*Average class size*	
	England	*Hartlepool*
1997	27.5	28.0
1998	27.7	28.0
1999	27.5	27.1
2000	27.1	26.8
2001	26.7	26.3
2002	26.3	25.8
2003	26.3	26.2
2004	26.2	25.4
2005	26.2	25.3

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.

Source:

Annual Schools' Census.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size is in primary schools in *(a)* affluent and *(b)* deprived areas; and if she will make a statement. [41298]

Jacqui Smith: Information provided in the table shows class size data for primary schools in relation to the proportion of school population known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM). This indicates that the average class size is smaller in schools with the highest proportions of disadvantaged pupils (as assessed by FSM eligibility) than in those schools with the lowest proportions.

In addition, the rate of decrease in the average class size between 1997 and 2005 is greater in schools with the highest proportions of disadvantaged pupils than in those schools with the lowest proportions.

Maintained primary schools[1]: average class size by free school meal eligibility[2]: position in January each year 1997 and 2005

	Proportion of school population known to be eligible for free school meals[3]					
	Less than or equal to 8 per cent.		Greater than 50 per cent.		All primary schools	
	1997	2005	1997	2005	1997	2005
Key stage 1 classes[4]						
Average class size	27.1	26.1	25.2	24.1	26.9	25.6
Number of classes	15,980	21,420	3,730	2,290	61,110	55,860
Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils	27.6	1.6	11.4	1.0	23.9	1.2
Number of pupils	432,460	559,850	94,190	55,090	1,646,660	1,430,150
Percentage of pupils in classes with 31 or more pupils[5]	33.4	1.9	14.6	1.3	29.0	1.5
Key stage 2 classes						
Average class size	28.5	28	26.1	24.9	28.1	27.3
Number of classes	17,620	26,920	5,710	3,250	73,180	73,480
Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils	38.0	27.6	14.1	6.3	32.4	20.9
Number of pupils	502,070	753,200	149,120	80,860	2,056,840	2,002,610
Percentage of pupils in classes with 31 or more pupils	43.9	32.1	17.5	8.1	37.9	24.9
Classes in primary schools						
Average class size	27.7	26.8	25.8	24.3	27.5	26.2
Number of classes	36,380	54,830	10,310	6,420	146,430	146,860
Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils	32.2	15.4	13.3	4.7	27.9	12.2
Number of pupils	1,007,430	1,470,370	265,700	155,760	4,025,160	3,851,810
Percentage of pupils in classes with 31 or more pupils	38.2	18.6	16.9	6.5	33.4	15.2

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school in the day of the census in January. Classes taught by one teacher.
[3] The proportion of school population known to be eligible for free school meals. Includes dually registered pupils.
[4] Includes reception classes.
[5] Key stage 1 classes of 31 or more may contain pupils who have been admitted as exceptions.
Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils were in primary school classes of 25 or more pupils in each year since 1990–91; what percentage of the relevant age cohort this represents in each case; and if she will make a statement. [41457]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the following table. There have been infant class-size limits since 1998, but these do not apply to other primary school year groups.

However, the knock-on effect of infant class-size legislation has been to contribute to an overall reduction in the size of primary classes.

Maintained primary schools[1]: number of pupils in classes of 25 and over[2] 1991–2005, England

	Size of class					
	25 to 30		31 and over		Total 25 and over	
Position in January each year	Number of pupils	Percentage of pupils[3]	Number of pupils	Percentage of pupils[3]	Number of pupils	Percentage of pupils[3]
1991	n/a	n/a	911,218	25.5	n/a	n/a
1992	n/a	n/a	902,802	24.9	n/a	n/a
1993	1,976,342	53.1	985,973	26.5	2,962,315	79.7
1994	2,012,846	52.8	1,076,173	28.2	3,089,019	81.0
1995	2,052,121	52.5	1,155,715	29.6	3,207,836	82.1
1996	2,042,571	51.5	1,260,551	31.8	3,303,122	83.3
1997	2,033,122	50.5	1,344,231	33.4	3,377,353	83.9
1998	2,021,334	49.9	1,410,762	34.8	3,432,096	84.6
1999	2,109,101	52.1	1,277,250	31.5	3,386,351	83.6
2000	2,242,734	55.4	1,071,720	26.5	3,314,454	81.9
2001	2,347,916	58.5	848,961	21.1	3,196,877	79.6
2002	2,363,870	59.9	703,097	17.8	3,066,967	77.7
2003	2,406,098	61.4	638,511	16.3	3,044,609	111
2004	2,430,233	62.5	594,534	15.3	3,024,767	77.8
2005	2,404 253	62.4	584,163	15.2	2,988,416	77.6

n/a = not available.
[1] Includes middle schools as deemed
[2] One teacher classes.
[3] Number of pupils of classes of size expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average spending per child in primary schools was in each local education authority in each year since 1997. [44331]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The information requested is contained within the following table:

Pre-primary and primary school based expenditure[1,2,3] per pupil[4] (1997–98 to 2004–05)[5,6,7,8]

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000**	
	Pre-primary and primary education	*Pre-primary and primary education*	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary education*
England	1,740	1,870	2,010	2,050
Barking and Dagenham	1,970	2,160	2,250	2,270
Barnet	1,860	1,960	2,390	2,410
Barnsley	1,560	1,680	1,840	1,860
Bath and NE Somerset	1,720	1,820	2,010	2,060
Bedfordshire	1,750	1,780	1,970	2,000
Berkshire	1,610	—	—	—
Bexley	1,590	1,770	1,930	1,960
Birmingham	1,940	2,200	2,260	2,370
Blackburn with Darwen	—	1,840	2,000	2,120
Blackpool	—	1,690	1,870	1,890
Bolton	1,750	2,000	2,000	2,030
Bournemouth	1,480	1,700	1,820	1,850
Bracknell Forest	—	1,620	1,880	1,900
Bradford	2,140	2,240	1,980	2,020
Brent	2,030	2,190	2,470	2,510
Brighton and Hove	1,550	1,750	1,850	1,940
Bromley	1,720	1,910	2,010	2,040
Buckinghamshire	1,630	1,700	1,840	1,840
Bury	1,490	1,640	1,780	1,800
Calderdale	1,660	1,860	1,950	1,960
Pre LGR Cambridgeshire	1,580	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	1,6404	1,810	1,840
Camden	2,390	2,520	2,440	2,750
Pre LGR Cheshire	1,710	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	1,770	1,780	1,790
City of Bristol	1,810	1,930	2,200	2,270
City of Kingston-Upon-Hull	1,680	1,940	1,980	2,000
City of London	3,810	3,970	4,180	4,510
City of Nottingham	—	1,950	2,090	2,120
City of Peterborough	—	1,830	1,590	1,650
City of Plymouth	—	1,700	1,940	1,960
Cornwall	1,670	1,820	1,900	1,930
Coventry	1,800	1,970	2,190	2,220
Croydon	1,910	2,010	2,130	2,180
Cumbria	1,860	1,880	2,050	2,070
Darlington	1,420	1,570	1,790	1,860
Derby	1,670	1,850	1,940	1,990
Derbyshire	1,580	1,730	1,820	1,840
Pre LGR Devon	1,630	—	—	—
Devon	—	1,730	1,950	1,980
Doncaster	1,890	1,930	2,070	2,070
Dorset	1,640	1,780	1,870	1,890
Dudley	1,570	1,790	1,980	2,010
Durham	1,690	1,810	2,050	2,100
Ealing	2,020	2,170	2,220	2,310
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,610	1,620	1,790	1,810
East Sussex	1,670	1,800	1,910	1,930
Enfield	1,900	2,040	2,230	2,260
Pre LGR Essex	1,740	—	—	—
Essex	—	1,950	1,970	1,970
Gateshead	1,700	1,800	1,950	1,970
Gloucestershire	1,640	1,800	1,850	1,960
Greenwich	2,190	2,410	2,590	2,690
Hackney	2,420	2,490	2,740	2,980
Halton	—	1,870	2,030	2,090
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,520	2,560	2,920	3,050
Hampshire	1,700	1,760	1,960	1,970
Haringey	2,360	2,490	2,460	2,550
Harrow	2,140	2,260	2,320	2,430
Hartlepool	1,500	1,650	1,760	1,780
Havering	1,750	1,840	1,960	1,970
Hereford and Worcester	1,660	—	—	—
Herefordshire	—	1,780	1,840	1,850
Hertfordshire	1,760	1,880	1,930	1,960

Pre-primary and primary school based expenditure[1,2,3] per pupil[4] (1997–98 to 2004–05)[5,6,7,8]

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000*	
	Pre-primary and primary education	Pre-primary and primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education
Hillingdon	1,730	1,770	2,100	2,110
Hounslow	2,060	2,240	2,340	2,380
Isle of Wight	1,800	2,000	2,190	2,230
Isles of Scilly	2,560	2,570	2,510	2,520
Islington	2,340	2,330	2,370	2,520
Kensington and Chelsea	2,650	2,750	2,960	3,050
Pre LGR Kent	1,700	—	—	—
Kent	—	1,860	2,140	2,210
Kingston-upon-Thames	1,830	1,940	2,070	2,110
Kirklees	1,650	1,850	2,020	2,060
Knowsley	1,700	1,870	2,120	2,120
Lambeth	2,810	2,930	2,710	3,020
Pre LGR Lancashire	1,670	—	—	—
Lancashire	—	1,820	1,950	1,980
Leeds	1,710	1,910	2,100	2,120
Leicester city	1,740	1,910	2,130	2,150
Leicestershire	1,660	1,810	1,930	2,000
Lewisham	2,340	2,510	2,560	2,710
Lincolnshire	1,680	1,740	1,870	1,870
Liverpool	1,660	1,840	1,970	1,980
Luton	1,700	1,830	2,040	2,080
Manchester	1,620	1,740	1,920	1,950
Medway	—	1,790	1,970	1,930
Merton	2,060	2,160	2,220	2,260
Middlesbrough	1,580	1,620	1,920	1,920
Milton Keynes	1,610	1,770	1,960	2,030
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	1,940	1,960	2,060	2,120
Newham	1,850	2,010	2,200	2,290
Norfolk	1,710	1,730	1,800	1,810
North East Lincolnshire	1,600	1,830	2,060	2,140
North Lincolnshire	1,650	1,710	1,880	1,900
North Somerset	1,690	1,870	1,880	1,890
North Tyneside	1,640	1,800	1,860	1,920
North Yorkshire	1,650	1,750	1,980	1,990
Northamptonshire	1,580	1,720	1,910	1,930
Northumberland	1,620	1,810	1,960	2,000
Pre LGR Nottinghamshire	1,720	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	1,810	2,010	2,030
Oldham	1,650	1,820	2,040	2,100
Oxfordshire	1,630	1,750	1,830	1,870
Poole	1,510	1,600	1,700	1,710
Portsmouth	1,780	1,940	2,170	2,220
Reading	—	1,670	1,660	1,710
Redbridge	1,810	1,880	2,070	2,080
Redcar and Cleveland	1,630	1,790	2,000	2,010
Richmond-upon-Thames	1,940	2,020	2,110	2,120
Rochdale	1,680	1,770	1,900	1,960
Rotherham	1,580	1,780	2,050	2,080
Rutland	1,890	2,130	2,160	2,190
Salford	1,560	1,630	1,990	2,010
Sandwell	1,850	2,040	2,110	2,120
Sefton	1,590	1,670	1,840	1,850
Sheffield	1,680	1,760	1,960	2,090
Pre LGR Shropshire	1,680	—	—	—
Shropshire	—	1,830	1,880	1,910
Slough	—	2,070	2,130	2,340
Solihull	1,630	1,770	1,920	1,930
Somerset	1,700	1,820	1,930	1,950
South Gloucestershire	1,650	1,780	1,900	1,920
South Tyneside	1,560	1,760	1,920	1,950
Southampton	1,830	1,960	2,140	2,160
Southend	—	1,870	2,040	2,040
Southwark	2,330	2,520	2,730	2,850
St Helens	1,600	1,700	2,000	2,030
Staffordshire	1,580	1,670	1,850	1,860
Stockport	1,570	1,750	1,860	1,890
Stockton-on-Tees	1,450	1,610	1,970	2,000
Stoke	1,600	1,810	1,970	2,030
Suffolk	1,770	1,900	2,000	2,060
Sunderland	1,660	1,830	1,950	2,030

Pre-primary and primary school based expenditure[1,2,3] per pupil[4] (1997–98 to 2004–05)[5,6,7,8]

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000*	
	Pre-primary and primary education	Pre-primary and primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education
Surrey	1,780	1,910	1,960	2,040
Sutton	1,870	2,030	2,230	2,270
Swindon	1,580	1,620	1,580	1,590
Tameside	1,590	1,720	1,640	1,650
Telford and Wrekin	—	1,670	1,700	1,770
Thurrock	—	1,800	2,060	2,070
Torbay	—	1,680	1,860	1,880
Tower Hamlets	2,600	2,770	3,090	3,140
Trafford	1,580	1,710	1,830	1,840
Wakefield	1,560	1,710	1,890	1,930
Walsall	1,630	1,790	2,030	2,070
Waltham Forest	2,110	2,160	2,430	2,560
Wandsworth	2,210	2,390	2,530	2,700
Warrington	—	1,740	1,880	1,900
Warwickshire	1,670	1,780	1,910	1,930
West Berkshire	—	1,760	1,950	1,980
West Sussex	1,730	1,860	1,950	2,020
Westminster	2,590	2,860	2,810	2,900
Wigan	1,520	1,610	1,900	1,920
Wiltshire	1,690	1,740	1,720	1,720
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	1,860	2,020	2,050
Wirral	1,600	1,810	1,810	1,840
Wokingham	—	1,650	1,800	1,820
Wolverhampton	1,750	1,870	2,000	2,040
Worcestershire	—	1,720	1,830	1,840
York	1,600	1,730	1,760	1,800

	2000–01		2001–02	
	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education
England	2,210	2,280	2,480	2,570
Barking and Dagenham	2,450	2,490	2,880	2,940
Barnet	2,350	2,390	2,640	2,710
Barnsley	1,980	2,020	2,250	2,350
Bath and NE Somerset	2,180	2,250	2,240	2,380
Bedfordshire	2,260	2,350	2,550	2,700
Berkshire	—	—	—	—
Bexley	2,070	2,090	2,320	2,350
Birmingham	2,460	2,580	2,730	2,860
Blackburn with Darwen	2,260	2,410	2,560	2,750
Blackpool	2,200	2,210	2,390	2,450
Bolton	2,260	2,290	2,500	2,560
Bournemouth	2,020	2,070	2,270	2,340
Bracknell Forest	2,120	2,120	2,330	2,330
Bradford	2,270	2,340	2,780	2,860
Brent	2,550	2,600	2,910	2,950
Brighton and Hove	2,050	2,210	2,330	2,430
Bromley	2,170	2,220	2,440	2,490
Buckinghamshire	1,800	1,800	1,950	1,960
Bury	2,010	2,040	2,180	2,220
Calderdale	2,160	2,170	2,400	2,410
Pre LGR Cambridgeshire	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	2,020	2,070	2,280	2,330
Camden	2,650	3,040	3,140	3,690
Pre LGR Cheshire	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	1,880	1,900	2,060	2,100
City of Bristol	2,380	2,620	2,450	2,720
City of Kingston-Upon-Hull	2,270	2,290	2,760	2,800
City of London	4,520	4,740	4,630	4,630
City of Nottingham	2,260	2,310	2,800	2,860
City of Peterborough	2,220	2,340	2,360	2,420
City of Plymouth	2,150	2,200	2,440	2,510
Cornwall	2,030	2,070	2,270	2,340
Coventry	2,400	2,430	2,770	2,820
Croydon	2,350	2,390	2,780	2,870
Cumbria	2,240	2,270	2,550	2,550
Darlington	1,930	2,010	2,290	2,390
Derby	2,170	2,330	2,610	2,840

	2000–01		2001–02	
	Primary education	*Pre-primary and primary education*	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary education*
Derbyshire	2,020	2,040	2,250	2,290
Pre LGR Devon	—	—	—	—
Devon	2,060	2,090	2,260	2,300
Doncaster	2,230	2,240	2,520	2,550
Dorset	2,140	2,160	2,350	2,400
Dudley	2,170	2,240	2,420	2,520
Durham	2,290	2,340	2,600	2,660
Ealing	2,370	2,500	2,720	2,890
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,160	2,200	2,300	2,350
East Sussex	2,130	2,170	2,390	2,440
Enfield	2,400	2,470	2,740	2,840
Pre LGR Essex	—	—	—	—
Essex	2,240	2,250	2,460	2,480
Gateshead	2,220	2,260	2,300	2,410
Gloucestershire	2,170	2,340	2,260	2,510
Greenwich	2,830	2,990	3,210	3,430
Hackney	3,310	3,860	3,160	3,480
Halton	2,110	2,130	2,560	2,630
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,020	3,260	3,220	3,360
Hampshire	2,150	2,160	2,370	2,380
Haringey	2,590	2,780	3,080	3,440
Harrow	2,490	2,540	2,890	2,990
Hartlepool	2,070	2,090	2,550	2,620
Havering	2,200	2,230	2,390	2,430
Hereford and Worcester	—	—	—	—
Herefordshire	2,130	2,150	2,330	2,390
Hertfordshire	2,100	2,140	2,370	2,410
Hillingdon	2,200	2,220	2,430	2,470
Hounslow	2,470	2,530	2,820	2,880
Isle of Wight	2,480	2,550	2,730	2,830
Isles of Scilly	2,640	2,640	2,970	3,880
Islington	2,720	3,030	3,020	3,280
Kensington and Chelsea	3,270	3,380	3,440	3,600
Pre LGR Kent	—	—	—	—
Kent	2,220	2,320	2,520	2,670
Kingston-upon-Thames	2,270	2,280	2,630	2,650
Kirklees	2,240	2,340	2,460	2,520
Knowsley	2,300	2,350	2,510	2,580
Lambeth	2,730	2,940	2,730	2,970
Pre LGR Lancashire	—	—	—	—
Lancashire	2,160	2,220	2,450	2,530
Leeds	2,000	2,040	2,600	2,660
Leicester city	2,390	2,460	2,640	2,730
Leicestershire	2,080	2,160	2,260	2,420
Lewisham	2,680	2,970	3,120	3,370
Lincolnshire	1,990	2,000	2,070	2,090
Liverpool	2,540	2,580	2,770	2,860
Luton	2,590	2,650	2,700	2,800
Manchester	2,250	2,280	2,650	2,680
Medway	2,230	2,240	2,450	2,500
Merton	2,400	2,450	2,690	2,770
Middlesbrough	2,210	2,230	2,540	2,570
Milton Keynes	2,040	2,140	2,450	2,600
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	2,260	2,350	2,570	2,670
Newham	2,460	2,590	2,930	3,090
Norfolk	1,970	2,030	2,350	2,470
North East Lincolnshire	2,330	2,480	2,590	2,740
North Lincolnshire	2,200	2,330	2,540	2,590
North Somerset	2,070	2,090	2,090	2,130
North Tyneside	1,770	1,810	2,240	2,320
North Yorkshire	2,060	2,070	2,350	2,370
Northamptonshire	2,160	2,180	2,340	2,390
Northumberland	2,200	2,260	2,450	2,560
Pre LGR Nottinghamshire	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	2,220	2,240	2,410	2,430

	2000–01		2001–02	
	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education
Oldham	2,090	2,190	2,500	2,630
Oxfordshire	2,230	2,280	2,510	2,540
Poole	1,820	1,730	2,060	2,080
Portsmouth	2,260	2,330	2,480	2,580
Reading	1,700	1,750	2,010	2,070
Redbridge	2,280	2,290	2,610	2,660
Redcar and Cleveland	2,090	2,110	2,420	2,470
Richmond-upon-Thames	2,380	2,430	2,690	2,750
Rochdale	2,100	2,270	2,420	2,570
Rotherham	2,360	2,400	2,620	2,700
Rutland	2,260	2,320	2,570	2,680
Salford	2,300	2,380	2,560	2,630
Sandwell	2,190	2,210	2,510	2,540
Sefton	2,050	2,080	2,240	2,290
Sheffield	2,260	2,410	2,500	2,66
Pre LGR Shropshire	—	—	—	—
Shropshire	1,990	2,020	2,250	2,300
Slough	2,400	2,600	2,560	2,760
Solihull	2,090	2,110	2,250	2,260
Somerset	2,140	2,240	2,360	2,510
South Gloucestershire	2,190	2,200	2,340	2,370
South Tyneside	2,160	2,220	2,580	2,660
Southampton	2,360	2,400	2,570	2,610
Southend	2,220	2,230	2,530	2,560
Southwark	2,980	3,070	3,760	3,810
St Helens	2,190	2,240	2,410	2,470
Staffordshire	2,070	2,110	2,290	2,360
Stockport	2,180	2,230	2,370	2,410
Stockton-on-Tees	2,190	2,250	2,440	2,560
Stoke	2,080	2,150	2,400	2,510
Suffolk	2,220	2,290	2,420	2,560
Sunderland	2,180	2,280	2,470	2,620
Surrey	2,160	2,270	2,380	2,430
Sutton	2,430	2,510	2,640	2,700
Swindon	2,030	2,030	2,000	2,030
Tameside	1,970	2,010	2,420	2,500
Telford and Wrekin	2,060	2,200	2,320	2,440
Thurrock	2,050	2,160	2,540	2,710
Torbay	2,080	2,090	2,260	2,290
Tower Hamlets	3,350	3,400	3,670	3,820
Trafford	2,190	2,220	2,360	2,400
Wakefield	2,100	2,160	2,450	2,490
Walsall	2,200	2,260	2,450	2,560
Waltham Forest	2,480	2,560	3,080	3,140
Wandsworth	2,900	3,100	3,220	3,480
Warrington	1,980	1,990	2,220	2,250
Warwickshire	1,990	2,020	2,190	2,240
West Berkshire	2,210	2,270	2,560	2,650
West Sussex	2,200	2,270	2,360	2,500
Westminster	3,390	3,680	3,780	4,180
Wigan	2,330	2,340	2,480	2,500
Wiltshire	1,920	1,930	2,010	2,020
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,480	2,560	2,600	2,710
Wirral	2,030	2,060	2,400	2,450
Wokingham	1,980	2,010	2,210	2,270
Wolverhampton	2,070	2,120	2,390	2,500
Worcestershire	2,060	2,090	2,320	2,370
York	1,860	1,870	2,180	2,260

	2002-03* Primary education	2003-04 Primary education	2004-05 Primary education
England	2,530	2,750	2,910
Barking and Dagenham	2,760	3,110	3,150
Barnet	2,820	3,050	3,280
Barnsley	2,550	2,680	2,910
Bath and NE Somerset	2,480	2,670	2,850
Bedfordshire	2,540	2,710	2,830
Berkshire	—	—	—
Bexley	2,390	2,630	2,810
Birmingham	2,720	2,940	3,200
Blackburn with Darwen	2,540	2,730	2,910
Blackpool	2,370	2,660	2,880
Bolton	2,410	2,620	2,760
Bournemouth	2,390	2,520	2,670
Bracknell Forest	2,390	2,580	2,730
Bradford	2,770	2,960	3,070
Brent	2,780	3,080	3,230
Brighton and Hove	2,480	2,660	2,820
Bromley	2,400	2,590	2,690
Buckinghamshire	2,350	2,600	2,740
Bury	2,220	2,460	2,660
Calderdale	2,490	2,750	2,940
Pre LGR Cambridgeshire	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	2,350	2,560	2,720
Camden	3,610	3,950	4,120
Pre LGR Cheshire	—	—	—
Cheshire	2,340	2,540	2,640
City of Bristol	2,510	2,720	2,860
City of Kingston-Upon-Hull	2,670	2,930	2,990
City of London	4,780	5,250	4,990
City of Nottingham	2,930	3,260	3,410
City of Peterborough	2,530	2,740	2,890
City of Plymouth	2,430	2,610	2,800
Cornwall	2,440	2,640	2,810
Coventry	2,630	2,870	3,010
Croydon	2,710	2,890	3,060
Cumbria	2,560	2,740	2,870
Darlington	2,380	2,640	2,710
Derby	2,430	2,730	2,940
Derbyshire	2,350	2,480	2,630
Pre LGR Devon	—	—	—
Devon	2,370	2,620	2,790
Doncaster	2,530	2,720	2,860
Dorset	2,340	2,610	2,790
Dudley	2,310	2,620	2,760
Durham	2,590	2,810	3,000
Ealing	2,830	3,210	3,330
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,430	2,580	2,760
East Sussex	2,460	2,660	2,830
Enfield	2,730	3,090	3,270
Pre LGR Essex	—	—	—
Essex	2,570	2,750	2,900
Gateshead	2,470	2,680	2,850
Gloucestershire	2,310	2,620	2,720
Greenwich	3,080	3,280	3,530
Hackney	3,280	3,810	4,010
Halton	2,580	2,740	2,910
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,260	3,600	3,800
Hampshire	2,480	2,690	2,850
Haringey	3,110	3,440	3,590
Harrow	2,720	2,950	3,100
Hartlepool	2,430	2,660	2,840
Havering	2,490	2,730	2,920
Hereford and Worcester	—	—	—
Herefordshire	2,410	2,600	2,780
Hertfordshire	2,420	2,630	2,780
Hillingdon	2,480	2,710	2,920
Hounslow	2,840	3,060	3,160
Isle of Wight	2,690	2,840	3,000
Isles of Scilly	8,030	6,620	7,280
Islington	3,150	3,590	3,760
Kensington and Chelsea	3,550	3,990	4,160
Pre LGR Kent	—	—	—
Kent	2,400	2,630	2,770
Kingston-upon-Thames	2,600	2,950	3,110
Kirklees	2,580	2,850	3,060
Knowsley	2,620	2,850	3,010

	2002-03* Primary education	2003-04 Primary education	2004-05 Primary education
Lambeth	3,520	3,880	4,110
Pre LGR Lancashire	—	—	—
Lancashire	2,520	2,780	2,900
Leeds	2,610	2,840	3,010
Leicester city	2,520	2,760	2,990
Leicestershire	2,190	2,420	2,580
Lewisham	3,230	3,590	3,800
Lincolnshire	2,260	2,450	2,600
Liverpool	2,720	2,970	3,100
Luton	2,660	2,910	3,100
Manchester	2,740	2,930	3,030
Medway	2,560	2,830	3,050
Merton	2,890	3,100	3,200
Middlesbrough	2,530	2,790	2,980
Milton Keynes	2,340	2,630	2,760
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	2,470	2,670	2,840
Newham	2,880	3,270	3,630
Norfolk	2,500	2,660	2,770
North East Lincolnshire	2,570	2,730	2,920
North Lincolnshire	2,480	2,670	2,840
North Somerset	2,270	2,490	2,650
North Tyneside	2,410	2,590	2,760
North Yorkshire	2,470	2,710	2,890
Northamptonshire	2,280	2,600	2,720
Northumberland	2,470	2,720	2,940
Pre LGR Nottinghamshire	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	2,500	2,740	2,900
Oldham	2,430	2,600	2,740
Oxfordshire	2,460	2,690	2,790
Poole	2,430	2,530	2,620
Portsmouth	2,780	2,950	3,070
Reading	2,430	2,640	2,730
Redbridge	2,500	2,700	2,830
Redcar and Cleveland	2,490	2,780	2,940
Richmond-upon-Thames	2,650	2,900	3,030
Rochdale	2,370	2,760	2,910
Rotherham	2,380	2,600	2,820
Rutland	2,540	2,840	2,950
Salford	2,480	2,830	2,920
Sandwell	2,530	2,760	3,010
Sefton	2,530	2,830	2,980
Sheffield	2,430	2,620	2,780
Pre LGR Shropshire	—	—	—
Shropshire	2,330	2,560	2,600
Slough	2,630	2,810	2,990
Solihull	2,260	2,460	2,580
Somerset	2,430	2,610	2,810
South Gloucestershire	2,330	2,460	2,610
South Tyneside	2,540	2,820	2,970
Southampton	2,640	2,940	3,170
Southend	2,590	2,730	2,860
Southwark	3,470	3,660	3,970
St Helens	2,500	2,590	2,790
Staffordshire	2,280	2,490	2,620
Stockport	2,260	2,460	2,720
Stockton-on-Tees	2,430	2,610	2,810
Stoke	2,320	2,640	2,730
Suffolk	2,520	2,740	2,920
Sunderland	2,470	2,660	2,840
Surrey	2,490	2,640	2,790
Sutton	2,470	2,640	2,870
Swindon	2,240	2,440	2,630
Tameside	2,480	2,610	2,750
Telford and Wrekin	2,290	2,430	2,660
Thurrock	2,680	2,810	2,940
Torbay	2,370	2,580	2,730
Tower Hamlets	3,850	4,150	4,300
Trafford	2,250	2,390	2,500
Wakefield	2,480	2,690	2,810
Walsall	2,430	2,610	2,770
Waltham Forest	2,910	3,230	3,390
Wandsworth	3,170	3,470	3,630
Warrington	2,270	2,510	2,630
Warwickshire	2,390	2,560	2,670
West Berkshire	2,500	2,680	2,840
West Sussex	2,430	2,610	2,780

	2002-03* Primary education	2003-04 Primary education	2004-05 Primary education
Westminster	3,430	3,620	3,800
Wigan	2,400	2,620	2,780
Wiltshire	2,340	2,550	2,670
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,550	2,710	2,870
Wirral	2,520	2,640	2,730
Wokingham	2,340	2,550	2,650
Wolverhampton	2,430	2,580	2,810
Worcestershire	2,330	2,540	2,740
York	2,390	2,560	2,680

[1] School based expenditure includes only expenditure incurred directly by the schools. This includes the pay of teachers and school-based support staff, school premises costs, books and equipment, and certain other supplies and services, less any capital items funded from recurrent spending and income from sales, fees and charges and rents and rates. This excludes the central cost of support services such as home to school transport, local authority administration and the financing of capital expenditure.

[2] 1999–2000 saw a change in data source when the data collection moved from the RO1 form collected by the 0DPM to the Section 52 form from the DfES. 2002–03 saw a further break in the time series following the introduction of Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) and the associated restructuring of the outturn tables. The change in sources is shown by an asterisk. In 2002–03 school based expenditure is taken from Section 52 Outturn Table A line 51 net current expenditure (NCE). For 2001–02 and earlier years the expenditure is calculated as lines one to 12 less lines 29, 30, 35 and 37. This differs from the old Net Institutional Expenditure (NIE) calculation only in the treatment of meals and milk which is no longer excluded and no adjustments for balances are now made. This is taken from Section 52 0utturn Table 3 for 1999–2000 to 2001–02 and from the RO1 form previously.

[3] The calculation for 2002–03 onwards is broadly similar to the calculation in previous years. However, 2001–02 and earlier years includes all premature retirement compensation (PRC) and Crombie payments, mandatory PRC payments and other indirect employee expenses. In 2001–02 this accounted for approximately £70 per pupil. From 2002–03 onwards only the schools element of these categories is included and this accounted for approximately £50 per pupil of the 2002–03 total. Also, for some LAs, expenditure that had previously been attributed to the school sectors was reported within the LA part of the form from 2002–03, though this is not quantifiable from existing sources.

[4] Pupil numbers include only those pupils attending maintained establishments within each sector and are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

[5] Local government reorganisation (LGR) took place during the mid to late 1990s and those LAs that did not exist either pre or post LGR are represented by '—' for those years.

[6] Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99.

[7] The 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Consequently LAs where there entire pupil provision were educated in GM schools will show a unit cost of zero prior to 1999–2000.

[8] Expenditure was not distinguished between the pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of Section 52 for financial year 1999–2000.

Note:

Figures are as reported by the LEA in cash terms and rounded to the nearest 10.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size was in primary schools in each local education authority in each year since 1997. [44332]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the House Library.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter dated 30 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. A. Diamond. [41837]

Jacqui Smith: I replied to the right hon. Member's letter on 9 January.

Dedicated Schools Grant

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the purpose is of the Dedicated Schools Grant; how much will be spent on this in each of the next three years; how much will be received by each local authority; and if she will make a statement. [41297]

Jacqui Smith: The data I placed in the Library to accompany my written statement of 7 December 2005 on the School Funding Settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08, set out how much Dedicated Schools Grant each authority will receive for those years. Allocations of DSG for 2008–09 will be announced after the comprehensive spending review has been completed, expected to be in summer 2007.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to improve the consistency of the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant across all local education authorities. [43022]

Jacqui Smith: My statement to the House on 7 December said that Dedicated Schools Grant for 2006–07 and 2007–08 would be distributed according to the modified method, in which each authority receives a guaranteed increase in funding per pupil of 5 per cent. with further funding to reflect Government priorities on top of that. The decision to use the modified method was taken after a consultation over the summer, and will provide stability of funding for the next two years, as the new school funding arrangements are introduced. This method of distribution for DSG will also provide substantial real terms increases for all authorities for 2006–07 and 2007–08. We also propose to review the operation of the methodology for allocating DSG for 2006–07 and 2007–08, consider what lessons can be learnt and work up proposals for the distribution of the DSG in the longer term, in time for the announcement of the first three year allocations of DSG in late 2007 following the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the direct schools grant per pupil is in *(a)* Shropshire and *(b)* England; and what assessment she has made of the adequacy of Shropshire local education authority's direct schools grant. [43023]

Jacqui Smith: The following table sets out the guaranteed level of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) per pupil for Shropshire and England for 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Dedicated Schools Grant per pupil

£

	2006–07	2007–08
Shropshire	3,338.62	3,550.86
England	3,642.98	3,888.20

The levels in the table represent increases of 6.6 per cent. and 6.4 per cent. per pupil for 2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively. Those increases will allow Shropshire authority to meet the minimum funding guarantee for all its schools, while also allowing it to put substantial resources into the Government priorities of greater personalisation of learning at Key Stage 2 and 3, more practical learning options for 14 to 16-year-old pupils, work force reform in the primary sector and the increased entitlement to early years provision from 33 to 38 weeks. The increases will also provide the authority with headroom to target on local priorities, and will ensure that it has scope to begin to respond to the conclusions of the review of deprivation funding, ensuring that schools in our most deprived communities and areas benefit from sufficient resource to meet the pressures and challenges they face.

Departmental Forms

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate she has made of the change in the number of forms issued by her Department to teachers since 2002; [41929]

(2) what assessment she has made of the changes in the attitude of the teaching profession to the amount of forms issued to teachers since 2002. [41931]

Jacqui Smith: Reducing bureaucracy is a key element of the New Relationship with Schools which aims to streamline planning and accountability requirements and rationalise communications with schools. The Department does not separately track the number of forms which are sent to schools, but we do monitor the number of paper-based documents sent directly to schools. The figures are set out in the following table.

	Primary schools	Secondary schools
2002–03	43	47
2003–04	31	38
2004–05	0	0

This year no paper-based documents have been sent to schools due to the national roll-out of the Department's online ordering system, and fortnightly email service which draws head teachers attention to key publications. These developments make it easier for schools to access the documents they need at a time and in a format which is right for them.

The Department's Stakeholder Tracking Study which took place from 2002–04 includes an assessment of attitudes of the teaching profession to levels of bureaucracy. This shows that our approach is beginning to pay dividends. In November 2004 10 per cent. of teachers thought that bureaucracy had reduced, compared to just 4 per cent. in November 2002. The percentage who thought bureaucracy had increased dropped from 71 per cent. to 56 per cent. over the same time period. The study has been published on the Departments website and is available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/index.cfm?type=5&x=47&y=14

Drinking Water

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2074W, on drinking water, whether she plans to issue guidance to schools on drinking water provision in relation to the aims of her healthy schools policy. [43896]

Jacqui Smith: In order to keep properly hydrated throughout the day, children need access to water at school. The promotion of good hydration is included within the Government's Food in Schools programme (www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/FoodInSchools), which supports the National Healthy Schools Standard (www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk). It advises that good quality drinking water should be available to pupils throughout the day and not from taps or drinking fountains located in toilet areas (http://foodinschools.datacenta.uk.net).

Drop-out Rates

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which 10 *(a)* further and *(b)* higher education institutions had the (i) highest and (ii) lowest drop-out rate in the last period for which figures are available. [39920]

Bill Rammell: For higher education institutions, the latest available information on projected non-completion rates for students starting full-time first degree courses in 2002/03 is shown in the following table. The overall non-completion rate for all English HE institutions was 13.9 per cent., compared to 15.7 per cent. in 1996/97.

Percentage of UK domiciled full-time first degree students expected neither to obtain an award nor transfer 2002/03

	Percentage
Highest non-completion rates:	
Bolton Institute of Higher Education	31.9
The University of Derby	27.0
The University of Sunderland	26.8
The University of East London	26.0
London South Bank University	25.6
Middlesex University	25.1
Thames Valley University	25.0
The University of Greenwich	25.0
London Metropolitan University	24.7
Liverpool Hope University College	23.6
Lowest non-completion rates:	
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies	0.0
University of London (institutes and activities)	0.0
The Royal Veterinary College	0.0
The University of Cambridge	1.0
Courtauld Institute of Art	1.3
The University of Oxford	2.3
Royal College of Music	2.7
University of Durham	3.7
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	3.7
The University of Bath	3.9

Source:
"Performance Indicators in Higher Education", published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). For 2002/03, the projected outcomes summarise the pattern of movements of students at institutions between 2002/03 and 2003/04 and give the outcomes that would have been expected from starters in 2002/03 if progression patterns for the years after 2003/04 were to remain unchanged. The published HESA data show the proportion of entrants who are projected to: obtain a qualification (either a first degree or another undergraduate award); transfer to another HEI; neither obtain a qualification nor transfer (i.e. fail to complete the course).

The Learning and Skills Council does not collect data on drop out rates from FE colleges. Instead they collect data on learner retention rates. The learner retention rate is the proportion of qualification aims for which all learning activities were completed. Retention rates for individual colleges can be downloaded from the LSC website (http://benchmarkingdata.lsc.gov.uk/year8/index.cfm)

The overall learner retention rate for all FE colleges combined was 85 per cent. in 20003/04, the latest year for which final data are available. For the middle 80 per cent. of colleges the retention rate lay in the range 78 per cent. to 91 per cent.

The 10 colleges with the highest retention rates were:

	Percentage
Northern College for Residential Adult Education	99
Plater College	97
Fircroft College of Adult Education	97
Ruskin College	97
King Edward VI College, Stourbridge	96
Hills Road Sixth Form College	96
Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College	96
St Dominic's Sixth Form College	96
The Sixth Form College, Farnborough	95
Pershore Group of Colleges	95

The 10 colleges with the lowest retention rates were:

	Percentage
Salisbury College	61
Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture	62
North East Surrey College of Technology	67
Widnes and Runcorn Sixth Form College	69
Newark and Sherwood College	70
Milton Keynes College	72
Leeds College of Music	72
Isle College FE Corporation	72
Thames Valley University	72
Joseph Priestley College	73

Retention rates are highly dependent on the mix of qualifications done at a college. A college that does few short courses and many full courses is likely to get a relatively low retention rate, simply because the national retention rate for short courses is relatively high and the national retention rate for full courses is relatively low.

FE College retention rates and HE institution non-completion rates are collected in different ways and are not comparable.

Dyslexia

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills at what age children can be tested for dyslexia; and what types of test are available. [43917]

Maria Eagle: There is no set age at which children can or should be tested for dyslexia. Being a spectrum disorder, dyslexia can present a range of characteristics that can vary considerably from person to person. It is therefore uncertain that universal screening to test for dyslexia, particularly in the early years, would prove sufficiently discriminating to pick out those children most at risk of persisting difficulties.

Schools and local authorities must have regard to the SEN code of practice, which gives practical advice on carrying out statutory duties to identify, assess and make suitable provision for children with SEN, including with dyslexia. The precise arrangements for any screening or assessment are, however, for local determination.

Through our primary national strategy, we have issued guidance for teachers, which has a specific focus on dyslexia. Professional development materials, "Learning and teaching for children with dyslexia", include a checklist of early indicators for potential dyslexia. "Playing with sounds", deals with the early teaching of phonics and includes guidance on early identification and support for children who demonstrate the phonological difficulties often associated with dyslexia.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children who were removed or excluded from their school because of behavioural problems were *(a)* dyslexic and *(b)* subsequently diagnosed as dyslexic in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [43918]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not collected centrally. However the number of pupils permanently excluded with all types of special educational needs is shown in the table.

Maintained primary, secondary and all special schools [1,2]—number of permanent exclusions by special educational needs (SEN)—England, 2003/04 (Estimates) [3]

	Permanent exclusions			*Fixed period exclusions*		
	Number of exclusions	*Percentage of exclusions[4]*	*Percentage of school population[5]*	*Number of exclusions*	*Percentage of exclusions[4]*	*Percentage of school population[5]*
Pupils with statements of SEN	1,040	11	0.44	39,790	12	17.1
Pupils with SEN without statements	5,240	53	0.46	133,290	39	11.7
Pupils with no SEN	3,600	36	0.06	171,420	50	2.7
All pupils [6]	9,880	100	0.13	344,510	100	4.5

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] For permanent exclusions includes both maintained and non-maintained special schools. For fixed period exclusions excludes non-maintained special schools.
[3] Figures relating to permanent exclusions are estimates based on incomplete pupil level data.

[4] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of exclusions.
[5] The number of exclusions by stage of SEN expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils with same stage of SEN. Excludes dually registered pupils.
[6] There was one permanent exclusion and 12 fixed period exclusions for which stage of SEN was not known—these were included in total for 'all pupils' only.
Source:
Annual Schools Census and Termly Exclusions Survey

Education Expenditure

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of the average total cost of Government education spending between the ages of 0 and 21 for a child from *(a)* the highest and *(b)* the lowest (i) income decile and (ii) socio-economic class; and if she will make a statement. [41446]

Jacqui Smith: Estimates are not available on the average total cost of Government education spending between the ages of 0 and 21 by each parental income decile and each socio-economic class.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of the distribution of total education spending between pupils from *(a)* each income decile of parents, *(b)* each income quintile of parents and *(c)* each socio-economic group of parents; and if she will make a statement. [41447]

Jacqui Smith: Estimates of the distribution of total education spending on pupils by parental income decile, income quintile and socio-economic group are not available. Public education spending is not collated by parental background. Figures on private spending on education are not collated by the Department.

There are likely to be some differences in both public and private spending on education for pupils from different family backgrounds. Such differences will be influenced by, for example, Government education policies targeted at those from poorer backgrounds (such as the education maintenance allowance and targeted student support for higher education), how parental income affects private spending; and differences in post-16 education choices.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of per capita public spending on education for each age cohort in England from age three to age 21 years; and if she will make a statement. [41456]

Jacqui Smith: Data on education spending are not collated by age or cohort. The latest and nearest available estimates relate to annual unit funding in each education sector—schools, FE and HE—published in the DfES' Departmental Report for 2005 (Cm 6522). The following table provides estimates of planned unit funding in 2005–06 per school pupil and full-time equivalent (FTE) students in further and higher education: figures in cash terms rounded to nearest £10.

Planned funding per school pupil and FTE student in FE and HE, 2005–06

	£ 2005–06
Funding per school pupil (ages three to 19)	4,250[1]
Assumed[2] funding per FTE student in FE for participation (excluding capital costs)	4,840[3]
Funding per planned FTE student in HE	4,610[4]

[1] Figure does not include capital and PFI funding. Estimate consistent with Education Standard Spending/Education Funding Formula Spending plus all schools-related revenue grants. Pension transfers are included. Based on FTEs aged three to 19 in maintained schools in England, including three-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational establishments.
[2] This is an assumed estimate as it is based on assumptions about how much of the total amount of money going to the Learning and Skills Council is spent on further education.
[3] Figure relates to all FE spending, including for adult participants. Full-time equivalent (FTE) students funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in either further education sector colleges or in external institutions, specialist designated institutions, dance and drama institutions and higher education institutions.
[4] Funding relates to all DfES revenue grants to support HE in HE institutions and FE colleges in England and excludes expenditure on tuition fees and student maintenance costs. Figure based on planned.

Education Funding (Shropshire)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effect of the level of direct support grant allocated to Shropshire's schools on their ability to remain within their budget for 2004–05. [44177]

Jacqui Smith: The new Dedicated Schools Grant will not be introduced until April 2006 but under the current revenue funding system for schools, Shropshire received £3,780 per pupil in 2004–05. This figure includes funding via Education Formula Spending Share and revenue grants allocated at an LEA level.

At the end of the financial year 2004–05, the data indicate that the deficit balances held by maintained schools in Shropshire amounted in total to approximately £677,675 and that total surplus balances totalled approximately £5,554,614; these figures are derived from the outturn statements prepared by local education authorities under section 52 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Education White Paper

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many representations her Department has received *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* opposed to the proposals in the recent White Paper on Schools. [44483]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has received at least 211 representations from a wide range of organisations, Members of Parliament and members of the public which directly refer to the White Paper. These representations contain a variety of opinions both supporting certain proposals within the context of the White Paper and opposing elements of it.

Enterprise and Entrepreneurism Training

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to expand the teaching of enterprise and entrepreneurism in schools in Hartlepool; and if she will make a statement. [42983]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has allocated £60 million a year for the three academic years from September 2005 to support a new focus on enterprise education in all secondary schools in England. St. Hild's Church of England School in Hartlepool was among the 700 schools which participated in our Enterprise Education Pathfinder programme that looked at various ways of delivering enterprise education and helped to produce our national guidance on enterprise education. The Guidance is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/enterpriseeducation to support other schools in developing and improving their own practice.

In addition, statutory Citizenship education in secondary schools and the non-statutory framework for Personal, Social and Health Education also provide opportunities to develop pupils' enterprise capability—including personal financial capability as well as business understanding, innovation, creativity, risk-management and risk-taking.

First Aid

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of basic instruction in first aid is required to be given to pupils in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools; and if she will make a statement. [43922]

Jacqui Smith: There is scope in the Personal Social and Health Education framework for schools to explore safety and emergency procedures as part of the curriculum. At Key Stages 2 and 3, the framework suggests pupils should be taught basic emergency aid procedures and where to get help and support. At Key Stage 4 pupils should be taught to develop skills to cope with emergency situations that require basic aid procedures, including resuscitation techniques.

Examinations (Cheating)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will list cases in the last three years in which the *(a)* regulatory authorities and *(b)* qualification awarding bodies have determined there was malpractice, cheating or assisting in cheating in examinations or coursework leading to a qualification; which educational establishment was involved in each case; and what sanction was applied in each case; [42682]

(2) if she will list the educational establishments adjudged to have been complicit in cheating or assisting in cheating in examinations or coursework leading to a qualification in the last five years. [43525]

Jacqui Smith: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, regulator for qualifications in England, published for the first time in March 2005 total figures for the number of GCSE and A level confirmed malpractice cases dealt with by AQA, Edexcel, and OCR during the summer 2004 exams series. These figures are as follows:

	Candidate malpractice cases
AQA	1,608
Edexcel	847
OCR	1,118

Note:
These figures are for the number of cases of candidate malpractice rather than the number of candidates.

The QCA are intending to publish in late March 2006, similar data at a greater level of detail, broken down by category of offence, for the summer 2005 exams series. Those figures are still being verified.

Further details of the cases set out aforementioned are not readily available and could be obtained from the awarding bodies only at disproportionate cost.

Foundation Schools

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2736W, on foundation schools, when she expects this analysis to be completed. [42191]

Jacqui Smith: My Department is continuing its analysis of this issue. We will publish our findings as soon as the work is complete.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many applications were made for foundation school status in each year since September 1999; and how many of these applications were granted. [42287]

Jacqui Smith: The governing body of a school wishing to change category to foundation must consult and publish statutory proposals. Since August 2005, the governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled secondary schools have been able to decide their own proposals to change category to foundation. Otherwise, proposals are decided by the School Organisation Committee or Schools Adjudicator.

The following table sets out the numbers of statutory proposals published to change the category of existing schools to foundation, together with the decisions, since 2001.

	Primary			*Secondary*			
Publication year	*Approved*	*Rejected*	*Awaiting Decision*	*Approved*	*Rejected*	*Awaiting Decision*	*Total*
2001	6	1	—	9	—	—	16
2002	4	—	—	7	1	—	12
2003	3	—	—	3	—	—	6
2004	1	—	—	2	1	—	4
2005	1	—	—	6	—	4	11
2006	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Totals	15	1	—	27	2	6	51

Following the introduction of the new schools framework in September 1999, schools were prohibited from publishing proposals to change category for one year (except where the governing body of a voluntary aided school were unable to meet their financial obligations). No proposals were published in 2000 after the end of this embargo.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools had foundation school status in each year since 1999. [42288]

Jacqui Smith: The following table details the numbers of primary and secondary foundation schools each year since 1999:

	Primary	*Secondary*	*Total*
1999	359	500	859
2000	359	500	859
2001	357	497	854
2002	362	501	863
2003	365	510	875
2004	364	514	878
2005	366	513	879

The 1999 figures reflect the position at 1 September 1999 following the introduction of the new schools framework, and subsequent figures have been derived from annual schools census returns made by schools to the Department in January each year.

Free School Meals

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in each school in Bristol, East constituency receive free school meals. [42976]

Jacqui Smith: Two sets of figures relating to the number and proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are given here. The first includes all pupils in the school, regardless of their age. The second includes full-time pupils aged up to (and including) 15 and part-time pupils aged 5 to 15 (inclusive). This second coverage is as used in the Pupil Achievement Tracker and Ofsted's PANDA reports and provides consistent school level comparisons.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, pupil referral units and academies:school meal arrangements—as at January 2005, Bristol, East parliamentary constituency

				All pupils[1]			
UIN	*Establishment number*	*Establishment name*	*Number on roll*	*Number of pupils taking free school meals*[3]	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
108893	1002	St. Philips Marsh Nursery School	123	7	5.7	7	5.7
108898	1007	Rosemary Nursery School	58	23	39.7	26	44.8
108903	1013	Spring Woods Nursery School	65	18	27.7	20	30.8
108904	1014	Redcliffe Early Years Centre	71	12	16.9	17	23.9
108905	1015	The Limes Nursery School	112	0	0.0	0	0.0
108907	1017	Cashmore Nursery School	33	9	27.3	12	36.4
133160	1102	St. Matthias Park Pupil Referral Service	33	8	24.2	13	39.4
108909	2000	Air Balloon Hill Junior School	344	47	13.7	71	20.6
108915	2009	Bannerman Road Primary School	285	122	42.8	146	51.2
131500	2017	Waycroft Primary School	456	26	5.7	37	8.1
108919	2018	Broomhill Junior School	227	30	13.2	30	13.2
108955	2068	St. Anne's Junior School	156	20	12.8	25	16.0
108956	2069	St. Anne's Infant School	203	19	9.4	20	9.9
108957	2070	St. Anne's Park Primary School	147	48	32.7	58	39.5
108965	2080	Summerhill Junior School	340	43	12.6	69	20.3
108966	2081	Summerhill Infant School	257	38	14.6	59	23.0
108967	2083	Two Mile Hill Junior School	282	33	11.7	48	17.0
108968	2084	Two Mile Hill Infant School	167	19	10.2	23	12.3
108974	2097	Holymead Junior School	335	31	9.3	38	11.3
108975	2098	Holymead Infant School	247	17	6.9	17	6.9
108978	2103	West Town Lane Junior School	238	21	8.8	27	11.3
108979	2104	West Town Lane Infant School	177	9	5.1	12	6.6
108983	2115	Broomhill Infant School	217	20	9.2	27	12.4
108985	2124	Burnbush Primary School	168	31	18.5	33	19.6
108993	2142	Stockwood Green Primary School	92	19	20.7	19	20.7
108994	2143	Air Balloon Hill Infant School	253	36	14.2	44	17.4
108995	2145	Barton Hill Primary School	176	89	50.6	112	63.6
109110	2299	Hannah More Primary School	161	85	52.6	102	63.4
109131	2327	May Park Primary School	413	96	23.2	149	36.1
109132	2328	Whitehall Primary School	463	107	23.1	158	34.1
109137	2336	Millpond Primary School	206	106	51.5	111	53.9
131993	2342	Barton Hill Nursery and Infant School	114	44	38.6	55	48.2
131525	3301	Easton Church of England Primary School	346	176	50.9	206	59.5
109248	3408	St. Nicholas of Tolentine Catholic Primary School	149	53	35.6	59	39.6
109250	3411	St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School	202	16	7.9	17	8.4
109280	4032	Brislington Enterprise College	1,391	178	12.8	201	14.5

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, pupil referral units and academies: school meal arrangements—as at January 2005, Bristol, East parliamentary constituency

			All pupils[1]				
UIN	*Establishment number*	*Establishment name*	*Number on roll*	*Number of pupils taking free school meals*[3]	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
109287	4045	Whitefield Fishponds Community School	938	167	17.8	201	21.4
109327	4603	St. Mary Redcliffe and Temple School	1,365	42	3.1	48	3.5
134221	6905	The City Academy Bristol	1,095	388	35.4	409	37.4

				Pupil Achievement Tracker[2]	
	Establishment number	*Establishment name*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
108893	1002	St. Philips Marsh Nursery School	58	7	12.1
108898	1007	Rosemary Nursery School	39	24	61.5
108903	1013	Spring Woods Nursery School	43	20	46.5
108904	1014	Redcliffe Early Years Centre	39	17	43.6
108905	1015	The Limes Nursery School	n/a	n/a	n/a
108907	1017	Cashmore Nursery School	24	12	50.0
133160	1102	St. Matthias Park Pupil Referral Service	33	13	39.4
108909	2000	Air Balloon Hill Junior School	344	71	20.6
108915	2009	Bannerman Road Primary School	285	146	51.2
131500	2017	Waycroft Primary School	356	34	9.6
108919	2018	Broomhill Junior School	227	30	13.2
108955	2068	St. Anne's Junior School	156	25	16.0
108956	2069	St. Anne's Infant School	165	20	12.1
108957	2070	St. Anne's Park Primary School	135	58	43.0
108965	2080	Summerhill Junior School	340	69	20.3
108966	2081	Summerhill Infant School	257	59	23.0
108967	2083	Two Mile Hill Junior School	282	48	17.0
108968	2084	Two Mile Hill Infant School	187	23	12.3
108974	2097	Holymead Junior School	335	38	11.3
108975	2098	Holymead Infant School	247	17	6.9
108978	2103	West Town Lane Junior School	238	27	11.3
108979	2104	West Town Lane Infant School	177	12	6.8
108983	2115	Broomhill Infant School	167	27	16.2
108985	2124	Burnbush Primary School	157	32	20.4
108993	2142	Stockwood Green Primary School	92	19	20.7
108994	2143	Air Balloon Hill Infant School	253	44	17.4
108995	2145	Barton Hill Primary School	176	112	63.6
109110	2299	Hannah More Primary School	161	102	63.4
109131	2327	May Park Primary School	393	147	37.4
109132	2328	Whitehall Primary School	463	158	34.1
109137	2336	Millpond Primary School	206	111	53.9
131993	2342	Barton Hill Nursery and Infant School	107	55	51.4
131525	3301	Easton Church of England Primary School	346	206	59.5
109248	3408	St. Nicholas of Tolentine Catholic Primary School	149	59	39.6
109250	3411	St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School	202	17	8.4
109280	4032	Brislington Enterprise College	1,283	194	15.1
109287	4045	Whitefield Fishponds Community School	936	200	21.4
109327	4603	St. Mary Redcliffe and Temple School	1,021	46	4.5
134221	6905	The City Academy Bristol	906	373	41.2

n/a = not applicable

[1] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration of all ages.

[2] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration who are full-time and aged 0 to 15 (inclusive) and those who are part-time and aged 5 to 15 (inclusive).

[3] Number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census in January.

Source:

Annual Schools Census

Free School Milk

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schoolchildren who would qualify for free school milk if they lived in a local authority area which participates in the School Milk Subsidy Scheme do not receive free school milk. [43871]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Fruit

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injuries have been caused in schools by fruit in each of the last 10 years. [43363]

Jacqui Smith: The Government do not collect such data.

Good Practice

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 27 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 1778W, on good practice, what information she has received from Ofsted on the extent to which faith schools have adopted the good practice published on www.teachernet.gov.uk/faithschools; and what assessment she has made of the impact of the adoption of the good practice on outcomes in terms of educational achievement. [41851]

Jacqui Smith: Ofsted do not assess the extent to which faith schools have adopted the good practice published on www.teachernet.gov.uk/faith schools. It is not part of the inspection framework. Our primary aim in publishing the examples of good practice is to show faith schools ways in which they can be inclusive and contribute to community cohesion. We have not made any assessment of the impact on pupils' achievement in those faith schools that have adopted the good practice.

Graduate Tax

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the merits of a graduate tax. [43074]

Bill Rammell: The issue of a graduate tax was discussed in a departmental paper of 8 December 2003, prior to the debates on the Higher Education Bill in 2004 when the Government legislated to introduce variable fees rather than a graduate tax. The main reasons were because variable fees provide a guaranteed source of additional income for HE institutions independent of Government; and generate a higher level of revenue for universities with lower short and medium term public expenditure implications. Graduates will also know exactly what their higher education will cost them at the outset. We have made no further assessment since then. The paper is available on our website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/whitepaperconsultation/index.cfm

Greenhouse Gases

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to reduce its emission of greenhouse gases. [43082]

Maria Eagle: The Department is taking the following steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

An internal review of energy usage and procedures to manage the estate is under way.

We have registered with the Carbon Trust who have confirmed we have qualified for an energy audit on three of our five headquarters buildings and to receive advice on a full carbon management programme.

Home Education

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents *(a)* in England, *(b)* in each region and *(c)* in each local education authority are educating their children at home. [42067]

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents in Tamworth constituency are educating their children at home. [43469]

Jacqui Smith: Parents may exercise their right to educate their children at home on a temporary or permanent basis. We do not collect information about the numbers of children whose parents provide education at home, and it would be impractical to do so given the transient nature of some of this type of provision.

Indoor Airborne Chemicals

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to issue guidelines to schools on acceptable *(a)* levels and *(b)* maximum concentrations of indoor airborne chemicals for children aged 4 to 11 years. [43192]

Jacqui Smith: DfES will shortly be issuing a new Building Bulletin 101, "Ventilation of School Buildings", see www.teachernet.gov.uk/iaq. This document will give the standards on ventilation for new school buildings for compliance with Approved Document F on Ventilation of the Building Regulations. Its performance standards are based on maximum concentrations of a number of pollutants including relative humidity, carbon monoxide, total volatile organic compounds, nitrogen dioxide and ozone and relate these back to a maximum carbon dioxide concentration and minimum ventilation rate. The new standards will come into force on 1 April 2006 at the same time as the new Approved Document F of the Building Regulations. The new standards are broadly in line with the requirements for minimum ventilation rates for all schools which are laid down in the Education (School Premises) Regulations SI No.2 1999, (http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1999/19990002.htm)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to educate primary school teachers about the possible risks of indoor airborne chemicals. [43193]

Jacqui Smith: "Qualifying to teach" sets out the professional standards for qualified teachers. All primary teachers are trained to teach science. The standards include planning and delivering lessons that are safe (Standard 3.1.3 and 3.3.8) and working within the legal and other frameworks that apply to teachers (Standard 1.8). These frameworks include health and safety legislation and advice.

List 99

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) which categories of *(a)* ban and *(b)* partial ban from working in schools can be applied to people included on List 99; [43656]

(2) what categories of *(a)* ban and *(b)* partial ban from working in schools can be applied to people included on List 99. [43771]

Ruth Kelly: My statement, and the accompanying report, of 19 January set out clearly the Government's analysis of, and response to, issues concerning child protection and List 99, together with the action we are currently taking.

Ministerial Meetings

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements she has for regular meetings with the Education Minister in the National Assembly for Wales to discuss education issues and share best practice. [44486]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills continues to work closely with colleagues in each of the devolved Administrations. We are committed to the principle of good communication with each other, in accordance with the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding.

National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many members of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth there are in each maintained secondary school in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire. [42674]

Jacqui Smith: This information is shown in the following table. Membership of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) is available to pupils aged 11–19 in the top 5 per cent. nationally.

School name	*NAGTY Members*
North East Lincolnshire	
Havelock School	0
Healing School	0
Hereford Technology School	46
Humberston Comprehensive School	0
Matthew Humberstone Church of England School	34
St. Mary's Catholic School	0
The Immingham School	0
The Lindsey School and Community Arts College	0
The Western Technology School	0
Tollbar Business and Enterprise College	0
Whitgift School	26
Total NAGTY Membership	106
North Lincolnshire	
Baysgarth School	22
Brumby Engineering College	32
Foxhills Technology College	1
Frederick Gough School	34
High Ridge School	5
Huntcliff School	32
North Axholme School	1
Sir John Nelthorpe School	1
South Axholme Community School	12
South Leys Business and Enterprise College	0
St. Bede's Catholic School	56
Thomas Sumpter School	0
Vale of Ancholme Technology College	51
Winterton Comprehensive School	0
Total NAGTY Membership	247
Total NAGTY Membership for North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire	353

Neighbourhood Nurseries

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time places were available at neighbourhood nurseries in each year for which figures are available;[43933]

(2) how many neighbourhood nurseries have been established in disadvantaged areas in each year for which figures are available. [43936]

Beverley Hughes: The Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative was launched in 2001 to create 45,000 new full-time child care and early education places for children aged 0 to five in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged areas in England by March 2004. The full target of 45,000 places in 1,279 neighbourhood nurseries was achieved by August 2004. By the end of 2005, over 49,000 places across over 1,380 neighbourhood nursery projects had been delivered. These places have been developed through a diverse range of local and national providers. Some are 'new-build' neighbourhood nurseries, some have been created in refurbished premises and some by expanding on existing provision in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors. A breakdown of the number of full-time places opened and neighbourhood nurseries established in each year since 2001 is in the following table. Information on the number of part-time places at neighbourhood nurseries is not available.

	Full-time places created	*Number of: Nurseries established*[1]
2001	190	7
2002	2,495	92
2003	10,886	348
2004	34,231	900
2005	1,296	33

[1] Figures include new build and refurbished premises.

Overseas Trained Teacher Programme

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many teachers were working in schools under the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme in each year since 1997–98; and if she will make a statement; [43607]

(2) what the country of origin is of staff placed under the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme. [43608]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The earliest available data for the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme (OTTP) are 2000:

	Number of teachers working under the OTTP in England
2000/01	313
2001/02	791
2002/03	831
2003/04	1,213
2004/05	1,544
2005/06	[1]468

[1] To date.

Overseas trained teachers are well qualified and greatly valued, making an important contribution to schools in England. The OTTP enables them to acquire Qualified Teacher Status so they can work permanently in English schools.

A sample of 500 overseas trained teachers on programmes between April and December 2003 showed that 165 (33 per cent.) were from South Africa, 78 (16 per cent.) from Australia, 40 (8 per cent.) from New Zealand and Canada, 26 (5 per cent.) from USA, 25 (5 per cent.) from Jamaica, 23 (5 per cent.) from India. Small numbers (less than 1 per cent.) were from other

countries including Ghana (14), Nigeria (9), Kenya (5), Zimbabwe (4), Brazil (3), Sierra Leone (3), Romania (3) and Poland (3). Overall, 435 (87 per cent.) of the sample were from the Commonwealth.

Parenting Fund

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* public, *(b)* private and *(c)* voluntary sector organisations have received payments from the Parenting Fund in each year for which figures are available; and how much each sector received. [43950]

Beverley Hughes: The Parenting Fund was established to support voluntary and community organisations in supporting parents and families. The fund is administered by the National Family and Parenting Institute which has contracted with PricewaterhouseCoopers to ensure the efficient and effective administration of the fund. The contract with PwC was worth £520,000 for the period 2004 to 2006. The remainder of the Parenting Fund has been allocated wholly to voluntary sector organisations. A list of the organisations benefiting from the fund in the period 2004 to 2006 is as follows:

ADAPT
Advisory Centre for Education
African Community Partnership
African Families Support Services
After Adoption
Alcohol Concern
Allens Croft Project
aMAZE
Asi
Asperger Norfolk
Barnardos
Beyond the Horizon (Spurgeon's Child Care)
Blackburn with Darwen Education Development Trust
British Red Cross Family Support Centre
Broadreach House
Camden Women's Aid
Centre for African Development
Child Action Northwest
Children North East
Children's Legal Centre
Chinese Health Information Centre
Chrysalis Manchester
Contact a Family
ContinYou
Coram Family
Croydon Welcare
Deaf Education through Listening and
Disabled Parents Network
Donor Conception Network
East Lancashire Deaf Society
Families at Bowthorpe
Family Group Conference Service
Family Matters Institute (FMI)
Family Rights Group
Family Welfare Association (FWA)
Fathers Direct
FPA (Family Planning Association)
FSU
FSU Liverpool
FSU Manchester
Great Yarmouth Community Trust
Greenwich Women's Centre
Groundwork Thames Valley
Hartcliffe and Withywood Ventures
Henshaw's Society for Blind People
Home-Start
Home-Start Croydon
Home-Start Leeds
Home-Start Leicester
Home-Start Teeside
Home-Start West Cornwall
I CAN
James Wolfe Parents' Association (JWPA)
KIDS Yorkshire and the Humber
Lancashire Council of Mosques
Leeds Animation Workshop
Leeway Woman's Aid
Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living
Life Education Centres West Midlands
Liverpool ADHD Project
Mencap
Mind in Croydon
NACRO
National Association of Child Contact Centres
National Children's Bureau
National Council of One Parent Families
National Family and Parenting Institute
National Library for the Blind
National Youth Advocacy Service
NCH
NCVCCO
Newcastle upon Tyne YMCA
Norfolk and Norwich Families' House
Nottingham Regional Society for Autism
One Parent Families
One Plus One
PACE
Parentalk
Parenting Education and Support Forum (Parenting UK)
Parentline Plus
Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP)
Positive Parenting Publications and Programmes
Positive Steps
Post-Adoption Centre
Promoting Effective Parenting
Rainer—Slough Youth Support Service
Refugee Action
REU
Sargent Cancer Care for Children
Scope
Single Parent Action Network

SOVA
Speke Garston Domestic Violence Project
Stepping Stones
Sure Start Burton
The Anaphylaxis Campaign
The Asian Health Agency
The Children's Society
The Family Centre
The Family Nurturing Network
The Fostering Network
The Laura Centre
The National Childbirth Trust
The National Deaf Children's Society
The National Pyramid Trust
The nia project
The Parenting Education and Support Forum
The Place2Be
The Women's Centre for Blackburn and District
Trust for the Study of Adolescence
Turning Point
Turning Point Women's Centre Ltd.
Twins and Multiple Births Association
Winston's Wish—for bereaved children
YMCA England
Yorkshire Band of Hope Union (YBHU)
Young Minds
Youth Access
YWCA Bristol Young Women's Centre
YWCA England and Wales

For 2005 to 2007, the Policy Research Bureau in association with the Tavistock Institute will receive £600,000 to conduct an evaluation of the Parenting Fund and the Fundholder model.

PGCE

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Post Graduate Certificate in Education places were provided for classics in this academic year; and how many she expects to be provided in the *(a)* 2006/07 and *(b)* 2007/08 academic years. [44025]

Jacqui Smith: 29 trainees were recruited onto secondary postgraduate classics initial teacher training courses in 2005/06. The number of classics places allocated to providers for 2006/07 is 29 and for 2007/08 27.

Pupil Funding

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* mean, *(b)* median and *(c)* mode annual funding per pupil is for each local education authority in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [43915]

Jacqui Smith: The data for mean and median values for Dedicated Schools Grant per pupil across all local authorities are set out in the following table for 2006–07 and 2007–08. There is no modal value for DSG per pupil in either of those years, since each authority has a unique value of DSG per pupil.

£

	2006–07	2007–08
Mean DSG per pupil	3,642.98	3,888.20
Median DSG per pupil	3,578.40	3,822.00

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total funding per pupil in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms is for each local education authority in England for 2005–06, calculated on the basis used for the figures provided to the hon. Member for Mid-Worcestershire on 9 November 2004; what the figures are planned to be in (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08; and what the national average is for each year. [42022]

Jacqui Smith: Total funding per pupil for each local education authority in 2005–06 in cash terms is set out in Table 1. Real terms figures are only used when making comparisons between one year and another.

The funding methodology for schools and other local authority services is changing from 2006–07, so the Department is working on developing a new series to show funding on the new basis.

Table 1: Total funding per pupil aged 3–19, in cash terms, 2005–06

		2005–06 (£)
301	Barking and Dagenham	4,830
302	Barnet	4,770
370	Barnsley	4,200
800	Bath and North East Somerset	3,930
820	Bedfordshire	4,140
303	Bexley	4,260
330	Birmingham	4,750
889	Blackburn with Darwen	4,610
890	Blackpool	4,230
350	Bolton	4,220
837	Bournemouth	3,960
867	Bracknell Forest	4,230
380	Bradford	4,530
304	Brent	5,440
846	Brighton and Hove	4,330
801	Bristol, City of	4,390
305	Bromley	4,350
825	Buckinghamshire	4,200
351	Bury	4,030
381	Calderdale	4,220
873	Cambridgeshire	4,000
202	Camden	6,280
875	Cheshire	3,930
908	Cornwall	4,060
331	Coventry	4,390
306	Croydon	4,610
909	Cumbria	4,140
841	Darlington	4,150
831	Derby	4,230
830	Derbyshire	3,930
878	Devon	4,000
371	Doncaster	4,330
835	Dorset	3,940
332	Dudley	3,990
840	Durham	4,240
307	Ealing	5,240
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	3,930
845	East Sussex	4,210
308	Enfield	4,800
881	Essex	4,160
390	Gateshead	4,340
916	Gloucestershire	3,950
203	Greenwich	5,820
204	Hackney	6,650

Table 1: Total funding per pupil aged 3–19, in cash terms, 2005–06

		2005–06 (£)
876	Halton	4,560
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	6,180
850	Hampshire	3,920
309	Haringey	5,580
310	Harrow	4,650
805	Hartlepool	4,430
311	Havering	4,250
884	Herefordshire	4,150
919	Hertfordshire	4,110
312	Hillingdon	4,650
313	Hounslow	5,070
921	Isle of Wight	4,310
206	Islington	6,400
207	Kensington and Chelsea	6,380
886	Kent	4,190
810	Kingston upon Hull, City of	4,450
314	Kingston upon Thames	4,470
382	Kirklees	4,250
340	Knowsley	4,750
208	Lambeth	6,410
888	Lancashire	4,080
383	Leeds	4,210
856	Leicester	4,570
855	Leicestershire	3,770
209	Lewisham	6,020
925	Lincolnshire	4,100
341	Liverpool	4,760
821	Luton	4,590
352	Manchester	4,970
887	Medway	4,100
315	Merton	4,720
806	Middlesbrough	4,780
826	Milton Keynes	4,360
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	4,550
316	Newham	5,470
926	Norfolk	4,090
812	North East Lincolnshire	4,220
813	North Lincolnshire	4,140
802	North Somerset	3,970
392	North Tyneside	4,150
815	North Yorkshire	4,030
928	Northamptonshire	4,000
929	Northumberland	4,190
892	Nottingham	4,830
891	Nottinghamshire	3,920
353	Oldham	4,420
931	Oxfordshire	4,140
874	Peterborough	4,420
879	Plymouth	4,120
836	Poole	3,860
851	Portsmouth	4,260
870	Reading	4,630
317	Redbridge	4,500
807	Redcar and Cleveland	4,330
318	Richmond upon Thames	4,230
354	Rochdale	4,500
372	Rotherham	4,230
857	Rutland	4,050
355	Salford	4,490
333	Sandwell	4,470
343	Sefton	4,240
373	Sheffield	4,250
893	Shropshire	4,040
871	Slough	4,980
334	Solihull	3,880
933	Somerset	3,950
803	South Gloucestershire	3,830
393	South Tyneside	4,440
852	Southampton	4,400
882	Southend-on-Sea	4,290
210	Southwark	6,190
342	St. Helens	4,270

Table 1: Total funding per pupil aged 3–19, in cash terms, 2005–06

		2005–06 (£)
860	Staffordshire	3,850
356	Stockport	3,850
808	Stockton-on-Tees	4,250
861	Stoke-on-Trent	4,400
935	Suffolk	3,940
394	Sunderland	4,330
936	Surrey	4,130
319	Sutton	4,430
866	Swindon	3,970
357	Tameside	4,130
894	Telford and Wrekin	4,120
883	Thurrock	4,360
880	Torbay	4,040
211	Tower Hamlets	6,740
358	Trafford	4,000
384	Wakefield	4,100
335	Walsall	4,280
320	Waltham Forest	5,120
212	Wandsworth	5,710
877	Warrington	3,810
937	Warwickshire	3,970
869	West Berkshire	4,300
938	West Sussex	4,030
213	Westminster	6,040
359	Wigan	4,030
865	Wiltshire	3,980
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	4,330
344	Wirral	4,310
872	Wokingham	4,130
336	Wolverhampton	4,500
885	Worcestershire	3,880
816	York	3,880
	England	4,310

Notes:

1. Price Base: Cash.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks from the education formula spending (EFS) settlement and include the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude education maintenance allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
5. Rounding: Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
6. Status: 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Respect Action Plan

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional funds will be made available to Kent local education authority to implement the Government's new Respect Action Plan to provide provision for those who are out of school. [43282]

Jacqui Smith: We are making additional funds totalling £16 million per year available to schools and local authorities from September 2007 for them to provide suitable full-time education to excluded pupils from the sixth day of their exclusion. We are developing a formula for allocating this to local authorities and will be consulting on this with key stakeholders during the course of this year. It will be for local authorities to decide how much to allocate to schools.

School Buildings

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the levels of capital expenditure on *(a)* new, *(b)* improvements to and *(c)* repairs to school buildings in England were in each year since 1997. [44484]

Jacqui Smith: The information is as follows.

1. Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007–08.

2. Capital allocations made to local authorities and schools since 1997 are set out in the following table:

	£ billion
1997–98	0.5
1996–97	0.6
1997–98	1.3
1999–2000	1.6
2000–01	2.5
2001–02	2.5
2002–03	3.3
2003–04	4.2
2004–05	4.9
2005–06	5.5

3. We expect local authorities and schools to take decisions on allocating funds between new buildings, improvements and repairs in accordance with local asset management plans. Accordingly, records of these categories of capital expenditures are not held centrally.

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support is provided to church schools within the state sector in England for *(a)* repairs and improvements to school buildings and *(b)* new school buildings and facilities. [44485]

Jacqui Smith: Church schools—those with a religious character—are funded in the same way as other maintained schools. Those that are Foundation or Voluntary Controlled receive funding for normal repairs and maintenance through their local authorities. They also receive capital funding through a combination of formulaic and targeted programmes. The latter includes Building Schools for the Future, our programme to renew or refurbish all secondary schools over a 15-year period. We will shortly be consulting on a programme of investment in primary schools. Those church schools that are Voluntary Aided are funded in a similar way except that they must usually contribute 10 per cent. towards the cost of capital work, and they receive their capital funding direct from the Department for Education and Skills. Local authorities are responsible for capital work to playing fields at Aided schools. Details of our programmes are published on our website at www.teachernet.gov.uk/schoolscapital.

Capital investment in buildings for all schools in the current spending review period is £5.5 billion in 2005–06, rising to £6.3 billion by 2007–08. It is not possible to say how much of this is allocated to schools with a religious character.

School Clubs

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools had *(a)* after school clubs and *(b)* breakfast clubs in each year for which figures are available. [43948]

Jacqui Smith: Precise information is not available. However, my Department recently commissioned MORI to undertake a survey of study support (out of school hours learning) activities in England. This showed that 90 per cent. of primary schools and 98 per cent. of secondary schools offer some study support. Of those, 96 per cent. of primary schools and 97 per cent. of secondary schools provided after school activities, with breakfast clubs provided by 30 per cent. of primary and 49 per cent. of secondary. All local authorities receive funding from my Department to provide study support, as part of the School Development Grant.

School Finance

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are being taken to help schools who face financial problems due to unexpected falling rolls. [43297]

Jacqui Smith: With the introduction of a new funding methodology for schools from 2006–07, all local authorities will be required to use a single pupil count, based on numbers in January before the financial year, in the calculation of school budget shares. Using the single pupil count will be a significant contribution to improved certainty of funding and will offer protection to schools which suffer unexpected falling rolls during the year.

Local authorities are currently able to include factors in their local funding formulae to provide additional funding where schools have a high turnover of pupils during the year; where they have higher than average salary costs; or where they have reductions in budget year on year beyond a threshold set by the authority. With the introduction of the new funding methodology from 2006–07, local authorities will still be able to retain such factors in their local funding formulae if they consider they are necessary.

School Performance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which schools her Department classed as *(a)* low-attaining and *(b)* under-performing in its analyses of school performance in (i) 2003 and (ii) 2004. [42037]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

School Toilets

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding is available to schools to *(a)* refurbish and *(b)* upgrade pupils' toilet facilities. [43521]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations are made by the Department to local authorities and direct to schools, and prioritisation on individual expenditure is determined locally in accordance with local Asset

Management Plan. Accordingly, the Department maintains no central records of *(a)* refurbishment and *(b)* upgrading of pupils' toilet facilities.

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007–08.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she will take to ensure that adequate toilet facilities are provided for pupils in schools over the extended school day. [43522]

Beverley Hughes: The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 set out the requirements regarding washrooms in schools. The regulations do not specify what the distribution of washrooms should be, but facilities must be adequate for the ages, sex and numbers of pupils and any special requirements they may have. It is for schools and local authorities to plan services and facilities in schools over the extended school day. They will need to take into account in their planning that adequate toilet facilities must be provided for children attending extended services. We have committed £840million for extended schools from 2003–08, which schools and local authorities can use flexibly, including to support small capital projects.

Schools (Aylesbury Vale)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the cost of additional *(a)* post-16 years and *(b)* special school provision in Aylesbury Vale arising from planned expansion of housing. [43306]

Jacqui Smith: No such estimates have been made by the Department. New provision for young people is planned locally. Our capital programmes are designed to support local responsiveness to meet the demands and needs of forecast population changes.

Revenue funding for pre and post 16 provision depends on numbers of pupils in a local authority's schools: extra pupils from planned expansion of housing will therefore generate extra funding for the local authority.

School Admissions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on how many occasions the Admissions Adjudicator has ruled on complaints that schools should not be allowed to interview pupils and parents under the Admissions Code; and how many of these rulings have been successfully challenged by the schools concerned. [42771]

Jacqui Smith: Since 1999, there have been three objections to school's proposals to interview parents and/or pupils as part of their admissions process. One fell to the Schools Adjudicator to consider, while two fell within the Secretary of State's remit.

Of these:

One objection was upheld;

One objection was upheld, but subsequently overturned at judicial review;

One was not upheld.

Schools Provision

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 429W, whether the projections for children of secondary school age take into account the additional new houses that are being built under the Milton Keynes South Midlands Regional Strategy. [42524]

Jacqui Smith: Population projections are the responsibility of the Office for National Statistics.

The mid-2003 based subnational population projections are based on assumptions about local fertility, mortality and migration levels derived from the five-year reference period 1999 to 2003. They are demographic trend-based projections and take no account of any future growth or development policies of an area.

The effects of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Spatial strategy will be covered in future sets of projections when they are observed in the mid year estimates and historic migration estimates that are used to set the projection assumptions.

Schools White Paper

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the *(a)* workload and *(b)* time commitments for (i) governors and (ii) chairs of governing bodies of trust schools under the proposals in the Schools White Paper. [37667]

Jacqui Smith: On average, governors will spend 6 to 8 hours per month on governing body business and chairs of governors will spend at least twice as much time. We would expect a similar commitment in future Trust schools.

Science Graduates

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students graduated in the academic year 2004/05 in *(a)* pure chemistry, *(b)* pure physics, *(c)* electrical engineering, *(d)* mechanical engineering and *(e)* avionics; and how many graduated in each subject (i) five, (ii) 10 and (iii) 20 years ago. [27212]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table. Data for 20 years ago is not available at this level of detail.

First degree qualifiers from English HE institutions

Subject	*1994/95*	*1999/2000*	*2004/05*[1,2]
Medicine and dentistry	4,190	4,570	5,855
Subjects allied to medicine	8,515	13,300	20,295
Biological sciences	9,590	14,680	21,900
Veterinary sciences	300	390	505
Agricultural and related sciences	1,380	1,790	1,795
Physical sciences	11,215	10,840	10,185
Of which:			
Chemistry	3,395	2,835	2,260
Physics	2,090	1,935	1,925
Mathematical sciences	3,380	3,500	4,375
Computing sciences	7,055	9,655	17,170
Engineering and Technology	18,245	16,990	15,730
of which:			
Electrical Engineering (up to 2001/02)	815	795	n/a
Electronic and Electrical Engineering (2002/03 onwards)	n/a	n/a	4,545
Mechanical Engineering	2,815	2,945	2,650

First degree qualifiers from English HE institutions

Subject	1994/95	1999/2000	2004/05[1,2]
Aeronautical Engineering (up to 2001/02)	615	710	n/a
Aerospace Engineering (2002/03 onwards)	n/a	n/a	1,050
Architecture, building and planning	6,715	4,965	4,945
Total non-science subjects	125,605	137,325	148,265
Total all subjects	196,195	217,995	251,045

n/a = not applicable

[1] In 2002/03 a new coding frame for subject of study was introduced, as was a new method of allocating students between subjects studied. As such, figures for 2002/03 onwards are not directly comparable to earlier years.

[2] Figures for 2004/05 include students qualifying from dormant modes of study. In 2004/05 there were just under 10,000 first degree students who qualified from dormant modes of study.

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record

Secondary School Places

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils of secondary school age on 1 January 2006 were without a school place; and what estimate she has made of the average length of time for these pupils to be allocated a place. [41566]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally. Local authorities have responsibility for ensuring that there is a school place for every child in their area that needs one. They should ensure that the admission arrangements operating in their areas enable children to be admitted to school as quickly as possible.

Special Educational Needs

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received on ring-fencing funding for special educational needs. [42476]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* We have received occasional representations, normally about the possibility of ring-fencing for particular purposes, e.g. specialist support and training.

Under the New Relationship with Schools we are committed to giving greater freedom and flexibility in relation to how schools manage their own resources. Similarly, we are committed to minimising ring-fencing for local government to allow authorities greater freedom to manage their resources according to their assessment of needs and priorities.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils permanently excluded from school had special educational needs in the last year for which figures are available. [42478]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary, secondary and all special schools[1,2]: Number of permanent exclusions by special educational needs (SEN)—2003/04 (estimates)[3]—England

	Permanent exclusions		
	Number of exclusions	Percentage of permanent exclusions[4]	Percentage of school population[5]
Pupils with statements of SEN	1,040	11	0.44
Pupils without statements of SEN	8,840	89	0.12
Of which:			
SEN pupils without statements	5,240	53	0.46
Pupils with no SEN	3,600	36	0.06
All pupils[6]	9,880	100	0.13

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Includes both maintained and non-maintained special schools.

[3] Figures relating to permanent exclusions are estimates based on incomplete pupil-level data.

[4] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of permanent exclusions.

[5] The number of excluded pupils by SEN stage expressed as a percentage of all pupils with the same SEN stage in primary, secondary and all special schools (excludes dually registered pupils) in January.

[6] There was one permanent exclusion for which stage of SEN was not known—this is included in total for 'all pupils' only.

Note:

Totals may not appear to equal the sum of component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual Schools' Census

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent as a proportion of total budget by each local education authority in Greater London on special needs education in each of the last seven years. [43453]

Jacqui Smith: The available information is contained within the following table. Similar data are not available before 2000–01.

Local authority name	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Barking and Dagenham	14	13	13	14	15	15
Barnet	11	16	14	15	17	15
Bexley	9	14	12	14	14	15
Brent	16	14	15	15	15	15
Bromley	17	17	16	16	17	23
Camden	12	11	12	12	14	14
City of London	12	11	12	14	15	14
Croydon	15	13	10	11	11	12
Ealing	18	17	16	16	18	17
Enfield	12	12	11	16	15	14
Greenwich	15	15	13	14	15	14
Hackney	16	15	13	14	15	15
Hammersmith and Fulham	18	17	17	16	20	19
Haringey	11	10	11	13	13	16
Harrow	10	6	11	11	12	12
Havering	18	17	16	17	17	17

Local authority name	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Hillingdon	13	14	14	16	15	14
Hounslow	12	13	12	12	14	13
Islington	13	12	11	15	13	15
Kensington and Chelsea	13	13	12	14	13	14
Kingston upon Thames	15	14	14	13	14	13
Lambeth	13	13	12	13	13	13
Lewisham	12	13	15	15	17	16
London	17	14	12	14	16	16
Merton	9	9	8	8	8	8
Newham	14	14	14	14	14	13
Redbridge	13	13	13	15	14	15
Richmond upon Thames	14	14	15	14	15	14
Southwark	17	16	16	16	16	17
Sutton	13	13	13	14	14	16
Tower Hamlets	10	10	10	11	12	11
Waltham Forest	11	14	12	14	15	14
Wandsworth	14	14	15	15	16	16
Westminster	12	12	14	12	13	14

Notes:
1. 2000–01 saw a change in data source when the data collection moved from the RA form collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to the section 52 form from the DfES. Therefore data are only available in a comparable format from 2000–01 onwards.
2. The ISB for special schools will include some general education costs for pupils with SEN in addition to those costs specifically for SEN while the figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might by spent by schools on SEN and, from 2004–05 onwards, "notional SEN" delegated to nursery schools was reported on section 52 for the first time and this accounts for £2.7 million and £3.3 million of the 2004–05 and 2005–06 London totals respectively. In 2005–06, local authorities in London also budgeted £90 million for SEN transport expenditure but this is not included in the above table as figures are not available prior to 2005–06.
3. Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, local authority functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was of funding places in non-maintained special schools in each local authority in the last year for which figures are available. [42477]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 17 January 2006]*: The Department does not collect the information in the way it has been asked for. However, the following table gives a breakdown of the available data on local authorities planned expenditure for fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad in 2005–06:

Local authority	Fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad (£)
Barking and Dagenham	2,200,000
Barnet	6,488,050
Barnsley	2,068,400
Bath and North East Somerset	1,522,068
Bedfordshire	2,439,142
Bexley	4,195,000
Birmingham	3,262,294
Blackburn and Darwen	1,438,052
Blackpool	1,861,449
Bolton	1,615,671
Bournemouth	1,988,497
Bracknell Forest	1,916,560
Bradford	2,564,282
Bromley	5,702,080
Buckinghamshire	10,148,634
Bury	3,548,815
Calderdale	1,984,169
Cambridgeshire	4,562,648
Camden	1,998,900
Cheshire	7,761,860
City of Bristol	1,926,644
City of Kingston-Upon-Hull	844,496
City of London	149,600
Cornwall	3,723,260
Coventry	4,005,550
Croydon	8,080,557
Cumbria	1,662,630
Darlington	378,030
Derby	1,966,498
Derbyshire	4,471,603
Devon	4,718,000
Doncaster	1,533,030
Dorset	6,838,200
Dudley	1,530,300
Durham	3,031,707
Ealing	3,738,100
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,169,390
East Sussex	7,037,870
Enfield	3,742,978
Essex	11,903,303
Gateshead	2,553,323
Gloucestershire	3,062,764
Greenwich	2,661,430
Hackney	2,485,503
Halton	1,470,540
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,927,215
Hampshire	9,039,000
Haringey	4,086,599
Harrow	3,653,600
Hartlepool	174,482
Havering	1,136,740
Herefordshire	1,323,278
Hertfordshire	10,295,538
Hillingdon	4,229,210
Hounslow	3,853,900
Isle of Wight	1,835,177
Isles of Scilly	0
Islington	2,321,717
Kensington and Chelsea	2,219,536
Kent	8,471,084
Kingston upon Thames	3,211,700
Kirklees	2,861,408
Knowsley	754,439
Lambeth	2,970,800
Lancashire	15,897,000
Leeds	2,727,980
Leicester	2,249,505
Leicestershire	4,822,907
Lewisham	4,374,391

Local authority	Fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad (£)
Lincolnshire	6,000,130
Liverpool	3,054,406
Luton	1,982,180
Manchester	10,496,812
Medway	2,290,200
Merton	3,833,440
Middlesbrough	569,164
Milton Keynes	2,231,232
Newcastle upon Tyne	1,982,070
Newham	2,575,907
Norfolk	4,053,427
North East Lincolnshire	2,398,268
North Lincolnshire	2,594,969
North Somerset	1,382,509
North Tyneside	1,605,132
North Yorkshire	1,592,790
Northamptonshire	3,037,690
Northumberland	4,721,980
Nottingham City	450,356
Nottinghamshire	1,959,607
Oldham	1,126,720
Oxfordshire	4,586,219
Peterborough	3,871,110
Plymouth	1,614,565
Poole	1,595,290
Portsmouth	640,900
Reading	1,288,062
Redbridge	3,027,370
Redcar and Cleveland	599,900
Richmond upon Thames	2,759,900
Rochdale	1,563,144
Rotherham	2,059,261
Rutland	597,300
Salford	3,285,399
Sandwell	2,517,600
Sefton	2,922,443
Sheffield	2,264,476
Shropshire	2,404,711
Slough	2,110,620
Solihull	1,076,320
Somerset	4,383,910
South Gloucestershire	1,616,000
South Tyneside	913,777
Southampton	974,600
Southend	2,258,033
Southwark	3,125,000
St. Helens	1,474,338
Staffordshire	4,329,920
Stockport	3,339,073
Stockton-on-Tees	1,045,348
Stoke on Trent	2,013,340
Suffolk	6,160,690
Sunderland	1,135,501
Surrey	18,880,553
Sutton	4,313,033
Swindon	1,721,702
Tameside	939,400
Telford and Wrekin	618,420
Thurrock	1,575,115
Torbay	704,989
Tower Hamlets	2,690,447
Trafford	3,276,291
Wakefield	1,769,223
Walsall	2,294,735
Waltham Forest	3,820,764
Wandsworth	4,088,224
Warrington	1,371,122
Warwickshire	5,454,361
West Berkshire	1,919,588
West Sussex	10,194,300
Westminster	2,921,700
Wigan	1,650,913
Wiltshire	6,439,824
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,916,590
Wirral	3,643,300
Wokingham	2,706,432
Wolverhampton	794,000
Worcestershire	2,070,784
York	1,883,274

Notes:

1. Fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad covers planned expenditure by the local authority on the payment of fees in respect of pupils with special educational needs at independent schools or non-maintained special schools. Consequently this covers budgeted cost to each local authority of sending children with special educational needs to independent or non-maintained special schools rather than the full cost to schools of educating these pupils.
2. The data are drawn from the 2005–06 Section 52 Budget Statement (Table 1 line 1.2.7) which local authorities submitted to the DfES.
3. Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 13 January 2006.

Speech Therapy

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on speech therapy services for children in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Wakefield District and *(c)* Normanton constituency; and whether she has plans to increase the allocated resources. [41097]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for commissioning services, including speech therapy services for children, to meet the health needs of their local population. In the current financial year, PCTs in West Yorkshire received resource revenue allocations totalling £2.3 billion, with the two PCTs covering Wakefield receiving a total of £364.8 million. By 2007–08 the total resource allocation to PCTs in West Yorkshire will have increased to £3.0 billion, with the two Wakefield PCTs receiving £489.2 million.

State Schools

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils of *(a)* primary school and *(b)* secondary school age in the Bristol local education authority area are educated within the state school system. [42977]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the following table.

All schools: full-time equivalent number of pupils by age group[1,2], as at January 2005, Bristol local education authority area

	Pupils aged[1]			
	Five to 10		11 to 15	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Maintained nursery	17	0.1	0	0.0
Maintained primary	24,076	92.2	18	0.1
Maintained secondary	0	0.0	15,107	72.6
Maintained special	208	0.8	382	1.8
Pupil referral units[3]	5	0.0	91	0.4
Total maintained schools	24,306	93.1	15,597	74.9

All schools: full-time equivalent number of pupils by age group[1,2], as at January 2005, Bristol local education authority area

	Pupils aged[3]			
	Five to 10		11 to 15	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Independent	1,806	6.9	4,313	20.7
City technology colleges and academies	0	0.0	906	4.4
Non-maintained special	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total other school types	1,806	6.9	5,219	25.1
Total all schools	26,112	100.0	20,816	100.0

n/a = not applicable, no schools of this type.
[1] Age as at 31 August 2004.
[2] Excludes dually registered pupils.
[3] Includes pupils with other providers.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Sure Start

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) which *(a)* private, *(b)* voluntary and *(c)* public sector organisations delivered services in Mini Sure Start programmes in each year for which information is available; [43835]

(2) in which constituencies Mini Sure Start programmes are located; [43837]

(3) how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults participated in Mini Sure Start programmes in each year for which figures are available; [43838]

(4) how many Mini Sure Start programmes were established in each year for which figures are available; [43839]

(5) what target she has set for expanding the number of Mini Sure Start programmes; and what progress has been made in meeting this target. [43840]

Beverley Hughes: 50 Mini Sure Start programmes were approved in 2002, four of these subsequently became Sure Start Local Programmes. There are no plans to develop further Mini Sure Start programmes. We expect all of the 46 remaining mini programmes to develop into children's centres and to contribute to our target of 3,500 children's centres across the country by 2010. The Department does not keep data on which private, voluntary and public sector organisations have delivered Mini Sure Start programmes or how many children and adults have participated in the programmes. However, each programme typically covers between 150 and 170 children under 4 in their catchment areas. We are unable to provide the information requested by constituency, but the following table provides a breakdown by local authority.

Local authority	*Number of mini programmes*
Bedfordshire	1
Cambridgeshire[1]	1
Cheshire	1
Cornwall	2
Cumbria	3
Derbyshire	2
Devon	3
Dorset	1
Durham	2
East Riding of Yorkshire	1
Essex	1
Gloucestershire	1
Hampshire	1
Herefordshire	1
Hertfordshire	1
Leicestershire	1
Lincolnshire	2
Norfolk[1]	3
North Yorkshire	1
Northamptonshire	1
Northumberland	2
Nottinghamshire	1
Oxfordshire	1
Shropshire	1
Somerset	2
Staffordshire	1
Suffolk	2
Surrey	1
Warwickshire	1
West Sussex	1
Wiltshire	2
Worcestershire	1

[1] The mini programmes in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk have combined to form one mini programme—The Fen Border collaboration.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people work in the *(a)* Sure Start regional teams and *(b)* Sure Start Task Force. [43946]

Beverley Hughes: There are 104 full-time equivalent staff in the Sure Start and Children's Fund regional teams. Their role is to oversee and support the delivery of Sure Start and the Children's Fund by local authorities.

There are currently 11 consultants in the Sure Start taskforce. They support particular local authorities with particular issues related to the delivery of Sure Start. They are engaged for a specific number of days a year and their contracts come to an end in March.

Teaching Literacy

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will ensure the National Framework for Teaching Literacy takes into account the report and recommendations of the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Reading commissioned by the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training. [42327]

Jacqui Smith: As part of the evidence for his independent review of early reading, Jim Rose is considering the findings of the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. Along with other relevant source material, he will take the Inquiry's recommendations into account when he prepares his final report, and this will, in turn, feed into the Primary National Strategy's revision of the Framework for teaching literacy.

Truancy

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the truancy levels were in schools in *(a)* the Ruislip-Northwood constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each year since 1995. [40717]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on unauthorised[1] absence is shown as follows:

Percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised[1] absence

	1997/98	*1998/99*	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02[2]*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05[3]*
Maintained Primary								
Ruislip-Northwood	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3
London Borough of Hillingdon	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.71	0.67	0.58	0.55
Greater London	—	—	0.9	0.9	0.85	0.79	0.74	0.73
England	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.45	0.43	0.41	0.43
Maintained Secondary								
Ruislip-Northwood	1.0	1.0	1.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.1
London Borough of Hillingdon	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.49	1.63	1.43	1.61
Greater London	—	—	1.4	1.5	1.45	1.34	1.30	1.38
England	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.09	1.07	1.13	1.25

[1] Unauthorised absence includes other forms of absence such as lateness, holidays during term time not authorised by the school, absence where reason is not yet established and truancy. Truancy forms only one part of the unauthorised figures.
[2] Regional and National figures from 2001/02 onwards are published to 2 decimal places.
[3] 2004/05 figures are provisional.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 24 January 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Office *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43489]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office today.

SCOTLAND

Transport Links (England)

8. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on improving road and rail links between Scotland and England. [43217]

Mr. Darling: Regular discussions are held with the Scottish Executive on a range of transport matters.

Undersea Pipeline (Norway)

9. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the merits of an undersea oil and gas pipeline between Scotland and Norway. [43218]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friends have regular discussions on a wide range of issues.

Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act

10. **Jo Swinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Ministers on the commencement of sections 25 to 29 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990. [43219]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend has not discussed the commencement of sections 25 to 29 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990, which is a devolved matter, with Scottish Ministers.

Population Decline

11. **Jim Sheridan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps the Government is taking to address the declining population of Scotland. [43220]

David Cairns: The Government are committed to implementing policies that will improve the social well being and economic prosperity of the people of Scotland. This includes our initiatives on managed migration that help to create economic migration routes into Britain that respond positively and flexibly to the needs of the labour market. The population figures published routinely by the Registrar General for Scotland are projections from past trends and cannot of course take account of future social or economic policy effects on population patterns at national or local level.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

12. **Sir Robert Smith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the impact of the proposed closure of the Banchory station of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology on climate change research in Scotland. [43221]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Competitiveness, Department for Trade and Industry, to the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Ainsworth) on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 471W.

I am sure that the Natural Environment Research Council will consider all evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposed re-structuring of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, including the proposed closure of the site at Banchory.

Arbuthnott Commission

13. **Anne Moffat:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he has received the report of the Arbuthnot commission; and if he will make a statement. [43222]

David Cairns: The Arbuthnott Commission published its report on 19 January. My right hon. Friend welcomed the report and said he would consider carefully the recommendations and respond in due course.

Nuclear Waste

14. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the First Minister of Scotland regarding the disposal of nuclear waste. [43223]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with the First Minister on a wide range of issues.

Energy

15. **James Duddridge:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the First Minister on Scotland's future energy needs. [43224]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with the First Minister on a wide range of issues.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Election Turnout

20. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the estimated turnout at the last election was among voters from socio-economic groups D and E. [44684]

Ms Harman: May 2005 general election turnout in social class DE was 54 per cent. This compares with AB turnout of 71 per cent. The turnout of socio-economic groups D and E was up by 1 per cent. from the 2001 general election (53 per cent.). However this was still the lowest turnout based on social status. Socio-economic groups A and B had the highest turnout (70 per cent.). This was up 2 per cent. on the 2001 general election.

Legal Advice

21. **Huw Irranca-Davies:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will take steps to make it easier for the public to seek redress against lawyers for poor legal advice. [44685]

Bridget Prentice: I share my hon. Friend's concern hat people must be able to seek redress against lawyers where appropriate. In our White Paper "The Future of Legal Services: Putting Consumers First" we set out proposals for an independent Office for Legal Complaints. This will be a direct point for all complaints about providers of legal services. Where things go wrong, it will provide full, fair and swift redress to the consumer.

House of Lords

22. **James Brokenshire:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made with plans to change the powers of the House of Lords. [44686]

Ms Harman: Our plans include clarifying the powers of the House of Lords to entrench the primacy of this House. We are seeking to set up a joint committee of both Houses to codify the powers of the second Chamber. We hope to be able to do so as soon as possible.

Electoral Registration

23. **Ms Abbott:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of levels of electoral registration in London. [44687]

Ms Harman: London has the worst voter registration levels in the country. Young people, people in rented accommodation, black and minority ethnic group hardest to register. Estimate over half a million Londoners not registered to vote.

24. **Chris Ruane:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress is being made in increasing electoral registration rates in the UK. [44688]

Ms Harman: Electoral Administrators have carried out annual canvass and the results will be published in March when we will see the levels of registration in UK. The Electoral Administration Bill includes a new duty on electoral registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers and a number of other measures to improve registration

29. **Jessica Morden:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what her estimate is of the number of 18 to 24-year-olds who are not on the latest electoral register. [44693]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Commission's "Understanding Electoral Registration" report provides a comprehensive analysis of registration rates and a detailed analysis of non-registration by age group. The report estimates that on 15 October 2000—the date on which the report's analysis is based—the levels of non-registration among all eligible 18 to 24-year-olds in England and Wales was 16 per cent.

National Mediation Helpline

26. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people are employed at the National Mediation

Bridget Prentice: The Department has funded one full-time operator to work on the National Mediation Helpline for a year. Up to three other trained operators are available, on a part-time basis, to handle calls at peak times.

Judicial Appointments

27. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State last met the Chairperson of the Judicial Appointments Commission to discuss judicial appointments; and if she will make a statement. [44691]

Bridget Prentice: The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission last met to discuss judicial appointments on 17 January 2006.

Regarding a statement, I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made yesterday by my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State. The Chairperson of the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Lord Chief Justice have both agreed this statement.

Legal Aid

28. **Jim Cousins:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will estimate the effect on legal aid costs of the Government's respect agenda. [44592]

Bridget Prentice: The legal aid implications of all new Government policy initiatives are assessed as part of the regulatory impact assessment process. This will apply to the range of policy initiatives departments will be ringing forward as part of the respect agenda.

Devolved Administrations (Ministerial Visits)

30. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether agreement to overseas visits by Ministers from devolved Administrations is sought from her Department. [44694]

Bridget Prentice: Such visits are a matter for the devolved Administrations, therefore agreement is not sought from my Department.

Cohabiting Couples' Rights

Barbara Follett: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of strengthening the rights of unmarried, cohabiting couples. [44689]

Bridget Prentice: The Department is funding several research projects on the legal rights of cohabitants and a review by the Law Commission. The Law Commission is considering how the law affects cohabiting couples on the termination of their relationship by separation, or death, and the merits of providing greater legal protection.

Council Tax Valuations

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* information and *(b)* data the Land Registry has provided to the Valuation Office Agency for council tax valuations. [39495]

Bridget Prentice: HM Land Registry has provided property data to the Valuation Office Agency to enable it to verify the information underpinning the revaluation of properties. The data has been supplied solely for the purpose of validation of council tax and non-domestic rating valuations. Most of the property information provided is already in the public domain (for example the title number of the property, and the name of the registered proprietor).

Criminal Justice (Statistics)

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs why the Department has not published in 2005 under the provisions in section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 statistics on women and the criminal justice system. [38369]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

Since much of the information in the section 95 publication for women is available from other sources, we have not published a separate volume in 2005. Relevant information is included in a number of statistical bulletins and regular briefs published by the Home Office which are all available on the Home Office website.

We are presently looking at ways of making it easier for users to access this information by creating an area of the website focusing on women that provides links to the most recent data and research. This will allow users to select the most relevant data for their purpose.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Parliamentary Questions

36. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Leader of the House whether he has made an assessment of the systems of tabling parliamentary questions during recesses operated by other parliaments. [44677]

Nigel Griffiths: No. However, he continues to remain open to representation from Members on this issue.

Regional Affairs Committee

37. **Andrew George:** To ask the Leader of the House what arrangements he is making for the Standing Committee on Regional Affairs to meet. [44678]

Nigel Griffiths: Appointment of the members of the Standing Committee on Regional Affairs under Standing Order No. 117 is under consideration.

Ministers' Speeches (Time Limits)

John Bercow: To ask the Leader of the House if he will ask the Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House of Commons to consider the merits of imposing a time limit on ministerial speeches. [44672]

Nigel Griffiths: This matter was considered by the Procedure Committee in the last Parliament. My right hon. Friend has no plans to raise it again with the Modernisation Committee.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Parliamentary Education Unit

Barbara Follett: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, what progress has been made towards implementing the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House of Commons to improve the facilities available to the parliamentary education unit and send a new voters' guide to all young people on their 18th birthday; and if he will make a statement. [44679]

Nick Harvey: In response to the Modernisation Committee's recommendations, the Commission authorised the recruitment of dedicated outreach officers, two of whom were recruited to start work in the education unit in September 2005. Since their appointment they have been meeting other organisations involved in promoting and teaching citizenship to identify how Parliament can most effectively contribute to the teaching of political literacy. Over the coming months they will be travelling to local education authorities and schools around the country to gather ideas on how the services of the education unit can be delivered to young people who are currently unable to visit Parliament. This fieldwork, along with a draft outreach strategy, will be completed before the summer recess.

In October 2004 the Commission authorised the extension of the education unit's autumn visits programme. Room A in 1 Parliament street has been equipped for presentations to school groups, in addition to the use of the Macmillan Room in Portcullis House, while an allocation of tickets in the public gallery has increased the opportunity for visiting groups to see the work of the House. To enable the unit to increase the number of school parties it can support on a daily basis, a new visits officer was appointed earlier this month with a second due to start in April. These changes will allow a further 20,000 young people each year to visit and learn more about the work of Parliament.

The House authorised the Commission to take forward work on a guide for new voters in January 2005. Since then qualitative research with groups of young people has been undertaken by an external agency in order to find out what kind of guide would be most effective. Following a competitive exercise an external creative agency was then appointed to produce the guide. Draft versions of the guide are going to be presented to groups of young people—again, by an external agency with expertise in the field—to test their effectiveness and see how they can be improved. A revised draft guide will be produced in the light of that research and will be made available to the Modernisation and Administration Committees for comments. The Commission hopes to agree a final version of the guide soon, so that from the second half of 2006 the guide can thereafter be sent to young people on or around their eighteenth birthday. The guide is intended to encourage more new voters to make sure they are registered to vote and to use their votes in the next general election.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Acid Rain

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to tackle acid rain. [43703]

Mr. Morley: Acid rain is the term given to precipitation which has been made acidic by airborne pollutants. It causes acidification of sensitive ecosystems, such as certain soils and freshwaters.

Acid rain is a transboundary phenomenon, so the best way to tackle it is through international action. The UK has played a major role in the development of a succession of Protocols under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution to reduce the emissions that lead to acid rain. These emissions are also controlled through the EU National Emission Ceilings Directive.

Much progress has been made over the last few decades in reducing the emissions that lead to acid rain, and progress continues: between 1990 and 2002, emissions of sulphur dioxide decreased by 73 per cent. and emissions of nitrogen oxides by 43 per cent. Emissions of ammonia reduced by 17 per cent.

The Government support an extensive research programme to examine and understand the effects of acid rain on the environment, and there is now evidence of the beginnings of recovery in some of the most acid sensitive sites in the UK. But more remains to be done, and the Government continue to work in both the UNECE and the EU to ensure the next generation of international agreements will deliver further improvements in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Agricultural Produce (Description)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many types of agricultural produce have been required to change their name or description as a result of European regulations in each of the last five years. [43707]

Jim Knight: This information is not held by Defra.

Animal Welfare Bill

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on the Animal Welfare Bill from local charities, in relation to codes of conduct being implemented through secondary regulation. [43260]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have received a number of representations on the Animal Welfare Bill and its accompanying codes of practice from a range of charities and organisations with an interest in animal welfare.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the premises occupied by her Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42881]

Jim Knight: Information is not collected in this form and an audit of the departmental estate could be conducted only at disproportionate public cost. The Department is committed to ensuring compliance with fire safety law in premises it occupies. That includes provision of fire detection and warning systems that are appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to require domestic birds kept in outdoor aviaries to be brought indoors in an outbreak of avian influenza in the United Kingdom. [45120]

Mr. Bradshaw: If a case of H5N1 is found in Great Britain, British bird owners will be required to move their birds indoors as soon as possible while the disease is traced and controlled. In cases where housing is not practicable, keepers will be required to take all reasonable measures to minimise contact with wild birds.

We will also carry out a risk assessment on the need to house birds if a case of H5N1 occurs in other EU member states or the East Atlantic flyway.

Battery Recycling

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what provisions are in place for the recycling of batteries in England. [36149]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2005, G&P Batteries opened a plant that processes portable/consumer batteries for recycling in the West Midlands. This is the first of its kind in England.

The majority of waste industrial lead acid batteries in England are recycled at H.J. Enthoven & Sons in Derbyshire.

There are no facilities for recycling nickel cadmium (NiCd) batteries, so NiCd batteries are separated for recycling in England and are exported to the SNAM facility in France for reprocessing.

The principal UK mercury reprocessing facility that accepts button cells for treatment is Odin Technology based in Berkshire. Mercury Recycling in Manchester also processes spent button cells. The majority of spent silver oxide batteries are reprocessed by Engelhard Ltd.

Beef

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of when the export ban on British beef will be lifted following the cessation of the over-30-month scheme. [44041]

Mr. Bradshaw: We cannot be sure when EU member states and the Commission will agree to lift the export ban. But we are working to achieve this as quickly as possible, and it could be as early as April.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan; and if she will make a statement. [43653]

Jim Knight: The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was published in 1994 as part of the UK response to the Convention on Biological Diversity signed in Rio in 1992. Under the plan there are costed and targeted national action plans for 436 of our most threatened habitats and species in the UK. These are supported by approximately 150 local biodiversity action plans, often at county level.

Progress on the UK BAP is reviewed every three years. Results from the most recently completed reporting round were published in "UK Biodiversity Action Plan—tracking progress" in 2003.

By the end of 2002, 26 per cent. of BAP species were either stable or increasing, and the rate of decline had slowed for a further 8 per cent. of species. 26 per cent. of habitats were either stable or increasing and the rate of those in decline had slowed by 31 per cent.

Information for 2005 is currently being collated. This will address not only on how individual species and habitats are faring, but also emerging influences by sector and constraints to delivery. A report will be published in 2006. Notable successes of the UK BAP so far include genuine results for species like the corncrake, bittern, cirl bunting, field cricket, lady's slipper orchid and otters, and for habitats including cereal field margins and native pinewoods.

In addition, the UK Biodiversity Partnership is currently undertaking a review of the targets set for UK priority species and habitats and a review of the UK priority lists themselves. We will publish new priorities, targets and plans for meeting our target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, once these reviews have been completed.

Chicken Farming

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has made to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister concerning planning permission for new chicken farms near *(a)* residential areas and *(b)* schools. [43388]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* There have been no representations to the ODPM on such planning issues.

Climate Change

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of non-binding, as opposed to binding, climate change targets; and what assessment she has made of the impact of the Montreal climate change talks on this. [38904]

Mr. Morley: The agreement at Montreal illustrates the significant impact that the UK's leadership on climate change has on the rest of the world and is a hugely significant step in the global effort to tackle climate change. Despite the deep divisions of recent years, the whole global community including the United States, India and China have agreed to work together through the United Nations process to examine the way forward.

The discussions on action beyond 2012 will be taken forward on two tracks:

Developed country Kyoto parties (Annex I Parties) will consider further targets beyond 2012; and

all countries under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (including all Kyoto parties, both Annex I and non-Annex I Parties such as China and India, plus non-parties including the US and Australia) have agreed to begin talks on the longer term future.

These discussions will enable us to further consider the most effective way in which the UNFCCC objectives can be met through global participation.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on plans for further reform of the common agricultural policy; and when the single payment scheme will be implemented. [43257]

Jim Knight: EU Heads of State and Government agreed in December a proposal from the UK presidency for the Union's budget over 2007–13, including the common agricultural policy (CAP). That proposal included a provision allowing member states to voluntarily transfer up to 20 per cent. of their funding for CAP market support and direct payments to rural development. The Government have always supported moving funds in this direction, and will continue to do so. The agreement in December also contained a commitment to review all EU expenditure, including the CAP, in 2008–09. A debate has already begun ahead of

that review. On 2 December, the Government made its first contribution to the debate, with the publication of a paper setting out the UK's vision for reform of the CAP. The Government are in ongoing discussions with other member states and other stakeholders about their views on that vision, and their own ideas for the future of the CAP.

The single payment scheme has been implemented in the UK from 1 January 2005, with the Rural Payments Agency working towards a target date of commencing payments in February 2006.

Correspondence

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letters of 31 October, 16 November and 28 November 2005 from the hon. Member for Morley and Rothwell on the Draft Magnox Decision Document. [42797]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letters of 31 October 2005 and 16 November 2005. A response will be sent shortly. This Department has no record of receiving your letter of 28 November 2005. If you would like to forward a copy, I shall arrange for a swift response.

Departmental Property

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by her Department in Castle Point. [42895]

Jim Knight: The Department does not own any land or property in Castle Point.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in her Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43495]

Jim Knight: The numbers of disciplinary cases commenced and the numbers of sanctions applied in core-Defra for each calendar year since it was created on 9 June 2001 are as follows:

	Number of cases	*Sanctions applied*
2001	9	Five
2002	26	21 (plus three who resigned during the process)
2003	12	Four (plus one who resigned during the process)
2004	8	Seven
2005	13	Eight (plus two who resigned during the process and two cases are ongoing)

The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirements for Departments to have procedures in place to deal with conduct and disciplinary issues. The Defra procedures are laid down in the staff handbook which is accessed on the departmental intranet.

Emissions Trading

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the draft UK National Allocation Plan for Phase 2 of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme will set a target higher than that for phase 1. [43517]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* Phase 2 of the EU ETS coincides with the first Kyoto protocol commitment period (2008 to 2012), and national allocation plans for the second trading period will have a significant part to play in ensuring that the EU meets its targets under the protocol.

Further guidance from the European Commission was issued on 9 January 2006, and is currently being assessed.

A draft NAP will be published this spring, outlining Government proposal on a number of issues including the phase 2 cap.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date she expects to publish the draft National Allocation Plan for Phase 2 of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [43519]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Commission has recently published further guidance on the preparation of national allocation pla[illegible]NAPs) and member states' approaches to the second p[illegible] assessing the impact of the guidance on the dev[illegible] of policy options and on the overall phase 2 timetable, but intend to publish a draft policy NAP this spring.

Endangered Species

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many endangered species of plant and animal there are in the UK; and how much was directed at preventing them from extinction in each year since 2000. [43651]

Jim Knight: Based on World Conservation Union criteria, published UK Red Data Books and domestic species reviews there are currently 2,661 endangered species of plants and animals in the UK. Although annual data is not available, I can confirm that approximately £692 million has been spent, since 2000, to help prevent the extinction of these species in the UK.

Environmental Research Projects

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding the Government has provided in 2005–06 for environmental research projects. [42551]

Mr. Morley: Government spending on research into environmental matters comes from a range of sources. The Department's research budget is allocated to specific Directorate Generals, and within each budget there will be specific projects addressing questions about the environment. The allocated research spend for 2005–06 for the Department, by Directorate General, is as follows:

Directorate general	*£000*
Environment Protection	55,787
Science Economics and Statistics	9,659
Natural Resources and Rural Affairs	8,306
Sustainable Food, Farming and Fisheries	44,258
Animal Health and Welfare	38,831

In addition, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is responsible for supporting basic, strategic and applied environmental research and related postgraduate training in the UK. The Department for Trade and Industry has allocated some £371 million to NERC for expenditure in 2005–06.

Finally, the Department for Trade and Industry also contributes funding directly to research with environmental objectives. Over the three years 2004–05 to 2006–07 £370 million is available for Collaborative Research and Development through the Department for Trade and Industry Technology Programme. Of this, £50 million—derived from the Department's BREW (Business Resource Efficiency and Waste) programme—is explicitly focused on resource efficiency and waste technologies.

In the 2005–06 period, DTI has committed £30 million to projects which will cover clean production, waste minimisation, design and manufacture of sustainable products and contaminated land assessment and remediation, and has also allocated £20 million to low carbon energy technologies.

DTI also provided funding for Grants for Research and Development, delivered through the Regional Development Agencies in the period 2005–06, which includes enabling environmental industries to successfully investigate environmental technologies, although it is not currently possible to separate out this expenditure.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the Government's domestic carbon dioxide target she expects to be met as a result of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme; and what methodology will be used to calculate the scheme's effects. [43518]

Mr. Morley: The Government are currently considering the total level of allowances (the cap) for the second phase of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and the proportion that the scheme should contribute to the UK's 2010 carbon dioxide goal. An announcement will be made in due course.

The overall effect of the scheme may be determined by the level of effort (emissions reductions) asked of the trading sector, which is the difference between the cap and business as usual emissions projections.

Farmers (Qualifications/Migration)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers are *(a)* aged under 30 years, *(b)* hold degree level qualifications, *(c)* have moved to the UK after being farmers in another European country and *(d)* have moved to the UK after being farmers in another non-European country. [43708]

Jim Knight: The closest available information from the EC Farm Structure Survey indicates that:

(a) 3 per cent. of UK farm holders (approximately 9,000) in 2003 were aged under 35 years.

(b) 11 per cent. of UK farm holder managers (approximately 22,000) in 2000 (the latest year in which training questions were asked) had undertaken formal courses lasting two years or more.

Unfortunately we hold no data on holders moving to Britain from other European or non-European countries.

Notes:

1. The EC Farm Structure Survey is held across all member states of the European Union four times each decade, to assess the agricultural situation across the Community and to monitor trends in the structure of holdings.

2. The holder is defined as the (natural or legal) person in whose name the holding is operated. The holder can either own or rent the holding, be a hereditary long-term leaseholder, or a usufructuary or a trustee.

3. Holder managers are only those holders who manage the holding. Holders refers to all holders whether or not they are the manager of the holding.

Habitat Destruction

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to seek to insert a provision into the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill to increase the fines given for the illegal destruction of habitat; and if she will make a statement. [44247]

Jim Knight: There are no plans to introduce measures into the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill to increase the fines for offences involving the destruction of habitats.

However, the Bill does include measures that will help with effective enforcement action. Clause 52, for example, extends the time limits for bringing summary proceedings, including for offences that involve damage to sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) . This will allow more time to secure sufficient evidence.

In addition, clause 54 introduces a new offence of intentionally or recklessly destroying or damaging the special interest features of a SSSI, or disturbing its fauna. This will not require proof that the offender knew the land involved had SSSI status and will therefore support more effective enforcement against damage to habitats in these sites where proving the state of knowledge of the offender can be difficult to achieve.

Habitats Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether populations of *(a)* white-clawed crayfish, *(b)* medicinal leech, *(c)* pearl mussel, *(d)* large blue butterfly and *(e)* noble crayfish in the UK have Favourable Condition Status as defined by the EU Habitats Directive 1992. [44865]

Jim Knight: The concept and delivery of favourable conservation status is central to the implementation of the EU habitats directive. A broad definition of the term favourable conservation status is given in the habitats directive, but there remains a lack of clarity in the

interpretation of this term or the means by which to implement it. The European Commission plans to produce supplementary guidance later this year and the UK is supporting work to draft this guidance.

Member states are required to report on their implementation of the habitats directive every six years. The next report is required in 2007, and this will cover the period from 2000 to 2006. For the first time, this will also include reports on the conservation status of listed habitats and species.

The UK has already started work to gather and assess current status and then to assess whether it is favourable. No formal decisions have yet been made.

The Noble crayfish *Astracus astracus*, while listed in Annex V of the habitats directive, is not ordinarily resident in the UK. As it is an introduced species, the UK will not be reporting on the status of this species. Under section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is, in fact, an offence to release this species into the wild.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to minimise the length of time necessary for the identification of species potentially at risk and their addition to the EU Habitats Directive 1992; and if she will make a statement. [44869]

Jim Knight: The procedure for amending the annexes of the habitats directive is set out in Article 19 of the directive. The UK has not considered taking steps to alter the annexes through this procedure.

Horse Tethering

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under what legislation action can be taken against those responsible for cruel tethering of horses; and if she will make a statement. [44396]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Protection Against Cruel Tethering Act 1988 created a specific offence under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 of causing unnecessary suffering to a horse, ass or mule by the manner or condition of its tethering. The maximum penalty for an offence under the 1911 Act is a fine of £5,000 or six months' imprisonment, or both.

The Animal Welfare Bill will introduce a positive duty to ensure the welfare of animals, and powers to act before an animal suffers.

Lynx

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has had discussions on the reintroduction of the lynx to the UK; and if she will make a statement. [43553]

Jim Knight: I have had no discussions on the reintroduction of the lynx in the UK. The release of animal species into the wild that are no longer native to Great Britain, such as the Eurasian lynx, is controlled by section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Section 16 of the Act gives the Secretary of State powers to grant licences for releasing animals. However, these are only issued for soundly reasoned and specific purposes, supported by a detailed scientific risk assessment. Applicants who wish to submit proposals must also comply with international legislation and guidance.

Permission to re-introduce a species in England needs to be based on proper scientific evidence. And it would only be granted after proper consultation with the public.

Oil Spills

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many significant oil spills there were in UK waters in the last seven years; where each took place; and how much oil was estimated to have been discharged in each case. [43654]

Mr. Morley: On behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), the Advisory Committee on the Protection of the Sea (ACOPS) conduct annual surveys of reported discharges attributed to vessels and offshore oil and gas installations operating in the United Kingdom pollution control zone. Annual reports for the years 1999 to 2004 are available on the MCA and ACOPS internet sites as follows. The report for 2005 is not yet available.

http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-environmental/mcga-dops_cp_environmental-counter-pollution.htm

http://www.acops.org/UK_Survey.htm.

Information on oil pollution from other sources from 2002 to 2005 is available from the Environment Agency's incident recording system. 73 category 1 (the most serious) oil pollution incidents were recorded over this period. I am arranging for details to be placed in the Library, where the Environment Agency's pollution incident reports for the years 2000 and before can also be found.

Paper Usage

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what policy her Department has on minimising *(a)* waste paper and *(b)* paper usage within her Department. [42733]

Jim Knight: All DEFRA sites monitor the amount of waste generated. An annual target of at least 1 per cent. reduction in waste generated is incorporated in site-based Environmental Management Systems. Particular attention is given to paper use and paper waste, which forms a significant proportion of departmental waste. A number of strategies are in place to achieve reductions in paper use and waste, including increasing internet-based and electronic publication of documents, and improved printer efficiency.

Pesticides

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers were found to be using banned pesticides in the last five years. [43704]

Mr. Morley: Between 2001 and 2005 two farmers were successfully prosecuted for using a pesticide which was not approved for that use.

PR Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by her Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39075]

Jim Knight: The Department came into being in July 2001.

The Communications Directorate of Defra has no formal contract with public relation companies and uses the Central Office of Communications when such services are required.

For the level of expenditure on these services commissioned through the Communications Directorate of Defra I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2385W.

Information on contracts for each of the Department's non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies, independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by the Department is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Radioactively Contaminated Land

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what opportunities interested institutions and individuals will have to comment on the draft radioactively contaminated land exposure assessment. [43912]

Mr. Morley: Interested stakeholders have had two opportunities to comment on the proposals. The first, which covered the overall scope and approach of RCLEA, was held between May and June 2005. The second covering the ease with which the RCLEA methodology can be understood and applied is currently underway and is available on the Defra website.

Red Kite/Great Bustard

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made on the reintroduction of *(a)* the Red Kite and *(b)* the Great Bustard; and what the Government's contribution to these projects has been to date. [43727]

Jim Knight: The Red Kite Reintroduction Programme has involved the release of 292 young red kites in four separate areas of England between 1989 and 2005. It has been a great success with breeding populations now well established in three different areas; in 2005 an estimated 385 pairs were breeding in these areas. Similar work has been carried out in Scotland as part of the same programme and breeding populations have now been established at three Scottish sites; in 2005 there were an estimated 75 breeding pairs.

English Nature and RSPB coordinate work on the Reintroduction Programme in England, working with a range of different partners in each of the release areas. Much of the funding is provided by external partners and sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Landfill Tax Credits Scheme. English Nature has contributed approximately £20,000 per year to the programme, as well as providing considerable staff time for those involved in the work. Gateshead council has committed £250,000 over five years for the Northern Kites project. And the Forestry Commission is a key partner in two of the projects in England, providing staff time for educational work and for monitoring birds.

The Great Bustard Reintroduction Project has involved the release of 54 birds on Salisbury Plain since 2004. Of these, 27 were known to be surviving in the wild as of October last year. The fate of a further three birds was unknown (although they were assumed to be alive and living wild).

The Great Bustard Project is run by a private consortium made up of a group of dedicated enthusiasts and the University of Stirling. The Department contributed an initial £10,000, but the rest of the funding is provided by private sponsorship and from the "Sustain The Plain" LEADER + project.

Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what measures will be in place under the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive to monitor chemicals contained in products imported from outside the EU; and whether imported products which contain one of the substances defined by the Commission as being 'of very high concern' will be banned from sale; [42691]

(2) what methods the European Chemicals Agency will use to determine which of the chemicals covered by the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive will need to be tested; and what input national Governments will have in this procedure; [42694]

(3) what safety data chemical manufacturers will need to supply under the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive: [42693]

(4) how consumers will be informed about the relative safety of chemical products once the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive comes into force. [42695]

Mr. Morley: On 13 December 2005 the UK presidency achieved political agreement on the proposed Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH). Based on the agreed text, substances imported in articles (i.e. finished products) only require registration if the substances are intended to be released from articles and where they are present above one tonne. Otherwise importers need to notify the authorities only if the article contains a substance of very high concern. The agency may request the registration of any substance in an article if it poses a risk to human health or the environment. The UK Government will appoint a competent authority

who will be responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of these provisions in conjunction with other UK bodies as appropriate.

All substances manufactured or imported into the EU above one tonne will have to register with the European Chemicals Agency. The registration of a substance involves the submission of a technical dossier of information about the chemical including a testing package. The testing requirements are outlined in Annexes IV to IX of the regulation. To avoid duplicate testing and minimise the cost to industry, sharing of animal test data is mandatory. To simplify the system, the sharing of non animal data has been made mandatory if requested by a potential registrant. Reduced registration requirements apply to substances manufactured below 10 tonnes. Only substances meeting one of the criteria in Annex Ic need to provide the full testing package outlined in Annex V of the regulation. It will be up to companies to identify whether a substance meets these criteria. A key part of the REACH proposal is that the onus is placed on industry (not the European Chemicals Agency or national Government) to identify the appropriate registration requirements and any additional testing that is required. Guidance will be available and a national help desk will be set up to assist industry in meeting these requirements. In addition, the UK competent authority could, under contract to the agency, conduct dossier evaluations to assess the testing proposals submitted.

For substances supplied in quantities over 10 tonnes, the registration package also requires the submission of a chemical safety report. This is a risk assessment in which the registrant takes into account the risk management measures required for the safe handling of the chemical. Details of these requirements are found in Annex I of the regulation.

To inform consumers and the public, basic data held by the European Chemicals Agency about a registered substance, such as its classification and labelling, the results of environmental and health impact studies and guidance on the safe use of a substance, will be made publicly available over the internet. The UK will also explore other approaches through other consumer information services such as Environment Direct.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what regulatory impact assessments the Government has commissioned for the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive; [42692]

(2) what estimates she has made of the overall cost in the UK of implementing the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive; who will bear the costs; how she expects they will be met; and what assessment she has made of whether there will be a cost to UK industry in terms of competitiveness. [42696]

Mr. Morley: Within the UK, the draft regulation on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) was subject to a partial regulatory impact assessment in 2004 which estimated the direct cost to UK industry to be in the region of £515 million over the 11 year implementation period. A further impact assessment was carried out in 2005, which examined the indirect impacts for some downstream sectors. This concluded that the potential annual costs of REACH to the sectors studied were relatively low under most of the scenarios examined, with only worst case assumptions giving rise to significant costs.

One of the factors limiting the costs of REACH in the case studies is the large volume of information already available for a significant number of the bulk chemicals acting as inputs to the manufacturing process.

Across the EU, REACH has been subject to over 50 regulatory impact assessments. This includes the European Commission's extended impact assessment of October 2003, which estimated that changes made to its draft proposals could save up to €10.6 billion (around £7.5 billion). The Commission also carried out a further impact assessment in 2005 in partnership with industry, trade unions, consumer and environmental organisations.

The considerable amount of work carried out in assessing the impact of the REACH proposals has been invaluable in determining costs and benefits, and in informing the negotiations.

On 13 December 2005 the UK presidency achieved political agreement on a REACH text. This includes a number of measures aimed to reduce the cost of REACH-such as 'one substance, one registration', reduced registration requirements for substances manufactured or imported in quantities less than 10 tonnes and the removal of an expensive test in the 10–100 tonnage band. The UK Government will update its impact assessment to reflect the changes made in the agreed text. An updated impact assessment is expected in 2006.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the change in the number of animals across the EU each year which will be required for animal testing when the Regulation, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals Directive comes into force; and what steps have been taken to reduce the numbers of animals required for testing via *(a)* alternative methods of testing and *(b)* data sharing. [42697]

Mr. Morley: There have been no estimates made of the number of animals required for testing per year across the EU when the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation comes into force, not least since it is not possible to predict in advance the precise timing of any testing carried out by or for registrants. The total number of additional test animals needed as a consequence of the introduction of the regulation has been estimated by the Commission at £3.9 million based on the Commission's original proposal. The text of the Political Agreement of December 2005 goes further still in minimising the amount of animal testing required, for example through the incorporation of "One Substance, One Regulation" (OSOR), a UK proposal with strong rules on the mandatory sharing of animal test data by companies.

The Commission's interim strategy during the implementation stages of REACH will focus on developing guidance, through REACH Implementation Projects (RIPs), on information requirements on intrinsic properties of substances, aiming in particular at developing integrated testing strategies based on

alternative methods of testing which will allow the minimum use of test animals. The RIPs are supported by the UK in providing expertise to the RIP project teams and by funding specific research into developing alternative methods.

Roman Snail

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the number of roman snail (helix pomatia) in the UK; and what measures have been taken to prevent further depletion of their numbers by collectors for the restaurant trade. [44867]

Jim Knight: The roman snail is a non-native species to the UK. However, we recognise that as European populations have been reduced, the British population may be important in terms of conservation of the species as a whole.

In southern England, for example, the species remains quite common in many parts of the chalk downs. But there are some areas where commercial collecting for the restaurant trade is a problem.

The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland has put the roman snail forward for inclusion in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) as part of the on-going review of listed species. A decision is expected later this year. The BAP provides a framework to monitor, health check and safeguard important species and habitats.

Snares

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what testing of snares for catching wildlife her Department is carrying out; and what trials are planned. [41514]

Jim Knight: A new snares code of practice was launched on 19 October, with a strong emphasis on animal welfare when people are considering their use.

The new code is an important step forward in improving the use of snares. It provides important guidance to ensure that snares are only used where necessary, and that welfare considerations are properly weighed against the benefits of snaring.

In addition, Defra is continuing its work to develop increasingly humane and non-lethal methods of pest control, and considering research to assess snares against the standards set out in the proposed Humane Trapping Standards Directive.

Defra's only current testing or research into snares for catching wildlife is research into restraining badgers using body snares. The aim of this is to inform a decision on culling methods that would be both effective and humane if we were to decide that culling of badgers was needed. No decisions on whether or not to cull badgers will be made until after the consultation on "Controlling the spread of bovine tuberculosis in cattle in high incidence areas in England: badger culling" closes on 10 March 2006. Further details can be found at: http://www.defra.gov.ukcorporate/consult/badgers-tbcontrols/index.htm

UN Environment Programme (Nairobi)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* Departmental officials will attend the special trades union assembly of the United Nations environment programme in Nairobi from 14 to 17 January; and if she will place in the Library copies of the United Kingdom submissions to this assembly. [41538]

Mr. Morley: The UK was represented by the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme (based at the British High Commission, Nairobi). No UK Ministers attended this event. The UK did not make any submissions to the Assembly. The Assembly agreed a 'Framework for Action', which will be available on the Assembly's website: http://www.will2006.org/assembly.php

Warm Front

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many pensioner households in Dewsbury constituency are eligible for *(a)* Warm Front grants to install energy efficient measures and *(b)* (i) free and (ii) reduced cost installation of central heating systems. [43178]

Mr. Morley: Detailed information on the number of pensioner households in the Dewsbury constituency eligible for either *(a)* a Warm Front Grant or *(b)* (i) free and (ii) reduced cost installation of central heating systems is not available.

Warm Front provides a range of heating and insulation measures to householders in receipt of certain qualifying benefits, up to a grant maximum of £2,700 (£4,000 where oil central heating is recommended). For full qualification criteria and more information about the Scheme, please visit www.eaga.co.uk.

Delivery arrangements for the support announced in the pre-Budget report of a £300 contribution towards the cost of a central heating system, for pensioner households not eligible for the Warm Front Scheme, are being developed and finalised. Further details will be announced in the coming months.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many pensioner households in the Tamworth constituency are eligible for *(a)* warm front grants to install energy efficiency measures and *(b)* (i) free and (ii) reduced cost installation of central heating systems. [43465]

Mr. Morley: Detailed information on the number of pensioner households in the Tamworth constituency eligible for either *(a)* a warm front grant or *(b)* (i) free and (ii) reduced cost installation of central heating systems is not available.

Warm front provides a range of heating and insulation measures to householders in receipt of certain qualifying benefits, up to a grant maximum of £2,700 (£4,000 where oil central heating is recommended). For full qualification criteria and more information about the scheme, please visit www.eaga.co.uk.

Delivery arrangements for the support announced in the pre-Budget report of a £300 contribution towards the cost of a central heating system, for pensioner households not eligible for the warm front scheme, are being developed and finalised. Further details will be announced in the coming months.

Waste Heat (Capture)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage the capture of waste heat to be fed into district heating systems; what percentage of such heat was captured in this way in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [44787]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* Defra's key support for district heating is through the Community Energy programme, which has encouraged and supported innovative schemes. This includes four schemes that will capture an estimated 20,000 megawatt hours of waste heat per annum. This cannot be expressed in percentage terms as we do not collect figures on the total amount of heat wasted. The Carbon Trust has launched Project Bolt to examine the potential for the commercialisation of projects linking providers and purchasers of waste heat.

Wildlife Crime

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) which UK-based internet service providers (ISPs) the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit has been working with; when discussions have taken place between the Unit and ISPs; and which of the ISPs have made commitments to combat the illegal trade in endangered species as a consequence of such discussions; [44245]

(2) what commitment eBay has made to the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit to combat the illegal trade in endangered species on its website. [44246]

Jim Knight: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 16 January 2006 *Official Report*, column 907W.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41591]

Mr. Thomas: Prior to 2005, DFID outsourced its payroll function to the Pay and Personnel Agency, part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD). We do not therefore readily hold information down to the level requested and to give the figures for spend on salaries as requested would therefore incur disproportionate costs.

We do hold information from 1999 onwards on "Staff Costs" which we report against in our resource accounts. These costs include salary and allowances paid to civil servants, contract staff and staff employed overseas:

	Staff costs (excluding social security costs) (£000)	*Percentage of total budget*
1999–2000	35,440	1.60
2000–01	37,452	1.48
2001–02	38,649	1.57
2002–03	51,896	1.86
2003–04[1]	70,440	2.45
2004–05[1]	79,643	2.44

[1] Excludes other pension costs

Pension Costs

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40002]

Mr. Thomas: The cost of pension contributions incurred by the Department for International Development is as follows:

£

Financial year	*Total employers contributions (ASLCs) paid to the PCSPS (Classic, Classic plus, Premium)*	*Total employers partnership contributions paid to the partnership providers (Scottish Widows, Standard Life, TUC)*	*Employers contributions to the PCSPS to cover death in service and ill health benefits of partnership optants (0.8 per cent.)*
2002–03	6,803,325.89	[1]0	[1]0
2003–04	7,673,693.84	33,332.12	2,099.49
2004–05	8,506,262.87	117,729.30	6,482.41
2005–06[2]	12,045,756.00	129,397.32	8,807.88

[1] DFID's first partnership option was made in May 2003, therefore no partnership contributions were made during 2002–03. There are only 30 members of the Partnership Pension Scheme. The figures in column four are payments to the Civil Superannuation Vote in respect of risk relating to death in service ill health benefits for the Partnership Pension Scheme.
[2] Projected figures.

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development is not responsible for any non-departmental public bodies, Executive agencies or any other public body.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Jo Martinson

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will take steps to ensure disciplinary action is taken against those in the Crown Prosecution Service responsible for the failure to bring to court the case of the death of Jo Martinson. [44394]

The Solicitor-General: This case has been the subject of previous correspondence between the Director of Public Prosecutions and the hon. Member. The Crown Prosecution Service considers that the case referred to was handled appropriately, and therefore, the question of disciplinary action does not arise.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Schemes

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what publicly-funded support is being provided to schemes to promote Islamic talent in the arts; and if she will make a statement. [44436]

Mr. Lammy: Arts Council England does not make funding decisions based on an applicant's religion. It funds artistic practice according to strategic priorities and on the basis of artistic merit. However, it may fund artists for whom Islam happens to be a part of their artistic inspiration. The Arts Council has supported an extremely diverse range of young artists, some of which are Islamic, through an inclusive approach.

One of the Arts Council's priorities is to encourage funding applications from people from a diverse range of backgrounds, and in many regions it is, where possible, facilitating community programmes and encouraging artists to apply for funds through the Grants for the Arts (GfA) programme.

There are some excellent case studies such as the West Midlands artist called Mohammed Ali. Mohammed received a GfA grant of just under £10,000 to undertake an exhibition of art work in Dubai titled Salam in the City. This exhibition is to be held late February/early March 2006.

Ulfah Arts has also received a GfA award of around £13,000 to support the development of their organisation, which encourages increased engagement in the arts for women across all faith groups but with a particular focus on Islam.

Pillars of Light, a year long programme across the Yorkshire and Humber region, aims to explore interactions between Muslim cultures and other cultures, within the context of their heritage and contemporary reality. Events throughout 2006 will focus on the visual arts, literature, film, music and theatre. Pillars of Light is being funded through Yorkshire's 'Illuminate' Urban Cultural programme, which is in turn being funded through the Arts Council and the Millennium Commission. Alchemy Anew, an Islamic Arts charity funded directly by the Arts Council, is coordinating it. Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust are one of the key participating organisations in Pillars of Light and are currently hosting the "Palace and Mosque" exhibition on loan from the V&A museum.

Another exciting project is the innovative and ambitious new cultural building being created by Rich Mix to serve London's many communities. The building work is currently underway in Tower Hamlets, which is one of the most deprived areas in the country and has 48 per cent. ethnic minority population, the majority of which is Bangladeshi and Muslim. Rich Mix, due to open in spring 2006, combines workshop and performance spaces, managed workspaces for creative industries, training and education spaces and houses a three screen cinema. Rich Mix has raised £23 million from funders, including the Arts Council and the London Development Agency.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what publicly-funded support is being provided to schemes to promote young Asian talent in the arts; and if she will make a statement. [44437]

Mr. Lammy: There is an enormous amount of work going on in the arts sector that helps to promote young Asian talent. The Arts Council has not delivered programmes specifically for the benefit of talented young artists from any particular religion or ethnicity, but has supported an extremely diverse range of young artists through an inclusive approach. One of its priorities is to encourage funding applications from people from a range of backgrounds. In many regions it is, where possible, facilitating community programmes and encouraging artists to apply for funds through the Grants for the Arts (GfA) programme. Furthermore, schemes such as Creative Partnerships and the Arts Award reach many young Asian people.

The innovative and ambitious new cultural building being created by Rich Mix will serve London's many communities. The building work is currently underway in Tower Hamlets, which is one of the most deprived areas in the country and has 48 per cent. ethnic minority population, the majority of which is Bangladeshi. Rich Mix, due to open in spring 2006, combines workshop and performance spaces, managed workspaces for creative industries, training and education spaces and houses a three screen cinema. Rich Mix has raised £23 million from funders, including the Arts Council and the London Development Agency.

Another exciting project is the Bernie Grant Centre, which is currently being built in Tottenham, North London. A £14 million funding package including £6 million from the Millennium Commission and £3.5 million from London Development Agency has been awarded to transform the former Tottenham swimming baths into a major performance and education centre fostering and showcasing local and

national artistic talent. Black and minority ethnic communities in particular will benefit from the training and business prospects that the Bernie Grant Centre will bring.

The Inspire Fellowship programme is an initiative devised by the Arts Council in order to address the under-representation of Black African, Caribbean, Chinese, South Asian and south-east Asian curators in the museums and galleries sector. Successful candidates receive high quality training and a bursary of £30,000 to £42,000 (depending on experience) over a two year period.

There are numerous examples of projects funded by the Arts Council that promote young Asian talent in all of the art forms. For example, Decibel Performing Arts Showcases is a programme aimed at significantly developing diversity in the arts in England and seeks to increase the profile of culturally diverse arts practice. The 2007 showcase will be held in Birmingham.

Examples of music organisations which are funded by the Arts Council, and are dedicated to working with Asian young people include, Asian Dub Foundation, SAMPAD (a South Asian Arts development agency), South Asian Arts UK, Milap Festival Trust and The National South Asian Youth Orchestra.

Arts Council England regularly funds South Asian dance companies Shobana Jeyasingh and Akram Khan, and a number of others such as Angika, Sankalpam and Mavin Khoo on a project basis. These companies provide essential role models and beacons of aspiration for young Asian talent All these companies provide education and outreach work. The Arts Council also funds the South Asian dance website, SADA, and the magazine, PULSE.

There are Asian visual artists in the Arts Council Collection (i.e. Sutapa Biswas, Chila Burman, Zarina Bhimji) and the work of Asian artists is promoted through funding for publications such as Third Text. The Arts Council also established the Institute of International Visual Artists, (inIVA) London in 1994 to take forward the advocacy and support of culturally diverse artists, especially artists of the diaspora.

In addition to receiving funding through GfA, Asian writers receive funding through the International Fellowships programme. An example is Nadeem Aslam who was a recent International Fellow at the Santa Maddalena Centre in Italy. The Arts Council also run the Positive Action Traineeships—placing young people from black, Asian and Chinese backgrounds in publishing houses to gain experience of the industry over a year/six months. Two out of five current trainees are of Asian background.

BBC (Transmitter Sale)

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much revenue the BBC received from the sale of its transmitters. [45000]

Mr. Caborn: The BBC sold its Home Service Transmission business in 1997 to Castle Transmission Services. The price agreed for the business was £244 million.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what criteria must be satisfied before the Learning and Skills Council fund a national industry-specific apprenticeship scheme; [44268]

(2) what duty there is on local learning and skills councils to work together to support an apprenticeship scheme which operates in different parts of the country but is not supported by the Learning and Skills Council nationally. [44661]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) only funds apprenticeship programmes that use a framework approved through a process managed by the Sector Skills Development Agency. The learning provider must also meet the LSC quality criteria. Funding is routed either through the LSC's local offices or its National Employer Service (NES) which awards national contracts for large multi-site employers. The basic criteria for awarding of a NES contract are that the business has 5,000 or more employees and that it is has the capacity to deliver at least 200 learner places. Programmes delivered through national contracts can cover a single apprenticeship or industry framework, or a number of them. Around a quarter of apprenticeships are covered by NES contracts.

Where an employer or learning provider does not meet the criteria for a contract with the NES but does operate across local LSC boundaries alternative simplified contracting arrangements should apply. These can include a contract with a lead local LSC to cover one of the nine LSC regions or where a provider is multi-regional a national lead can be designated.

Business Involvement (Schools)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to encourage the involvement of local business in schools in Staffordshire; and if she will make a statement. [43471]

Phil Hope: We have allocated £25 million a year to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) since 2002–03 to support a range of school business links activities, including in Staffordshire. These include professional development placements for teachers, work experience and mentoring for young people, and enterprise activities. Nationally there are 300,000 employers working with schools. The local Staffordshire Education Business Partnership is called 'Business and Education Together Ltd'.

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of those working in child care were qualified at NVQ levels *(a)* 2, *(b)* 3, *(c)* 4 and *(d)* 5 in each year for which figures are available. [43807]

Beverley Hughes: Figures are available for 2001 and 2002/03 and are taken from the Childcare and Early Years Workforce surveys for those years. The information collected for the surveys did not distinguish between NVQ levels 4 and 5.

Percentage

	NVQ level 2	3	4/5
2001	11.8	42.0	9.3
2002/03	8.3	50	10.8

Note:
These average percentages are based on percentage estimates of the distribution of qualifications across workers in the four main types of child care setting: full day care, playgroups, child minders and sessional care.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were working in child care in each year since 1997. [43808]

Beverley Hughes: Since 1997 we have published three surveys of the child care work force. The gender split of the work force in the three surveys is as follows:

	Men	Women
1998	4,400	234,100
2001	6,200	268,300
2002/03	5,900	273,200

As the figures show, the child care work force continues to be predominantly female, with women making up some 98 per cent. of the work force in 2002/03.

Children's Centres

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make of the effectiveness of children's centres; and if she will make a statement. [43789]

Beverley Hughes: In spring 2006 we will publish guidance which will advise local authorities how we plan to measure the quality and effectiveness of children's centres.

In addition, a comprehensive evaluation of children's centres is planned to begin in 2006. It is likely the evaluation will look at the implementation and cost effectiveness of children's centres as well as assess their impact on child and family outcomes over the short, medium and long term.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) which *(a)* private *(b)* voluntary and *(c)* public sector organisations have delivered services in children's centres in each year for which information is available; [43791]

(2) in which constituencies children's centres are located; [43794]

(3) what targets she has set for expanding the number of children's centres; and what progress has been made towards meeting those targets. [43796]

Beverley Hughes: My Department does not collect information on the location of children's centres by constituency. The Department does, however, have a list of designated Sure Start Children's Centres in each local authority and a copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

Our target is to establish 2,500 Sure Start Children's Centres by March 2008 and 3,500 by March 2010, representing one for every community. At present there are 466 designated Sure Start Children's Centres.

A range of private, voluntary and public sector organisations deliver services for children's centres, but information on each is not collected centrally.

Construction Apprentices

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many construction apprentices there are in England, broken down by trade. [40779]

Phil Hope: We do not hold information in the form requested. However, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) have calculated statistics on the total numbers of learners on apprenticeships overall and in construction in particular. In 2004/05[1] a total of 411.2 thousand learners were funded by the LSC on apprenticeships, of which 95.9 thousand were classified as construction area-of-learning (AOL) from a total of 14 categories.

Alternatively apprenticeships can be recorded in terms of the average number of learners over the year or at particular points in the year. For apprenticeships overall in 2004/05 the average number of learners on apprenticeships was 255.8 thousand, with a total number in learning in July 2005 of 252.3 thousand. More detail on the apprenticeship frameworks (of which there are currently over 100 and growing) pursued by the 252.3 thousand learners in July 2005 is published by the LSC on the internet via:

http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/partners/frameworks/apprenticeshipsdata/

[1] From 1 August 2004 to 21 July 2005.

Degrees

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received from business on the irrelevance to employment of certain degree subjects; and if she will make a statement. [43076]

Bill Rammell: A search of my Department's correspondence database has identified no such representations from business. However, I can confirm that my Department does have frequent and open dialogue with employers, business representatives and higher education institutions to ensure better alignment of the supply of higher level knowledge and skills with business needs. This is being achieved through the promotion of greater collaboration between business and higher education institutions. Sector skills councils, working with lifelong learning networks and organisations like Foundation Degree Forward, the HE Academy and regional development agencies—have been set up to ensure their business needs are being met.

Enterprise and Entrepreneurism

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to expand the teaching of enterprise and entrepreneurism in schools in Staffordshire; and if she will make a statement. [43470]

Phil Hope: The Department has allocated £60 million a year for the three academic years from September 2005 to support a new focus on enterprise education in all secondary schools in England. Fair Oak High School and Walton High School in Staffordshire were among the 700 schools which participated in our Enterprise Education Pathfinder programme that looked at various ways of delivering enterprise education and helped to produce our national guidance on enterprise education. The guidance is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/enterpriseeducation to support other schools in developing and improving their own practice. The Department is deciding with key partners how to offer further support to schools in the coming year.

Free School Milk

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will assess the merits of supplying free milk to secondary schools. [44908]

Jacqui Smith: We have no plans to assess the current availability of free milk in secondary schools.

There is no statutory requirement for milk to be provided in local authority maintained schools. It is a matter for local authorities and schools to decide. However, where a local authority provides milk, it must be free to pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments: income support; income based jobseekers' allowance; support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; child tax credit, provided that they are not entitled to working tax credit, and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that from 6 April 2005 does not exceed £13,910; or the guarantee element of state pension credit. In addition, children who receive income support or income based jobseekers' allowance in their own right are entitled to free school milk where it is provided.

We acknowledge that milk can provide a valuable contribution to a balanced diet as well as being a healthier alternative to soft drinks. We plan to launch a suite of new nutritional standards for school food later in the spring, which will stipulate water, fruit juices and milk as the only available drinks in schools. The new standards will take into account appropriate levels of daily nutrient intake, including calcium.

Medical Students

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of applicants to study medicine in each of the last five years. [37917]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 14 December 2005]:* The latest available information is given in the table.

UK domiciled applicants to pre-clinical medicine at UK HE institutions

Year of entry	*Applicants*
2001	8,130
2002	9,498
2003	11,920
2004	14,275
2005	15,637

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Home Tutors

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what security checks an individual must pass through before working as a home tutor. [44285]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Individuals working as self employed home tutors are not able independently to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure as the application must be signed by a person who is entitled to ask an exempted question in relation to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

The Department strongly advises parents to check the background of home tutors by requesting references and checking a tutor's registration with the relevant General Teaching Council. Parents are also advised to make appropriate arrangements for a child who is receiving home tuition, for example having an adult present.

The Department is fully aware that parents have limited access to information. The new scheme to be implemented as part of the Bichard inquiry recommendations will allow parents to check whether an individual they wish to employ to work with their children, e.g. as a home tutor, is barred.

Indoor Airborne Chemicals

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has commissioned on the *(a)* quality and *(b)* type of indoor airborne chemicals in state primary schools. [43191]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has not commissioned any research examining the quality or type of indoor air chemicals in state primary schools.

Lifelong Learning

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research the Government will *(a)* undertake and *(b)* commission to assess the selective effectiveness of measures to promote wider participation in lifelong learning in England. [43740]

Bill Rammell: The Department's research plans fully incorporate how effectively our policies widen participation in learning, especially in areas of 14 to 19 education, adult skills, and HE. Key policies aimed at increasing and widening participation in lifelong learning are subject to detailed evaluation to establish their effectiveness and to improve their delivery.

For example, in the context of widening participation in HE, Aimhigher is subject to a comprehensive evaluation strategy, organised in partnership with HEFCE and the LSC. It includes surveys of young people, educational providers and Aimhigher partnerships, all conducted by independent research organisations. The evaluation seeks to identify what works, and to use this to inform further policy development and delivery.

In the context of increasing participation in lifelong learning, the evaluation of the Employer Training Pilots uses a wide range of qualitative and quantitative techniques to assess their effectiveness including; surveys of participating employers and employees (early

and follow-up), ETP providers, case studies of LLSCs and all key stakeholders, quantitative random surveys of employers, and surveys of eligible employees.

Other examples include the evaluations of the Union Learning Fund, IAG, and the Adult Learning Grant. Full details of the Department's research programme is available at the "Research and Statistics Gateway" on the DfES website, including copies of completed and published research.

The Department will continue to assess the effectiveness of its policies aimed at widening participation and to share best practice among our partners in delivery.

National Foundation for Educational Research

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills by what process the decision to commission and fund the National Foundation for Educational Research to conduct a trial of the US SAT test was taken; and what other assessments were considered for funded research. [43377]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The research project into the validity of the use of the US-style SAT in university admissions was presented to the Department jointly by the Sutton Trust and the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). The independent review of admissions to higher education (HE) chaired by Professor Steven Schwartz recommended in 2004 a research study to assess the idea of a national test of potential for HE. It noted that US-style SATs were worth exploring, alongside other possibilities, and welcomed the Sutton Trust's proposals for an operational pilot. Following the Department's standard procedures for the approval of research proposed and initiated by external organisations, a decision was taken to contribute up to £800,000 over the length of the five year study. The Sutton Trust, NFER and the College Board in America which owns the SAT, are also making significant contributions. The research will go further than assessing the effectiveness of SATs—it will also provide valuable data to assess how pastoral support and teaching methods affect student retention and progression. The Department has received no other formal costed proposals to fund research into other forms of assessment of potential for HE.

School Finance

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual funding per pupil has been in *(a)* Hereford and *(b)* Leominster constituencies in each year since 1997. [44616]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect information on school funding at constituency level. It only collects funding information at the local authority level. The figures for total funding increases in Herefordshire for pupils aged 3–19 in real terms since 1997 are shown in the table.

Herefordshire: Total revenue funding per pupil aged 3–19[1]

	£ *Funding per pupil*
1997–98	2,880
1998–99	2,910
1999–2000	3,040
2000–01	3,270
2001–02	3,380
2002–03	3,470
2003–04	3,640
2004–05	3,790
2005–06	3,970

[1] Real terms, excluding the pensions transfer to Education Formula Spending and the Learning and Skills Council.

Notes:

1. Price Base: Real terms at 2004–05 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 23 December 2005.

2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of Standard Spending Assessment / Education Formula Spending (EFS) settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC.

3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude education maintenance allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.

4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.

5. Rounding: Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

6. Status: 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

7. 1997–98 figures for authorities subject to Local Government Reorganisation in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.

School Teachers Review Body

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in requiring the School Teachers Review Body to consider local pay; and if she will make a statement. [44947]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The School Teachers' Review Body considered the matter of local approaches to pay in detail in their 13th report (part 2) in March 2004. Following further evidence from statutory consultees, their 14th report in February 2005 noted that additional evaluation of the operation of existing pay bands should take place prior to further consideration of local pay. Their 15 report, published in December 2005, recommended no change at present, but that the principal response to a range of pay matters should be to encourage the using of existing local discretions.

School Travel Plans

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for the percentage of schools with travel plans by 2009. [44859]

Jacqui Smith: The joint Department for Education and Skills and Department for Transport travelling to school project includes targets for 10,000 schools to have a travel plan in place by March 2006, and every school in England to have one by the end of the decade. We are currently on target to achieve that.

Specialist Industry Sectors

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what financial support her Department provides to enable specialist industry sectors to meet their training needs. [44258]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Government funds the Sector Skills Development Agency which is responsible for funding, supporting and monitoring the network of 25 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) which cover 85 per cent. of the employed population. SSCs are led by employers and work to reduce skills gaps and shortages; improve productivity, business and public service performance, increase opportunities to boost the skills and productivity of everyone in the sector's workforce and improve learning supply including apprenticeships, higher education and National Occupational Standards (NOS).

In 2005–06 the Department for Education and Skills allocated £67.7 million to the Sector Skills Development Agency.

State-funded Education

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Croydon, Central (Mr. Pelling) of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1030W, on state-funded education, if she will express the figures in cash terms at 2005 prices. [45375]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the UK education expenditure and gross domestic product (GDP) cash figures used as the basis for my answer to the hon. Member for Croydon, Central.

£ million

	1979–80	*1987–88*	*1997–98*	*2004–05*
Education spend	10,500	20,400	37,400	63,900
GDP	207,608	431,246	824,044	1,177,760
Percentage	5.1	4.7	4.5	5.4

Note:

1. Figures on UK education spend for the years shown were obtained from the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses.
2. The GDP figures used are the latest available and were updated at the end of December 2005.
3. The international definition of education expenditure used to produce the figures for the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses has changed overtime; therefore, the figure for 1979–80 is not directly comparable with the other years. The figures for 1987–88, 1997–98 and 2004–05 have been produced to the same definition and so are comparable.

The figures for percentage of GDP spent on education remain the same whether cash or 2004–05 prices are used. This is because the same price deflator is used for education spend and GDP when calculating real terms figures.

Student Finance

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure that students who wish to enter higher education are aware of the types of financial support available to them. [45214]

Bill Rammell: In October 2005 we began a publicity campaign aimed at potential students and their parents to raise awareness of student finance messages. This campaign is planned to continue until March 2006.

We also continue to produce a range of targeted literature for potential students, and offer information and advice through a telephone helpline, internet websites, and events for prospective students.

In addition, we are working with local authorities, universities, the schools and FE sectors, and a range of national organisations to ensure that they are able to offer accurate information and advice.

Sure Start

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults have participated in Sure Start programmes in each year for which figures are available; [43786]

(2) how many Sure Start programmes have been established in each year for which figures are available; [43787]

(3) what target she has set for expanding the number of Sure Start programmes; and what progress has been made in meeting this target. [43788]

Beverley Hughes: There are 524 Sure Start local programmes. These were approved in the following years:

1999: 22
2000: 102
2001:116
2002: 161
2003: 123

We do not collect information on the total number of children and adults who have accessed all Sure Start local programme services. As of March 2005, there were 420,149 children aged 0–3 living in areas covered by Sure Start local programmes. These children and their parents are able to access a wide range of Sure Start services.

There are no plans to develop further Sure Start local programmes. We expect all 524 local programmes to develop into Sure Start children's centres. By March 2006 we expect around 90 per cent. of these local programmes to have developed into children's centres; the remainder will become children's centres by March 2008. We expect to have developed 3,500 children's centres by 2010.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in which constituencies Sure Start programmes are located. [43844]

Beverley Hughes: We do not hold information on all the constituencies covered by Sure Start local programmes. However we are able to provide a breakdown by local authority area and this is as follows.

Local authority	*Number of local programmes*
Barking and Dagenham	4
Barnet	1
Barnsley	5
Bath and NE Somerset	1
Bedfordshire	1

Local authority	Number of local programmes
Bexley	1
Birmingham	12
Blackburn with Darwen	5
Blackpool	3
Bolton	4
Bournemouth	1
Bradford	8
Brent	3
Brighton and Hove	2
Bristol	4
Bromley	1
Buckinghamshire	2
Bury	1
Calderdale	3
Cambridgeshire	2
Camden	5
Cheshire	4
Cornwall	7
Coventry	4
Croydon	1
Cumbria	5
Darlington	2
Derby City	4
Derbyshire	5
Devon	4
Doncaster	6
Dorset	1
Dudley	3
Durham City	1
Durham County	11
Ealing	2
East Riding of Yorks	1
East Sussex	6
Enfield	1
Essex	4
Gateshead	4
Gloucestershire	2
Greenwich	5
Hackney	7
Halton	5
Hammersmith and Fulham	3
Hampshire	2
Haringey	6
Hartlepool	3
Havering	1
Herefordshire	1
Hillingdon	1
Hounslow	1
Isle of Wight	1
Islington	6
Kensington and Chelsea	2
Kent	9
Kingston Upon Hull	7
Kirklees	5
Knowsley	5
Lambeth	6
Lancashire	17
Leeds	8
Leicester City	6
Leicestershire	1
Lewisham	5
Lincolnshire	7
Liverpool	10
Luton	1
Manchester	11
Medway Towns	1
Merton	1
Middlesbrough	5
Milton Keynes	1
Newcastle upon Tyne	7
Newham	8
Norfolk	8
North East Lincolnshire	7
North Lincolnshire	
North Somerset	1
North Tyneside	3
North Yorkshire	2
Northamptonshire	3
Northumberland	5
Nottingham City	8
Nottinghamshire	10
Oldham	5
Oxford City	1
Peterborough	3
Plymouth	4
Portsmouth	2
Reading	1
Redbridge	1
Redcar and Cleveland	4
Rochdale	5
Rotherham	3
Salford	5
Sandwell	9
Sefton	4
Sheffield	8
Shropshire	2
Slough	1
Solihull	1
Somerset	3
South Tyneside	5
Southampton	3
Southend on Sea	1
Southwark	7
St. Helens	5
Staffordshire	5
Stockport	1
Stockton-on-Tees	5
Stoke-on-Trent	6
Suffolk	3
Sunderland	7
Sutton	1
Swindon	1
Tameside	4
Telford and Wrekin	2
Thurrock	1
Torbay	2
Tower Hamlets	7
Trafford	1
Wakefield	4
Walsall	5
Waltham Forest	4
Warrington	2
Warwickshire	2
West Sussex	2
Westminster	3
Wigan	2
Wirral	4
Wolverhampton	5
Worcestershire	3
York	1
Grand total	524

Work-based Learning

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate she has made of the annual level of spending on work-based learning for *(a)* 16 to 18-year-olds and *(b)* over 19-year-olds between 2004–05 and 2008–09; [42647]

(2) what estimate she has made of the level of annual spending between 2004–05 and 2008–09 on *(a)* 16 to 18-year-olds and *(b)* over 19-year-olds on (i) advanced apprenticeships, (ii) apprenticeships, (iii) entry into employment and (iv) NVQ 1 to 4. [42648]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) through an annual Grant Letter that sets out the LSC's key priorities. The operational delivery of individual programmes, taking account of these

priorities and the funding made available by the Department, is a matter for the LSC. The following table details the allocations for work-based learning programmes for the relevant financial years. In addition funding allocations are given for the adult skills programme Train to Gain.

£000

Programme	2004–05[1]	2005–06	2006–07[2]	2007–08[3]
Work-based Learning (16–18)	615,001	605,611	669,189	675,181
Entry to Employment (16–18)	246,593	220,084	208,369	204,044
Work-based Learning (19+)	243,162	269,125	202,767	229,000
WBL Total	1,104,756	1,094,820	1,080,325	1,108,225
Train to Gain programme	[4]88,995	161,027	230,000	399,000
Overall Total	1,193,751	1,255,847	1,310,325	1,507,225

[1] Figures for 2004–05 are taken from LSC Accounts.
[2] Figures for 2006–07 are disaggregated from planning assumptions within the 2006–07 LSC Grant Letter.
[3] Figures for 2007–08 are disaggregated from planning assumptions within the 2006–07 LSC Grant Letter.
[4] Employer Training Programme (ETP) Pilots. These are the pilots for the roll out of NETP/Train to Gain in 2006–07.

The WBL totals shown in the aforementioned table for 2005–06 to 2007–08 are consistent with the plans outlined in 'Priorities for Success' published by the LSC in October. Bill Rammell wrote to all MPs at the time to inform them about the 'Priorities for Success' document.

For 2008–09 allocations are dependent on the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Data for allocations to programmes by qualification level are the responsibility of the LSC. In support of this PQ, LSC have been able to provide the following WBL programme/age breakdown for academic year 2004/05 only:

WBL programme	Age group	Level	Spent (£ million)
Advanced Apprenticeships	16–18	Level 3	226
Advanced Apprenticeships	19+	Level 3	118
Apprenticeships	16–18	Level 2	332
Apprenticeships	19+	Level 2	111
NVQ-only	16–18	Level 1–4	23
NVQ-only	19+	Level 1–4	22
Entry To Employment (E2E)	All Ages	Level 1	228
Total WBL	—	—	1,060

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a decision has been made on which country will lead the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps in Afghanistan after the UK. [42985]

John Reid: The Allied Rapid Reaction Corps is, and will remain, a British-led NATO formation. Upon the completion in February 2007 of its tour in Kabul as the headquarters of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the headquarters group of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps will return to its permanent base in Germany. No decision has yet been taken on which headquarters will assume command of the ISAF at that point.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the extent to which planners at the Army's land command headquarters and UK permanent joint headquarters have the required resources to select the brigade for the Afghan mission in spring; and if he will make a statement. [42988]

John Reid: No final decisions have been made on the possible deployment of British forces to Southern Afghanistan as part of the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force. Any decision on such a deployment would take full account of our wider operational commitments.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in finalising plans for the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force into the south and east of Afghanistan; which countries have made a final decision on *(a)* troop deployment and *(b)* the nature of the capabilities which may be required; and if he will make a statement. [42989]

John Reid: On 8 December 2005 NATO Foreign Ministers agreed a revised operational plan to inform the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) into the south and then subsequently east of Afghanistan. NATO is currently in the process of generating the necessary forces which will embrace the wide range of capabilities necessary to implement ISAF expansion. Offers by nations to fill particular requirements are a matter for the countries concerned.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his Dutch counterpart on future deployments to Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [42995]

John Reid: I have regular discussions with allies, including the Dutch, about NATO operations in Afghanistan.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what type of individual protection will be provided to troops deployed to Afghanistan in the future. [43001]

John Reid: All troops deploying to Afghanistan will be personally issued with body armour and helmets. In addition, task specific protection equipment will be issued to personnel depending on the operational role that the individual will perform.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what urgent operational requirements the Department has ordered to support future troop deployment to Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [43002]

John Reid: The urgent operational requirement (UOR) process is used to fine-tune our military capability to meet the threats and circumstances relating to particular deployments. Information regarding specific UORs remains operationally sensitive.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what agreement will govern the handover of prisoners detained in Afghanistan by UK forces to *(a)* US forces and *(b)* Afghan security forces; and if he will make a statement. [44262]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* We are currently concluding a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Afghanistan to cover the possible future transfer of any individual to the Afghan authorities following detention by UK forces. To date, the UK has not transferred any detainee to the Afghan authorities and there are no detainees under UK authority.

The UK has not and does not intend to transfer individuals detained in Afghanistan into the custody of US forces.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what agreement has been reached between NATO and the Afghan Government regarding the arrest and detention of prisoners apprehended on Afghan territory; and if he will make a statement. [44264]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The role of the NATO-led international security assistance force (ISAF) is to provide support to the Afghan authorities in creating and maintaining a secure environment. Troops deployed under the ISAF are able to arrest and detain by virtue of the authorisations permitting use of all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate contained in, most recently, UNSCR 1623 (2005), and by agreement with the Government of Afghanistan. ISAF policy is that individuals should be transferred to the Afghan authorities at the first opportunity and within 96 hours or released.

C-130 Hercules

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with representatives of *(a)* the RAF and *(b)* industry on fitting a fuel tank inerting system to RAF Hercules C-130 aircraft before 30 January 2006. [44138]

Mr. Ingram: The MOD's Equipment Capability Customer organisation has discussed with RAF Strike Command the possible fitting of Explosive Suppressant Foam to C-130 aircraft, and the Hercules Integrated Project Team is currently following this up with Marshall Aerospace. There are no plans to fit this before 30 January 2006.

EU Satellite System

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations the Government have received from the US Administration about the EU Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) satellite system; what assessment he has made of the implications of the system for the development of the European Security and Defence Policy; what use he expects British armed forces to make of GMES; and if he will make a statement. [30239]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

The EU Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) satellite system was designed as a civilian system and the EU has agreed it should be used for civilian purposes. It will be under civilian control but, like other civilian technology, the EU may draw on the information it provides for European Security and Defence Policy crisis management operations. The Ministry of Defence may similarly wish to make use of GMES information. The UK would oppose the system being under military control or being tasked to serve the military directly. The Government have not received any representations from the US regarding GMES.

First Sea Lord

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the contribution to the Royal Navy of Sir Alan West as First Sea Lord. [44034]

John Reid: Admiral Sir Alan West, who retires in February, has overseen an important stage in the transformation of the Royal Navy. This includes the introduction of new ships and aircraft and important changes to the personnel and organisational structures of the Royal Navy, delivering a flexible and versatile force for good with an increased level of capability.

Admiral West has worked to raise the profile of the Royal Navy, and in particular has drawn attention to the relevance and importance of the service to national life through the medium of the successful Nelson commemorations. By doing so he will leave an important legacy from his time as First Sea Lord.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy ships visited *(a)* Gibraltar and *(b)* Spain in the last 12 months. [44148]

Mr. Ingram: During the 2005 calendar year, there were a total of 45 Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship visits to Gibraltar and 28 visits to Spanish ports. Of the 28 visits to Spanish ports, 10 were undertaken by vessels allocated to NATO Standing Naval Forces and therefore programmed directly by NATO.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF aircraft landed at RAF Gibraltar in the last 12 months, broken down by type. [44533]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is shown as follows:

	Number
Hercules C130	67
Hawk	6
Falcon	7
Chinook	9
Nimrod	2
HS125	5
Canberra	2
C441	1
Hawk	6
Jaguar	7
Puma	2
C17	2
Tornado	9
Tucano	1

Hawker Hunter Aircraft Sites

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what restrictions were placed on the use of the Hawker Hunter aircraft sites by Phillips in November 2000 on behalf of his Department; and who acquired them. [40226]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's conditions of sale made clear that it is the responsibility of the purchaser to obtain a certificate of airworthiness if the intention was to fly the aircraft and to apply for an export licence if it was to be transferred outside the United Kingdom.

At the auction held on 29 November 2000 by Phillips Auctioneers, the Disposal Services Agency's records show that three ex-Royal Navy Hawker Hunter aircraft and one ex-Royal Air Force Hawker Hunter aircraft were sold to a private individual and two ex-Royal Air Force Hawker Hunter aircraft were sold to the company, 'Towerdrive'. The individual cannot be named for Data Protection Act reasons.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigations he has conducted into involvement of UK force personnel in the death of *(a)* Hanan Schmailawi, *(b)* Muhammad Salim, *(c)* policeman Raid al Musawi, *(d)* Hazim al-Skeini and *(e)* Waleed Muzban in Iraq in 2003; and if he will make a statement. [42943]

Mr. Ingram: All cases were investigated by the chain of command in theatre and in each case it was concluded that all actions taken had been within the rules of engagement. Subsequently the cases were subjected to review by the Special Investigation Branch (SIB). As a result, a full SIB investigation was carried out in 2004 into the case of Waleed Muzban and a report was passed to the Army Prosecuting Authority (APA). The APA considered the evidence, and, in September 2005, directed that the case be discontinued.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the total number of weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq since March 2003; and how many of these were classified as *(a)* nuclear, *(b)* chemical and *(c)* biological. [44460]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom Government have accepted the conclusions of the Iraq Survey Group's search for Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, published in Charles Duelfer's Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI of September 2004 and finalised in March 2005. The report is available to the public on the CIA website. This report provided the most authoritative assessment on Iraq WMD and concluded that no WMD of military significance were found.

However, as this report predicted, numbers of degraded pre-1991 chemical weapons continue to be found in Iraq and these are being safely disposed of.

Operation Enduring Freedom

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussion he has had with his US counterpart on future UK support to Operation Enduring Freedom. [42994]

John Reid: I have regular discussions with Secretary Rumsfeld regarding operational issues, including Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

QinetiQ

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to ensure that QinetiQ will maintain its current number of employees and presence in Scotland after privatisation. [44955]

John Reid *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* This is an operational matter for the company; questions should be referred to the chief executive at the following address:

Graham Love
Chief Executive
Qinetiq Ltd.
Cody Technology Park
Building A1
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire GU14 OLX

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether QinetiQ will be able to accept contracts from foreign Governments after flotation. [43826]

John Reid: Yes. The flotation itself will not make a difference to QinetiQ's ability to compete for foreign contracts, whether with Governments or industry. The Ministry of Defence will retain the right to veto QinetiQ from entering into a contract that would cause an unacceptable conflict of interest. QinetiQ is also subject to the same security and export controls as any other company.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions the Government have had with Credit Suisse regarding the availability and allocation of shares in the flotation of QinetiQ. [43827]

John Reid: Advice on availability and allocation of shares was provided to the Government, Carlyle and QinetiQ, by our joint financial advisers, under contractually committed

confidentiality agreements. Credit Suisse is one of those financial advisers, and as such representatives from the bank will have taken part in discussions on the subject.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the capacity for Territorial Army commissions at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst was in each year since 2001; and how many places were unfilled. [43679]

Mr. Touhig: The capacity and unfilled places for Territorial Army commissions at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in each calendar year since 2001 were as follows:

Year[1]	Capacity	Unfilled[2]
2001	360	143
2002	330	107
2003	180	0
2004	270	89
2005	270	165

[1] Calendar year
[2] Unallocated places

Type 23 Frigate

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 506W, on Type 23 frigates, what plans he has to refit those Type 23 frigates carrying Lynx helicopters with Merlins. [44529]

Mr. Ingram: A programme of work is in place to provide the required modifications that will enable 12 Type 23 Class frigates to operate both Merlin and Lynx helicopters. To date, five have been modified and work to modify the remaining seven will be carried out during their forthcoming Docking and Refit periods.

TRANSPORT

Biofuels

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to set targets for the percentage of fuel filling stations to be selling a minimum proportion of biofuels by *(a)* 2007 and *(b)* 2010. [45405]

Dr. Ladyman: We have no plans to do so. The Government announced in November 2005 that a Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO) will be introduced from 1 April 2008. The RTFO will require all suppliers of transport fuels in the UK to ensure that 5 per cent. of their total fuel sales come from renewable sources by 2010 in order to help meet our climate change objectives. In practice this is likely to mean that the vast majority of UK filling stations will be selling biofuel blends by 2010.

Driving Licences

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what rules apply to the photographs required for the new driving licence; and whether exemptions apply for particular religious groups. [44739]

Dr. Ladyman: The law requires applicants for new driving licences to provide a photograph of their current likeness.

The photograph must be in colour and passport style and size. It must show the full face, with no hat, helmet or sunglasses, although normal glasses and headwear worn for religious reasons is acceptable. The photograph must be taken against a plain, evenly lit background.

Crossrail

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Department has spent on the Crossrail project in each year since 1997; and what percentage has been spent on *(a)* staff recruitment, *(b)* technical consultants and *(c)* other external services. [42711]

Derek Twigg: Between its establishment in May 2001 and the end of 2005, Cross London Rail Links Ltd (CLRLL) was provided with funding of £130,750,118. I understand from CLRLL that the amount spent on staff recruitment, technical consultants and other external services was as follows:

£

Financial year	Total	Staff recruitment	Technical consultants	Other external services
2001–02	5,380,000	74,918	2,152,000	2,103,082
2002–03	25,238,000	182,603	15,282,000	4,487,397
2003–04	31,547,000	141,299	19,646,000	6,372,701
2004–05	44,461,000	198,540	25,821,000	11,266,460
Financial year to end December 2005	28,124,118	400,855	13,734,927	6,356,932

The remaining costs included staff salaries and day-to-day running costs.

In addition, between September 2003 and the end of 2005, the internal Department for Transport unit that deals with Crossrail sponsorship, which includes the Crossrail hybrid Bill team, had costs of £6,102,814. The amount spent on technical consultants and other external services is detailed in the following below. Spending on staff recruitment is not recorded separately. All relevant staff were already employees of the Department for Transport.

£

Financial year	Total spend	Technical consultants	Other external services
2003–04	1,445,019	1,144,920	Nil
2004–05	2,657,209	1,937,093	20,937
Financial year to end December 2005	2,000,586	1,231,149	25,657

The remaining costs included staff salaries and day-to-day running costs.

Prior to September 2003 any work undertaken in respect of Crossrail was carried out by staff within the Department on an ad hoc basis as part of their other duties. Other officials have been involved in Crossrail related matters from time to time, as have officials in the Strategic Rail Authority and Transport for London.

Cycling Accidents

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents involving cyclists resulting in *(a)* death and *(b)* serious injury there were in each year since 1997 in Gravesham constituency. [43274]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatal and serious personal injury road traffic accidents that involve one or more cyclist in the Gravesham constituency since 1997 is shown in the table.

	Fatal accidents	*Serious accidents*
1997	0	8
1998	0	2
1999	0	3
2000	0	3
2001	0	2
2002	0	1
2003	0	5
2004	0	0

The accidents given in the table are those which occurred within the 2004 boundary of Gravesham constituency. The cyclists in these accidents did not necessarily sustain injuries themselves.

We are committed to improving safety for cyclists. Across Great Britain the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured in 2004 was 38 per cent. below the 1994–98 baseline, while the number of child cyclists killed or seriously injured was 49 per cent. below the baseline. All local authorities should have a cycling strategy, which includes improving safety through measures such as education, publicity and engineering. We introduced a new national standard for cycle training in 2005. We also have a range of cycling publicity materials aimed at the most vulnerable cyclists, children and teenagers, with a new teen campaign planned for 2006. We are also educating drivers in the need to be aware of cyclists, with this message included in the theory, hazard perception and practical elements of the driving test, with advice to drivers in the Highway Code and elsewhere.

Greater Western Franchise

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average increase in ticket prices in the Greater Western franchise was in each of the last five years. [42156]

Derek Twigg: Regulated fares—meaning most fares used by commuters plus long distance Saver Return fares—on the First Great Western, First Great Western Link, and Wessex franchises have been limited to an average increase of 1 per cent. less than inflation from 1999 to 2003, then 1 per cent. more than inflation from 2004 onwards. Other fares are unregulated and may be set at the operator's own commercial discretion.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of future passenger numbers in the Greater Western franchise. [42157]

Derek Twigg: The Department's forecast is that 779 million passenger journeys will be made on Greater Western services over the 10 years of the Greater Western franchise.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the passenger figures were for the Greater Western franchise in each quarter of the last five years. [42158]

Derek Twigg: Passenger figures for all train operating companies are set out in National Rail Trends, published by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). A copy is available in the House Library.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* the absolute and *(b)* the moving annual average rates for (i) punctuality and (ii) reliability for companies operating the Greater Western Franchise were for each quarter of the last five years. [42160]

Derek Twigg: Quarterly performance figures for all train operating companies are set out in National Rail Trends, published by the Office of Rail Regulation. A copy is available in the House Library.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what public expenditure was allocated to *(a)* tracks, *(b)* estates and *(c)* rolling stock on the Greater Western Franchise in each of the last five years. [42161]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not record expenditure under these specific headings. The subsidy/premium payments for the constituent parts of the Greater Western franchise paid/received over the last five years are as follows:

£000

	First GW	*First GW Link*	*Wessex*
2000–01	42,770.	10,984	—
2001–02	27,511	[1]3,931	22,582
2002–03	8,735	[1]13,232	50,885
2003–04	16,089	[1]15,027	75,015
2004–05	[1]17,635	[1]5,804	55,628

[1] Premium paid to Government.

Light Rail Schemes

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost has been of light rail schemes delivered since 2000; and what he estimates will be the cost of schemes to be delivered up to July 2010. [40845]

Derek Twigg: Five light rail schemes have been delivered since 2000. The total cost of each was as follows:

Croydon Tramlink (opened 2000), £200 million

Manchester Metrolink Phase II extension to Eccles (2000), £160 million

Metro Sunderland extension (2002), £98 million

Nottingham Express Transit Line 1 (2004), £200 million

Docklands Light Railway extension to London City Airport (2005), £147 million

A number of new schemes are currently being developed. These include:

An extension to Midland Metro, which has provisional approval at £165 million in 1999 prices.

An extension to the Docklands Light Railway to Woolwich which is estimated to cost £200 million.

Refurbishment and capacity enhancement to part of the Manchester Metrolink. This is part of a commitment of £520 million public sector funding for public transport, which could include light rail, in the areas covered by Metrolink Phase III.

Proposals for other light rail schemes in England are being developed and will be considered in due course.

M18

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport why the temporary 50 mph speed limit is in force on the M18 in the vicinity of junction 1 during periods when works are not taking place. [44792]

Dr. Ladyman: The temporary 50 mph speed limit is in force on the M18 in the vicinity of junction 1 during periods when works are not taking place following a risk assessment which identified that it is safer for the road users and workers on site to enforce the speed limit for the full duration. Removing traffic management and the speed restriction while works were not ongoing would mean adding unnecessary safety risks to the road workers and road users, as well as extending the time required to complete the works.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the roadworks in the vicinity of junction 1 of the M18 motorway to be completed; and when he expects the M18 motorway to be free of *(a)* roadworks and *(b)* lane closures. [44793]

Dr. Ladyman: The roadworks in the vicinity of junction 1 of the M18 motorway are expected to finish in March 2006. The M18 is a strategic route and has regular maintenance and safety works. Therefore there will be roadworks and lane closures on an ongoing basis as needed.

Mobile Phone Coverage

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to improve mobile phone coverage on national mainline inter-city rail links. [43558]

Derek Twigg: Improving mobile phone coverage on inter-city rail links is a commercial matter for the train operating companies concerned and mobile phone companies.

The Department understand that Virgin trains, among others, are aware of the issue and are working on solutions with the mobile phone providers.

Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the arrangements are for the Government to oversee the work of Network Rail. [40910]

Derek Twigg: The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) is responsible for monitoring Network Rail to ensure that it acts in the public interest and delivers the outputs for which it is funded. ORR publishes regular information on Network Rail's performance including the Network Rail Monitor each quarter and an annual assessment. As a major funder of Network Rail, and to facilitate its role in setting strategy for the railway and its other railway functions, the Department for Transport also receives regular monitoring information from Network Rail.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes were made to the guarantee arrangements for Network Rail's debt when the Strategic Rail Authority was abolished. [40911]

Derek Twigg: The credit support arrangements for Network Rail previously provided by the Strategic Rail Authority were transferred to the Secretary of State for Transport on 26 June 2005. There were no changes to these arrangements arising from the transfer.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his most recent estimate is of the capital value of Network Rail's assets; and what charge he holds over those assets in the event that the company becomes insolvent. [40918]

Derek Twigg: The capital value of Network Rail's assets is a matter for the company and is set out in their annual report and accounts. The Secretary of State has no charge over any of Network Rail's assets.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the risk to *(a)* Network Rail's financial position and *(b)* its ability to service its debts if the Government should decide to reduce the level of activity it purchases from the Network; and whether he has made an assessment of the corresponding risk of the Government's guarantees being required. [40919]

Derek Twigg: The total income required by Network Rail and the outputs it has to deliver for that income for a five year period is determined by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) in Access Charge Reviews. Under the arrangements in the Railways Act 2005, at the start of future Access Charge Reviews the Secretary of State must provide ORR with details of the high level outputs he wants the railway to deliver and the public funding available for this. In carrying out the Access Charge Review, ORR must have regard to this information in establishing Network Rail's income and required outputs. ORR also take full account of the costs of servicing Network Rail's existing debts and its overall financial position.

Network Rail's income and required outputs can only be altered within the five year period under circumstances determined by ORR. This would take the form of an Access Charge Review as described above.

These arrangements should ensure that Network Rail has sufficient income to meet all its obligations.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what contingency arrangements he has put in place in the event of Network Rail becoming insolvent. [40920]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail is making good progress towards delivering the obligations established by the Access Charge Review 2003, including its efficiency savings target. Financial monitoring by ORR indicates that Network Rail is well within its financial licence condition and the likelihood of the company becoming

insolvent in the foreseeable future is therefore remote. Accordingly, no specific contingency arrangements have been considered. However, should a protected railway company be unable to or likely to become unable to pay its debts, the Railways Act 1993, as amended, includes powers for the Secretary of State to petition for a Railway Administration Order in relation to that company.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's submission to the Office for National Statistics concerning the classification of Network Rail's debt. [40921]

Derek Twigg: Correspondence between the Department for Transport and Office for National Statistics about the classification of Network Rail is available on the Office of National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/Methodology_by_theme/rail_network/default.asp

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what rights the Government has to define Network Rail's future activity. [40923]

Derek Twigg: The Government does not define Network Rail's future activity. Under the arrangements in the Railways Act 2005, at the start of an Access Charge Review the Secretary of State provides the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) with information about the high level outputs he wants the railway as a whole to deliver and the public funding likely to be available for a five year period. Scottish Ministers provide similar information as regards the railway in Scotland. ORR will use this in the course of the Access Charge Review to establish the specific outputs that Network Rail has to deliver as well as the income it requires for this.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many working days have been lost to strike action on the national rail network in each year since 1997. [43206]

Derek Twigg: The number of working days lost by passenger train operating companies (TOCs) are outlined in the following table:

1997	2,400
1998	3,634
1999	0
2000	1,713
2001	2,153
2002	29,709
2003	6,622
2004[1]	200
2005[1]	1,750

[1] The figures for 2004 and 2005 are estimates as the information is no longer collected in detail by the association of train operating companies (ATOC).

The table does not include reference to lost working days affecting Network Rail. As this is an operational matter for Network Rail, I have asked Network Rail to respond directly to the hon. Member.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the economy of strike action on the national rail network in each year since 1997. [43207]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of the number of passenger journeys on the national rail network affected by strike action in each year since 1997. [43208]

Derek Twigg: The data requested are not held by the Department and the information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average age is of the rolling stock of each of the heavy rail franchises; and whether the new contracts include plans to replace old rolling stock. [34637]

Derek Twigg: The average age of rolling stock by franchise (as at 1 October 2005) is:

Franchise	*Average age of rolling stock (in years)*	*Note*
c2c	4.5	296 new vehicles introduced, replacing the entire fleet operated by c2c
Central	13.6	
Chiltern	11.0	
First Great Western	24.6	The Department for Transport is leading the procurement of new vehicles to replace the existing High Speed Train (HST), it is planned they will start entering service from the end of 2012.
First Great Western Link	14.8	
Gatwick Express	8.2	
GNER	21.2	The Mk4 'Mallard' fleet is currently 16-years-old. The High Speed Train (HST) fleet is now approaching 30-years-old. The Department for Transport is leading the procurement of new vehicles to replace the existing HSTs, it is planned they will start entering service from the end of 2012.
Great Northern	19.9	
Island Line	67.8	Island Line is a small operator providing local and leisure services between Shanklin and Rye Pier Head on the Isle of Wight.
Midland Mainline	16.7	The Department for Transport is leading the procurement of new vehicles to replace the existing High Speed Train (HST), it is planned they will start entering service from the end of 2012.
Northern	17.1	
One	20.8	
Scotrail	14.0	
Silverlink	15.9	
Southern	8.1	742 new vehicles introduced as part of Southern Region upgrade, comprising two thirds of the Southern fleet.

Franchise	Average age of rolling stock (in years)	Note
South Eastern Trains	8.5	618 new vehicles introduced as part of Southern Region upgrade, comprising half of the SET fleet.
South West Trains	10.0	785 new vehicles introduced, (665 of these as part of Southern Region upgrade) comprising half of the SWT fleet.
Thameslink	18.8	
Transpennine	14.8	
Virgin Cross Country	3.6	352 new vehicles introduced, replacing the entire Cross Country fleet.
Virgin West Coast	4.1	477 new vehicles introduced, replacing the main West Coast fleet.
Wales and Borders	14.7	
Wessex	18.7	

As at 1 October 2005, the Average Age of the UK passenger fleet is 12.98 years. This compares to the average age in 2000 of 20.67 years and in 1995 of 22.74 years.

North East Regional Planning Assessment

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which *(a)* regional and *(b)* local stakeholders have participated in the development of the North East Regional Planning Assessment. [42007]

Derek Twigg: Development of the Regional Planning Assessment has benefited from extensive and constructive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including the North East Regional Assembly, One North East, Tyne and Wear PTE, the Regional Transport Forum, Local Authorities, Transport Operators and the Rail Passengers' Council.

Parliamentary Questions

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will answer question 34637 tabled by the hon. Member for Rochdale on 30 November 2005. [45379]

Derek Twigg: I have answered the hon. Member's question today.

Passenger Travel Alert Services

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to encourage public transport operators to use passenger travel alert services through mobile communications technology. [44304]

Dr. Ladyman: There are a number of public transport passenger travel alert services already available through mobile technology.

The Department for Transport supports Transport Direct, Britain's free online journey planning service, which offers a real time journey planning service to mobile and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) users. Users of Transport Direct's mobile and PDA service, which is subject to an ongoing development, can already:

Find out the departure and arrival times for national rail services throughout Britain and for some bus or coach stops in areas where Short Messaging Service (SMS) codes are available for bus or coach stops (e.g. in Wales, the South West, Leicestershire and the South East, except London). The service can give the scheduled arrival and departure time and in some cases provide the expected arrival or departure times.

View live travel news for car or public transport (e.g. check for delays and accidents) either for a region or for the whole of Britain.

Find out whether there is a taxi rank or private hire car firm at the rail station they are travelling to, and/or get phone numbers for taxi or cab firms serving the station.

Bookmark any useful pages they are viewing on their phone or PDA.

The Department also supports the Traveline telephone service that is operated by transport operators and local authorities. Traveline has an SMS text service covering Scotland, Wales and parts of England. The service provides info on the next departure times of bus services from bus stops and bus stations within that region, by responding through a text message to a customer request for next bus information.

In addition to scheduled bus times available through the Traveline SMS and phone service, some local authorities provide real time information for bus services through mobile devices. For example the "Star Text" scheme in Leicester and the "your next bus" service in West Yorkshire provide passengers with real time information about the actual running time of their buses through a text messaging service.

National Rail Enquiries offers a text-back facility which enables mobile phone users to check whether trains are running to schedule. Users text the name of the station (or the designated three-letter station code if they know it) to 484950. By return they receive information on the status of trains that are due over the next hour, with a status report (i.e. "On Time", "+5m", etc.).

Rapid Transport Lines

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new rapid transport lines are planned in the next five years; and if he will list them. [40581]

Derek Twigg: Construction has started on an extension to the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Woolwich. It is due for completion in 2009.

Phase 1a of the East London bus-based transit scheme linking Ilford with Dagenham Dock via Barking town centre is due for completion in 2007.

The following new rapid transport lines have provisional funding approval:

Midland Metro tram extensions to Brierly Hill and Birmingham City

Manchester, Leigh guided bus

Cambridge guided bus

Luton to Dunstable guided bus

£520 million public funding has been committed to Greater Manchester, subject to GMPTE developing a satisfactory plan for the areas covered by Metrolink Phase III.

A number of other schemes are in various stages of development, some of which may commence construction in the next five years.

Road Accidents (Ice)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries in road accidents, where the primary cause was ice on the road, there were in each of the past 20 years. [44524]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the primary cause of personal road injury accidents is not available. The number of fatalities and serious injuries in personal injury road accidents where there was "Frost or Ice" on the road surface, is given in the following table for 1985–2004.

Number of fatal and serious casualties by road surface condition "Frost or Ice": 1985–2004.

	Severity of casualty	
	Fatal[1]	*Serious*
1985	100	1,894
1986	118	2,039
1987	65	1,159
1988	63	1,071
1989	66	871
1990	58	747
1991	84	1,447
1992	77	1,040
1993	58	827
1994	53	872
1995	60	859
1996	59	919
1997	36	515
1998	33	558
1999	60	753
2000	33	487
2001	66	905
2002	29	301
2003	32	619
2004	40	505

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident. Excludes confirmed suicides, death from natural causes and injuries to pedestrians with no vehicle involvement (e.g. a fall on the pavement).

Road Improvements

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 929W, if he will clarify the information given in relation to road improvement in North East Lincolnshire, with particular reference to low noise resurfacing on the A180 east of Ulceby towards Grimsby. [43728]

Dr. Ladyman: My answer of 16 January confirmed the programmed dates for the low noise carriageway resurfacing of the remaining sections of the A180 in North East Lincolnshire.

The Highways Agency's policy for carriageway resurfacing is developed on a whole life cost basis, identifying the appropriate maintenance treatment at the optimum time and using quieter surfacing materials.

The current Government Spending Review 2004 confirms the Highways Agency's budgets for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08; no indication is available of funding levels beyond this period. Consequently, as the programmed dates for the works concerned fall outside the current Spending Review period, the allocation of funding to these resurfacing schemes cannot be confirmed at this time.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2318–19W, on road improvement costs, what proportion of the overrun for the targeted programme of improvements can be ascribed to *(a)* underestimates, *(b)* fraud, *(c)* inflation in the construction industry and *(d)* other factors. [44104]

Dr. Ladyman: The targeted programme of improvements (TPI) table placed in the House Library in December 2005 compares the approved full out-turn cost against the scheme cost submitted for TPI entry approval. Since April 2003 the TPI entry cost has been reported on the basis of full projected out-turn, making allowance for identified risks, inflation up to scheme completion, non-recoverable VAT and for 'optimism bias' in line with revised Treasury guidance issued in April 2003. Before then, only net scheme costs, exclusive of VAT, projected inflation and 'optimism bias' were reported at TPI entry.

This is why as stated in the footnote to the answer of 19 December 2005, the two sets of figures in the table are not directly comparable for the 43 schemes that entered the TPI prior to April 2003. For these schemes, about £0.6 billion (39 per cent.) of the £1.54 billion variance against the cost reported at TPI entry is attributable to the absence of VAT, projected inflation at 2.5 per cent. and 'optimism bias'. The remainder of the variance can be attributed to underestimates in the scope of schemes and the impact of inflation. Scheme budgets have assumed that construction inflation would run at 2.5 per cent. per year. The latest indications suggest that a higher allowance may be more appropriate and more research is under way in that area. As far as the Highways Agency is aware fraud has played no factor in any requirement for budget increases.

For the 39 schemes that entered the TPI since April 2003, the two sets of figures are directly comparable and only two schemes have approved budgets that have increased since TPI entry. These increases (£61 million) can be attributed to a combination of underestimates (£26 million) and higher construction inflation (£35 million). Again, none of these increases can be attributed to fraud.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department collects information on the number of fatalities in road traffic accidents partially or wholly caused by *(a)* domestic animals, *(b)* farm animals and *(c)* pheasants reared for shooting. [44202]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect information on personal injury road accidents caused by animals. However we do collect information on animals identified as carriageway hazards in accidents, specifically categories of "dog on road" and "other animal on road".

The following table shows the number of fatalities in personal injury road accidents where a dog or other animal has been identified as a carriageway hazard for 2004.

	Fatalities
	Number
Dog on road	1
Other animal on road	52

Transport Projects (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding his Department has provided for transport projects in Coventry South since 1997. [44553]

Ms Buck: Since the introduction of Local Transport Plans in 2000, the local authorities in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Area have received around £402.5 million in funding for local transport projects and maintenance schemes. In addition, the authorities received approximately £92.5 million in funding for major local transport schemes including £28 million of funding allocated in December 2004 for the Coventry Quality Bus Network.

Between 1997 and 2000 the local authorities in the former West Midlands county received approximately £175.5 million in funding for local transport capital investment. The Department for Transport does not have the data to identify a figure separately for local transport investment in Coventry south.

The Coventry South constituency has also benefited from the £7 billion investment in the west coast railway line. An additional £4.2 million has also been spent on railway related park and ride schemes.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Women's Pensions

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what plans the Government are considering to tackle women's pension inequality. [44724]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* Women's pension provision is steadily improving over time. Through various measures introduced since 1997, we have already lifted 1.9 million pensioners out of absolute low income—1.3 million of whom are women. The introduction of Home Responsibilities Protection in 1978 together with women's increased labour market participation mean that women are building up better basic state pension records. Future women pensioners will also benefit from the introduction of State Second Pension with six million more building up additional state pension than did under SERPS.

Government recognises that there is still more to be done to address this problem, and that's why the Department for Work and Pensions published a report entitled 'Women and pensions: The evidence' in November 2005, which will inform the next phase of the National Pensions Debate.

We are currently analysing the findings of the Pensions Commission's final report published on 30 November 2005, and we will consider the recommendations and options made by the Commission with a view to publishing a White Paper in the spring. Our proposals for reform will be guided by the principle that the pension system should deliver fair outcomes for women

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Administrative Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39815]

Alan Johnson: Functions carried out on official premises on behalf of the DTI in *(a)* England by the core Department include the following work undertaken by: Finance and Resource Management; "Finance processing services", Corporate Law and Governance Directorate; "Companies Investigation Branch", Legal D Enforcement Unit, Industry Economics and Statistics Directorate and the work of the Regional Policy, Partnership, Transport and Planning Directorate.

Functions carried out on official premises on behalf of the DTI in *(b)* London by the core Department include the work undertaken by: Business and Innovation Groups, British National Space Centre, Business Relations and Support, Consumer and Competition Policy Directorate, Corporate Law and Governance, Energy; "Industries and Technologies, Markets, Strategy, Resources and Development Units", Employee Relations Directorate, Europe and World Trade Directorate, Finance and Resource Management, Human Resources and Change Management, Internal Audit, Industry Economics and Statistics Directorate, Innovation; "Economics Statistics and Evaluation, Technological Innovation", Information and Workplace Services Directorate, The Legal Group; "Business and Consumers, Employment Discrimination Equality Intellectual Property, Energy, Companies and Insolvency and Enforcement", The Ministerial and Parliamentary Support Team, Office for Civil Nuclear Security, Operations Directorate, Office of Science and Technology; "Science and Engineering Base and Transdepartmental Science", The Regions Directorate, Strategy Communications Unit, Strategic Policy Analysis, Women and Equality Group, Womens National Commission and Export Control and Non-Proliferation Directorate.

Additionally functions are carried out by UK Trade and Investment, an organisation which brings together the work of the DTI and the FCO in support of British trade and investment overseas, and in encouraging Inward Investment.

Further detail pertaining to more in depth specification of the actual type of work carried out by the Units indicated above and associated Information on the administration costs of work undertaken is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39943]

Alan Johnson: There are no functions carried out on official premises on behalf of the DTI in *(a)* Northern Ireland by the core Department.

Functions carried out on official premises on behalf of the DTI in *(b)* Wales by the core Department include some but not all of the functions undertaken by: Human Resources and Change Management Directorate and Legal D Enforcement Unit.

Further detail pertaining to more in depth specification of the actual type of work carried out by the units indicated above and associated information on the administration costs of work undertaken is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40011]

Alan Johnson: Functions carried out on official premises on behalf of the DTI in Scotland include some but not all of those functions undertaken by the Energy Resources and Development Unit.

Functions carried out by Executive Agencies and Arms Length Bodies in Scotland include some but not all of those functions undertaken by: Employment Tribunals Service, Insolvency Service and Companies House.

Further detail pertaining to more in depth specification of the actual type of work carried out by the units, Executive Agencies and Arms Length Bodies indicated above and associated information on the administration costs of work undertaken is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Career Development (Women)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to encourage companies to develop the careers of their female staff. [43389]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* DTI has been actively promoting best practice for many years, through case studies, reports and industry events. For example, I will be speaking at "Women in IT Forum" meeting on 8 February, which will examine both the benefits to managers and to their businesses in having a better gender-balanced workforce.

Additionally DTI has various publications such as "Advancing Women in the Workplace—Good Practice Guide" and "Building Better Boards"—designed to support managers in implementing effective strategies for reducing barriers to women's advancement and to combat stereotyping in the workplace.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with business organisations on encouraging schoolgirls to consider careers in sectors which have been seen as traditionally male. [43390]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The concentration of women in particular job sectors is one of the main causes of the gender pay gap, and we recognise the importance of working with business organisations to address this issue.

Government are working with key partners on various initiatives to encourage schoolgirls to consider careers in sectors that are traditionally seen as male. The Manufacturing Forum is just one of the initiatives the Government are involved in. This is a partnership between Government, industry and stakeholders. The Forum highlighted the Image of Manufacturing as a priority area for action and set up a Image Subgroup which brought together key organisations already active in promoting science, engineering and technology to girls and women, in order to focus on how they can work together to improve the perception of manufacturing among girls and women to improve gender equality in occupations where women are currently under-represented.

Computer Club for Girls (CC4G) is another successful initiative aimed at getting more young girls involved in IT. DTI, DfES and South East England Development Agency supported e-Skills UK with the original pilot projects. The DfES funded national roll-out of this programme was launched in June 2005. Initial research on the benefits of CC4G has indicated that 66 per cent. of the participants are now considering future IT careers.

We acknowledge that there is still more work to do, and I look forward to the Women and Work Commission's findings and recommendations in their final report in the coming weeks, as they have looked at the occupational segregation as part of the gender pay gap.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding local race equality work will be allocated in the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. [44176]

Meg Munn: The Government has given a commitment, through the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, to continue to support the network of Racial Equality Councils and its anti -discrimination and local race equality work. The work of the RECs is an important foundation on which the new Commission will build.

Government has made clear that funding for race equality work through the RECs will continue at the current level for the foreseeable future.

Consumer Credit Bill

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the planned timetable is for the implementation of the Consumer Credit Bill. [44101]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Consumer Credit Bill is still under consideration by Parliament and it is therefore too early to say exactly what the implementation timetable will be at this stage. However, we would aim to implement the bulk of the legislative provisions as soon as practicable after Royal Assent, taking into account the time needed

for consultation and for the system changes that the regulator and industry will need to make. It is unlikely, therefore that any changes would come into effect before April 2006 and some will take longer.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39094]

Alan Johnson: For expenditure on advertising by my Department through COI from 1995–96 to 2000–01, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham on 20 November 2001, *Official Report*, column 162W. Expenditure for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 (to date) was £6,610,240, £13,741,906 and £2,044,497 respectively. These figures include advertising by the Small Business Service and exclude VAT.

Information on publicity expenditure from centrally held budgets is contained in the Government's expenditure plans and, more recently, the DTI's annual departmental report, which are available in the Libraries of the House. Figures relating to other information campaigns, and information on publicity and advertising by NDPBs, are not held centrally and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Letter from Claire Clancy, dated 24 January 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

	£
2000–01	401,245
2001–02	586,203
2002–03	376,641
2003–04	362,526
2004–05	533,310
2005–06	409,055

Advertising is mainly for compliance issues, particularly to remind company directors on their statutory duties to file accounts within the designated timescales.

I am sorry that figures for earlier years are unavailable due to the disproportionate cost of retrieval.

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 24 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997.

The Employment Tribunals Service has had no expenditure on advertising for the years in question.

Letter from Dr. Jeff Llewellyn, dated 24 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997.

NWML spent the following amounts on advertising during this period (the amounts of 03/04 onwards are actual, amounts before this are estimates):

	£
1997–98	800
1998–99	800
1999–2000	1,000
2000–01	1,000
2001–02	1,500
2002–03	1,500
2003–04	3,715
2004–05	1,430
2005–06	[1]437

[1] Year to date.

Letter from Desmond Flynn, dated 24 January 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2005/2524) asking how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997.

The Insolvency Service has not spent any money on advertising from May 1997 to date.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 24 January 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 16 December 2005, regarding advertising spend by the Patent Office since 1997.

	£
1997–98	8,908
1998–99	12,364
1999–2000	2,951
2000–01	7,391
2001–02	4,822
2002–03	3,569
200304	1,500
200405	21,500
2005–06[1]	825

[1] To date

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41247]

Alan Johnson: Information on refreshments specifically is not available. However, the table shows the total expenditure on entertainment by the Department of Trade and Industry in each year between 1998–99 and 2004–05. Information on spend for 1997–98 would be available only at disproportionate cost.

The majority of the Department's entertainment expenditure represents the hosting of stakeholder events both in the UK and overseas. This includes refreshments at meetings, working breakfasts and lunches and official events.

All expenditure of official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government accounting.

	£000
1999–2000	887
2000–01	1,089
2001–02	1,165
2002–03	1,311
2003–04	1,110
2004–05	1,777

Departmental Publications

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to publish as an annex to his annual report a list of all publications published by his Department in the preceding year; and if he will make a statement. [41000]

Alan Johnson: Details of major consultations and publications issued this year will be included within the 2006 Departmental Report. There are no plans to publish details of all publications separately as an annex. All DTI Publications currently available are listed on the DTI website at www.dti.gov.uk/publications/, the website covers all document formats including hard-copy and electronic versions.

Lending Companies

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many registered lending companies there were in the *(a)* Leeds, metropolitan district and *(b)* Leeds, West constituency in each year since 1997. [44438]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) is responsible for issuing consumer credit licenses and maintaining a public register of licensed traders. However this information is not held in constituency or Post Code order.

Renewable Energy

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants are available for *(a)* domestic and *(b)* non-domestic micro-renewable energy installations in (i) England and (ii) Wales. [36916]

Malcolm Wicks: Grants are available for domestic and non-domestic micro renewable installations through two programmes. Clear Skies offers grants for the installation of solar water heating, small wind, micro hydro, ground source heat pumps and biomass heating, further details can be found on the website www.clear-skies.org. The Photovoltaics Demonstration Programme also offers grant for the installation of photovoltaic panels for the production of electricity, for further details please see the website www.solarpvgrants.co.uk

Both these programmes will be superseded by a new Low Carbon Buildings Programme, which is due to start in April 2006, subject to EU State Aids approval.

Sunday Trading

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultants the Government have invited to conduct the analysis of the case for deregulation of Sunday trading hours. [41034]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has appointed Indepen Consulting Ltd. to conduct an independent economic cost-benefit analysis of the impact of further liberalisation of Sunday Trading.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1675W, on Sunday trading, when he expects the cost-benefit analysis report to be *(a)* completed and *(b)* published. [43476]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I expect the consultants' report to be submitted in the spring. We will place it on DTI's website shortly thereafter.

UK-registered Companies

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many UK registered companies operate in South and Central America, broken down by country. [44191]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Department does not record this information.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what dates in 2005 officials from his Department had meetings with British companies working in South America; and what was discussed at each meeting. [44192]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Department does not maintain a composite record of such meetings.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43501]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The following table shows the number of disciplinary actions involving serious or gross misconduct taken against civil servants employed in the Cabinet Office in the years 2001 to 2005. With one exception in 2004, a sanction was applied in each case.

	Disciplinary actions
2001	9
2002	7
2003	5
2004	9
2005	4

The department's disciplinary process reflects statutory requirements and is available on the department's intranet to all employees.

Data Sharing

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the documents and publications

on data sharing in the public sector the Cabinet Office and e-government agencies have placed in the public domain since 2001. [43566]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally. However, a list has been compiled from available records and has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what consultation his Department has undertaken on the privacy of data sharing within the delivery of more secure public services. [44606]

Mr. Jim Murphy: In April 2002, the Performance and Innovation Unit (now the Strategy Unit) published a report "Privacy and Data sharing: the way forward for public services" and sought public consultation on some of its key recommendations. Further work on data sharing and the privacy aspect is included in the Government report "Transformational Government—Enabled by Technology", (CM6683) published in November 2005. This Strategy as a whole is currently out for consultation which is due to close 3 February 2006. There is also regular consultation with the information technology industry and others on standards within the e-Government Interoperability Framework (e-GIF).

Delivery Unit

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what have been the main outputs from the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit since its inception. [42527]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) was formed in the summer of 2001. Its mission is to help Government to deliver better and more efficient public services. It does this by monitoring and reporting to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on delivery of his top delivery and reform priorities, and identifying and working with Departments to overcome the key barriers to improvement.

It remains the responsibility of Secretaries of State to deliver public service outcomes. Since 2001 PMDU has worked most closely with the Department of Health, Home Office, the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Transport. These Departments have achieved improvements in a number of their public service agreement (PSA) target areas.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41210]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The information requested for the Cabinet Office is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pension Entitlements

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the Government's policy is on pension entitlement for those taking up a public appointment; and if he will make a statement. [44609]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Most public appointments are not pensionable. Where an appointee receives remuneration and has executive responsibilities he or she may be provided with a pension. It is the responsibility of individual Departments to set the terms and conditions for their own appointments, including pension entitlement. The publication from Her Majesty's Treasury's 'Board Members anvd Public Appointees: Pension and Compensation Guidance Notes' sets out the points that departments need to consider when making any pension arrangements for such appointments. The guidance is available on Her Majesty's Treasury's website at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk./media/36F/03/pensions_board_mem_230604.pdf

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bangladesh

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on current levels of inter-community violence in Bangladesh, with particular reference to the Muslim and Hindu communities [43746]

Dr. Howells: The Government of Bangladesh has assured us of its commitment to safeguard the rights and freedoms of all its citizens, and we welcome this. There are, however, continuing concerns about the situation of religious minorities in Bangladesh and acts of repression against them and indigenous groups. In 2005, there were reports of attacks on Hindus and Ahmadiyyas, ranging from serious crimes such as murder and grievous bodily harm, to public order offences and criminal damage. I raised these concerns with the authorities when I visited Bangladesh in November 2005.

The High Commission in Dhaka closely monitors incidents of religious persecution and intolerance and regularly lobbies ministers and officials on these issues. Both bilaterally and with our EU partners we shall continue to encourage the Government of Bangladesh to meet its constitutional and international obligations on human rights.

Most recently, in December, the High Commissioner directly lobbied the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister, Morshed Khan, about a potentially violent demonstration against the Ahmadiyyas from the International Khatme Nabuwat Movement. The Bangladeshi authorities did respond effectively, preventing violence on this occasion.

China

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Chinese investments in Commonwealth countries in Africa; and if he will make a statement. [45309]

Ian Pearson: The Department has not calculated Chinese investments in Commonwealth African countries. However, China is Africa's third most important trade partner, and investments are accelerating in minerals, raw materials and energy. Through the Department for International Development Office in Beijing, we discuss with China the impact its activities and investments are having on poorer nations, including in Africa.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the EU Council of Ministers last met the Chinese Foreign Minister to discuss Chinese investments in Africa; and if he will make a statement. [45310]

Ian Pearson: The EU Council of Ministers has not met the Chinese Foreign Minister to discuss this issue. However, there have been informal discussions on China's role in Africa in the EU context. On 9 December the EU Secretariat organised the first Africa Task Force meeting to discuss this issue with Chinese representatives. The UK supported this useful initiative led by Koen Vervaeke, the Council Secretariat Head of the Africa Task Force.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last raised the issue of China's raw materials investment programme in African countries with his Chinese counterpart; and if he will make a statement. [45311]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, has not raised the issue of Chinese investments in African countries. In ministerial contacts with the Chinese ambassador, we have argued for a responsible investment policy, and we have expressed concern about Chinese commercial support for countries with internal problems such as Zimbabwe and Sudan.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 28 October 2005 from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, on behalf of Nazia Mahmood (post reference 728276, reference M1265571, acknowledgement reference B2588015). [44107]

Dr. Howells: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate passed the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood's letter to UKvisas on 18 January. UKvisas will reply as soon as possible.

Cuba

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Cuba about the detention of Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet; and if he will make a statement. [44531]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We are very concerned about the plight of Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, particularly the effect of the severe conditions of his confinement on his health. Our embassy in Havana continues to monitor Dr. Biscet's case and maintains close contact with his supporters and family. Most recently, a member of our embassy staff met his wife in December 2005. The Government considers his imprisonment to be a grave violation of his civil and political freedoms, and in particular his freedom of expression as recognised in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes the right 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'.

We regularly raise the situation of all political prisoners in Cuba with Cuban authorities both in London and Havana, and call for their immediate release. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister responsible for relations with Cuba, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, most recently raised this with the Cuban Ambassador on 8 November 2005 at the all party parliamentary group Cuba meeting. During our presidency of the EU we issued a number of statements reiterating this message and condemning Cuba's human rights record.

Cyprus

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Turkish Government in respect of proposals to build leisure, tourist and educational facilities on illegally-occupied land in the Morphou district of northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [44310]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We are aware of plans to build leisure, tourist and educational facilities in the Morphou district of northern Cyprus. While we maintain a dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot community on all aspects of the Cyprus settlement, the Government are not in a position to control property development in the north. We recognise that the Turkish Cypriots face powerful economic forces in a perverse political environment and believe that the difficult and complex issues relating to property in Cyprus can only be resolved as part of a comprehensive settlement.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs where he plans to meet Mr. Talat during his forthcoming visit to Cyprus; and in what capacity he is meeting him. [44311]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, plans to meet Mehmet Ali Talat in his offices as leader of the Turkish Cypriot community during his forthcoming visit to Cyprus. This is in keeping with past practice.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the current flows of small arms to warring factions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what measures he is taking to ensure a better enforcement of the arms embargo. [43745]

Ian Pearson: The borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remain porous. Smuggling of small arms to dissident forces is generally small-scale. Throughout eastern DRC, the illicit exploitation of natural resources is connected with the continued proliferation of small arms to the armed factions that guard these mines.

In the UN Security Council in November 2005, the UK and other partners successfully sought agreement to name individuals and organisations responsible for arms embargo violations as provided for in UN Security Council Resolution 1649. These violators will now be

targeted by sanctions including asset freezes and travel bans. We are currently considering the most recent report of the United Nations group of experts, and will be discussing within the Security Council later this month what action can be taken to improve implementation of the arms embargo.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received concerning the state of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what recent representations have been made to the government of that country by his Department. [44581]

Ian Pearson: We have received regular representations from local and international non-governmental organisations regarding the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Years of conflict, exacerbated by corruption, illegal exploitation of resources, the collapse of the state and chronic poverty, have led to a high level of human rights violations and abuses of humanitarian standards.

The UK frequently reminds the DRC authorities of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups and to bring to justice all perpetrators of abuse. An EU-led Resolution on the DRC adopted at this year's UN General Assembly makes clear that the DRC Government must take action to improve human rights conditions, through better command and control of the armed forces, improved freedom of expression and better protection for human rights defenders.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions consular officials have visited Mr. Hilal Al Jedda in Iraq; and what other consular assistance has been offered to him. [45386]

Ian Pearson: Consular officials have not visited or provided any consular assistance to Mr. Al Jedda, who is a dual Iraqi-British National.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Mr. Hilal Al Jedda will be tried according to international norms or returned home to the United Kingdom. [45387]

Ian Pearson: Mr. Al Jedda is detained in Iraq pursuant to UN Security Council resolutions 1546 (2004) and 1637 (2005) and Iraqi legislation, which authorise the Multi-National Force in Iraq to detain persons where this is necessary for imperative reasons of security. He is not currently facing any criminal charges. Mr. Al Jedda travelled voluntarily to Iraq and the UK Government are under no obligation to return him to the UK.

Natural Disasters

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what UK financial aid has been offered to UK expatriates resident in areas that suffered from natural disasters in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [43423]

Dr. Howells: In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, we provided the following assistance:

Details	Cost (£)
Return airfares for a British husband and wife Atlanta/London/Atlanta.	3,544.48
Return airfares for a British mother and daughter Atlanta/London/Atlanta.	10,571.60
The cost of the funeral of a British national, who died during the hurricane in New Orleans.	944.69

In the Bali bombing in October 2005, one dual British/Australian national, resident in Australia was killed and a British resident in Australia was injured, along with her Australian husband. Under the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Aftercare plan for victims of acts of terrorism overseas, we provided the following assistance:

Details	Cost (£)
Return flights to Australia for two bereaved family members, one from UK and one from Canada.	7,003.65
Medical evacuation from Bali to Singapore and hospital treatment for the injured British national. Return flight London to Singapore and five nights accommodation in Singapore for her sister.	5,234.47

All of the costs indicated were incurred by the FCO. The Department for International Development made no expenditure on UK expatriates resident in areas that suffered from natural disasters in 2005.

Taiwan

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Ministers in his Department have visited Taiwan in the course of their ministerial duties since 1997. [45307]

Ian Pearson: There have been no Foreign and Commonwealth Office ministerial visits since 1997.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last raised the sovereignty of Taiwan with his Chinese counterpart. [45308]

Ian Pearson: In their bilateral meeting, during the Chinese State Visit in November 2005, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed Taiwan with his Chinese counterpart, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister also discussed Taiwan with President Hu during his meeting.

Our long-standing position on Taiwan remains unchanged: that is, we acknowledge the position of the Chinese Government that Taiwan is a province of China and recognise the Chinese Government as the sole legal government of China. The United Kingdom considers the Taiwan issue is one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. We are strongly opposed to any use of force and urge both sides to engage in constructive dialogue.

Turkey

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken to ensure that progress is made under the Austrian presidency on negotiations regarding Turkish membership of the European Union. [44097]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Under the Austrian presidency, the Commission is taking forward the negotiations following the framework agreed on 3 October. It is currently continuing its process of screening Turkey's legislation against the EU acquis. Following the presentation of the Commission's screening reports, member states will consider whether to set benchmarks for Turkey to fulfil before the opening of individual chapters and will then consider whether any chapters are ready to be opened. Throughout the process, the Government will seek to ensure that Turkey be treated on its own merits, just as would any other state negotiating for accession.

War Compensation Scheme

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether former British prisoners of war formerly held in Germany are able to apply under the German prisoner of war compensation scheme; [43173]

(2) what progress his Department has made in its examination of the German compensation scheme for prisoners of war. [43174]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Dr. Lewis Moonie, in a debate on this issue on 5 April 2001, *Official Report*, columns 602–04.

The only relevant German compensation scheme of which the Government are aware is the German Forced Labour Compensation Programme, administered for the purposes of the UK by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which provides financial compensation to former slave and forced labourers. The German authorities have made clear that this programme specifically excludes Prisoners of War (PoW) as the funds were intended to compensate foreign national civilians who were forcibly conscripted by the Nazis to work as 'slave labourers'. The IOM has administered the scheme accordingly. This meant that being a PoW was not in itself a cause for entitlement to compensation. The deadline for applications to the IOM expired in August 2001.

HOME DEPARTMENT

0870 Numbers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions in the last five years on which 0870 telephone numbers have been used by his Department as contact numbers for members of the public; and how much revenue was received from the use of 0870 contact numbers in each of the last five years for which records are available. [24456]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Available records indicate that the 0870 numbers given in the following table have been used by the Home Office and its agencies. On 15 September 2005 the 0870 Home Office general public inquiry number was replaced with a geographical number. The department received no income from calls to the switchboard.

The 0870 numbers used by the Immigration and Nationality Enquiry Bureau (INEB) have been in existence since December 1998 and are published widely. The then Home Secretary, Jack Straw, in March 1998 agreed to the use of 0870 numbers on the understanding that IND re-invest monies earned into improving the telephone bureau operation and thereby customer service. In spring 2002, £750,000 was used to purchase a switchboard with increased functionality for INEB.

Figures are not available for the last five years. For the period one January 2004 to 31 August 2004, IND received £72,067 from BT for the use of 0870 telephone numbers. IND now take no revenue. The use of 0870 numbers in IND is being reviewed. The UK Passport Service have no record of the revenue generated before the financial year 2002–03.

The following revenue was generated:

	£
2002–03	230,593.85
2003–04	252,127.53
2004–05	383,264.74
1 April to 31 October 2005	238,605.96

The Criminal Records Bureau operates as a public/private partnership with Capita Plc and operates six 0870 telephone numbers as contact numbers for the public. The Home Office receives no revenue for calls made to these numbers.

0870 Numbers in use within the Home Office

Home Office Public Enquiries(replaced with 020 7035 4848 on 15 September 2005)	0870 000 1585
Immigration and Nationality Directorate	
Main	0870 606 7766
Application Forms	0870 241 0645
Complaints	0870 241 6523
UK Passport Service	
Main	0870 521 0410
Textphone	0870 240 8090
High Street Partners	0870 243 4477
Complaints	0870 241 1902
Siemens Business Services (initial application check)	0870 125 1256
Criminal Record Bureau	
Main	0870 909 0811
Registration	0870 909 0822
Disclosure applications	0870 909 0844
Minicom	0870 909 0344
Disputes	0870 909 0778
Welsh language line	0870 909 0223
HM Prison Service	
Main	0870 000 1397
HMP Holloway	0870 000 0575
TOGETHER	
Advice to practitioners on tackling anti-social behaviour	0870 220 2000
Crime Reduction	
Advice on preventing car crime	0870 000 8518
Security Industry Authority	0870 243 0100

Alcohol Sales (Under-age People)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices were issued for *(a)* consumption of alcohol by and *(b)* selling alcohol to under age people in (i) Essex and (ii) Castle Point in each of the last five years. [42906]

Paul Goggins: The Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND) scheme was brought into effect in England and Wales during 2003–04 to provide the police with a quick and effective means of dealing with minor offences. Under the scheme an offender is issued with a fixed penalty notice and has 21 days in which to pay the penalty or request a court hearing.

The offences of sale of alcohol to a person under 18 and consumption of alcohol by a person aged under 18 in licensed premises were added to the scheme with effect from 1 November 2004. The numbers of penalty notices issued for offences related to buying and consuming alcohol in Essex police force area, are provided in the table.

It is not possible to identify all Penalty Notices issued in Castle Point because the data is not broken down to that level of detail.

Number of penalty notices for disorder for certain offences relating to alcohol, Essex police force area, 2004 and 2005 (provisional)[1]

Offence description	*2004*	*2005*
Selling alcohol to person under 18	7	85
Consumption of alcohol by under 18 in licensed premises	—	—

[1] Provisional data January to September 2005

Antisocial Behaviour

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what proportion of antisocial behaviour orders issued to *(a)* under 18s and *(b)* under 16s have been breached in each year since 1999; [42146]

(2) what proportion of antisocial behaviour orders have been breached in each year since 1999. [42227]

Hazel Blears: Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. Age data are for those aged 10–17 and 18 and over. During this period 47 per cent. of ASBOs issued to persons aged 10–17 within the period were breached on one or more occasions. The corresponding percentage for those aged 18 and over is 38 per cent. The overall breach rate is 42 per cent.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* Derbyshire and *(b)* Amber Valley have been issued with anti-social behaviour orders *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each year since their introduction. [42938]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the criminal justice system area and local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the crime reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available).

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in each area since their inception; how many breaches have been recorded; how many prosecutions for breach there have been; how many recordings for breach have been obtained; and if he will make a statement on his policy on the recording of breaches. [44276]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the criminal justice system area and local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk.

This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available). The number of times persons have breached their ASBOs are not collected centrally.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database (HOCPD) only holds breach proceedings where there has been a conviction for breach of an ASBO. ASBO breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. Of the number of ASBOs issued during this period, as notified to the Home Office, the HOCPD records 2,053 occasions where a conviction was recorded for breaching an ASBO.

Asylum/Immigration

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers *(a)* whose claims are being processed and *(b)* who are appealing against a refusal for asylum are resident in the UK. [32818]

Mr. McNulty: As at the end of September 2005 there were 6,100 asylum applicants awaiting an initial decision (4,000 cases were work in progress ie the application had been outstanding for six months or less), all residing in the UK. As at the end of September 2005 the total asylum work in progress at the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal was 9,000 (to the nearest thousand).

A proportion of the 9,000 will be non-suspensive appeals, for which the appellant is residing outside the UK. Information on asylum applications is published quarterly. The next publication covering the last quarter of 2004 will be available on 22 February 2005 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Leeds, North West are *(a)* registered as asylum seekers and *(b)* registered migrants awaiting decision to be awarded status to remain in the UK. [38213]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 15 December 2005]:* Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what monitoring of the safety and welfare of deported asylum seekers to *(a)* Somaliland and *(b)* Somalia is undertaken; and from what sources his Department gains information to assess the personal safety and security of such people. [44459]

Mr. McNulty: As with returns to all countries, the Home Office does not routinely monitor the treatment of individual Somali nationals (both from Somalia and Somaliland) once removed from the UK. Where we refuse a claim and the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) dismisses any appeal we consider that it is safe for that individual to return. This is one of the reasons why the Government do not routinely monitor the treatment of individuals once removed from the UK.

However, if specific allegations are made that any returnee has experienced ill-treatment on return from the UK, these are followed up through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British high commission in Nairobi as a matter of urgency. The Government consider the safety of any prospective returnee at the initial decision stage and it is also covered by the AIT at the appeal stage. These assessments are made against the background of current information from a wide range of well-recognised sources about the situation in Somalia, including inter-governmental bodies, governmental sources and non-governmental human rights organisations.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Scottish First Minister about the use of dawn raids in asylum cases. [25315]

Mr. McNulty: [*holding answer 7 November 2005*]: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I have had discussions in person and on the phone with the First Minister on this and other subjects. In addition Immigration Service officials have met with officials from the Scottish Executive and Scotland Office in order to discuss the removal of failed asylum seeking families from Scotland.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers sought by his Department have been found through the use of Quick Check since its inception; and if he will make a statement. [43198]

Mr. McNulty: Quick Check records are available from one August 2004. Between this date, and 29 October 2005, a total of 60,660 Quick Check searches were submitted to the Immigration Asylum Fingerprint System (IAFS) database, and 25,283 possible matches identified.

Fingerprints captured by Quick Checks can be matched against those on an Application Registration Card (ARC), or transmitted for searching on the IAFS database. The result, which is automatically forwarded to the sender, is either "Possible Identification", this may require fingerprint expert verification, or "No match". Asylum status is not available on results forwarded from the IAFS to Quick Checks.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42878]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department is committed to ensuring compliance with fire safety law in premises it occupies. It is estimated that the proportion of premises occupied by the Department with audible fire alarm systems is roughly 90 per cent. The Department does not hold a central record of precisely how many premises have audible fire alarm systems. Instances where audible fire alarm systems are not installed include small buildings where there is no requirement under the Building Regulations. Otherwise some areas where persons are held in custody do not have audible fire alarm systems but in these instances controlled and managed contingency procedures will be in place.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what mechanisms are in place to ensure access by individuals to information about themselves gathered by means of the automatic number plate recognition system; [42367]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact on personal privacy of rolling out the automatic number plate recognition system. [42368]

Hazel Blears: My officials have been working closely with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to ensure that information collected by automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technologies and retained by the police is cognisant of the relevant data protection legislation. The specific ACPO guidance ensures that the principles detailed in part one of schedule one of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are followed by all police forces in relation to access to this information by individuals.

This document covers the European Convention for Human Rights, Data Protection, the Regulatory Investigative Powers Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the police use of ANPR (excluding speed enforcement devices) and is applicable to all police forces in England and Wales.

Bicester Accommodation Centre

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much compensation was awarded to GSL UK Ltd. for *(a)* construction works, *(b)* design works, *(c)* legal costs, *(d)* financial costs and *(e)* professional advisory costs on termination of the contract to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester. [43508]

Mr. McNulty: No compensation has been paid to GSL (UK) Ltd. following termination of the contract to design, build and operate the accommodation centre near Bicester. All amounts certified for payment to GSL (UK) Ltd. are covered by the contract, which also allows for a number of merited payments in the event of voluntary termination of the contract by the Home Office. The information relating to those payments is not available in the form requested. It could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department was of purchasing site A at Ministry of Defence Bicester to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers. [43510]

Mr. McNulty: The cost of the land was £3.25 millions; there were additional transaction costs of some £16,000.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date GSL UK Ltd. signed the contract to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester. [43511]

Mr. McNulty: The contract is dated 17 June 2004.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date his Department agreed a compensation package with GSL UK Ltd. after the contract to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester was terminated. [43512]

Mr. McNulty: Discussions of GSL's claim under the contract termination procedure continue.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department was of pursuing plans for an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester *(a)* at planning inquiry and *(b)* at judicial review. [43513]

Mr. McNulty: The information is not available in the form requested. It could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Cash-in-transit Crime

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 11 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2526W, on cash-in-transit attacks, what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the British Security Industry Association and *(b)* the police since September regarding the reduction of cash-in-transit robberies in England and Wales; and what progress has been made in developing national strategies to reduce such attacks. [42931]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* I had a very constructive meeting with representatives of the British Security Industry Association, the GMB union and Group four Securicor on 18 January 2006, where we agreed to work together, with other partners, on devising ways to reduce the number of cash-in-transit robberies.

Charity Commission

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the Charity Commission is required to investigate a charity more than once in relation to the same allegations without the provision of additional documentary evidence; [43666]

(2) whether the activities of charities are inspected on a regular basis by the Charity Commission; and how often such inspections took place in each of the last five years. [43667]

Paul Goggins: This is a matter for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The chief executive of the Charity Commission will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Codes of Practice (Compliance Auditing)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Codes of Practice of *(a)* the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and *(b)* the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 are audited for compliance; who is responsible for auditing compliance; and whether the reports on compliance are published. [42525]

Hazel Blears: Compliance with the PACE and CPIA Codes is an operational issue for the chief officer of the force concerned. Police officers are required to keep decision logs stating decisions made and the reasons for those decisions. Senior supervising officers are required to monitor and supervise the use and application of the provisions of the codes.

Any breach of the codes may result in an officer facing action under disciplinary and complaints procedures. The Crown Prosecution Service will consider the investigation into a case before deciding to charge. The Attorney-General's guidelines on disclosure place specific duties on the CPS to review police documentation under the CPIA Code; PACE Code C provisions require compliance with the guidelines when considering a decision to charge a suspect.

The courts who provide routine oversight of the police's compliance with both the PACE and the CPIA Codes, in that, for example, the defendant may raise a successful abuse of process argument at the trial based on an alleged breach; the court may decide to exclude evidence and the defendant may be acquitted as a result.

Independent Custody Visitors and Appropriate Adults are empowered to examine and report on the conditions and treatment of detainees in police custody in accordance the safeguards set out in PACE Code C.

Community Support Officers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what period funding allocations for community support officers (CSOs) will apply; and what plans he has for funding CSOs when the current funding period expires. [43416]

Hazel Blears: We are making available £88 million in 2006–07 and £340 million in 2007–08 through the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF) to help forces increase community support officer (CSO) numbers to 24,000 by March 2008. In addition, we continue to provide funding support of £44 million in 2006–07 and £47 million in 2007–08, for a number of CSOs recruited by forces before the NPF was introduced. We have made it clear that, we will sustain the investment in CSOs and in the longer term we will put this money into general police funding.

Consultants

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on consultants in each year since 1997. [17566]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information held by the Home Office on its spend on consultants is as follows:

	£
1997–98	7,627,016
1998–99	4,588,445
1999–2000	10,302,672
2000–01	27,877,286
2001–02	21,147,058
2002–03	Not held
2003–04	106,800,000
2004–05	46,900,000

We do not hold information on the Department's total expenditure on consultants for 2002–03 and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

The best information available for the financial year 2003–04 from interrogation of the business and accounting strategic system (BASS), indicates that the cost of external consultants to the department in 2003–04 was £106.8 million.

The best information available for the financial year 2004–05 from the interrogation of the Adelphi Enterprise resource planning (ERP) system accounts payable module indicates that the cost of external consultants to the department was £46.9 million.

The department awards contracts in open competition according to the EU procurement regulations based on best value for money. The use of external consultants in the Home Office provides the department with specialist knowledge, skill, capacity and technical expertise that is not otherwise available in-house.

Crime

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 925W, on crime, what plans he has to extend the Partners Against Crime Partnership; and if he will make a statement. [44050]

Hazel Blears: A local evaluation of this trial initiative, which was set up in partnership by Dyfed-Powys police and the Post Office Ltd., began at the end of the initiative in October 2005. I understand that the evaluation will be completed in spring 2006.

Any decision to extend the Partners Against Crime Partnership will be made by local police and partners when the evaluation has been completed.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reported level of *(a)* burglaries and *(b)* robberies was in the last period for which figures are available. [41913]

Hazel Blears: The latest figures relate to England and Wales as a whole for the period April to June 2005. The figures were published in Table A (page 10) of 'Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly Update to June 2005'.

The publication is Home Office Statistical Bulletin 18/05 and can be accessed online via the following link:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of levels of *(a)* violent crime, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* robbery and *(d)* burglary in Tamworth constituency; and if he will make a statement. [42099]

Hazel Blears: The available information relates to recorded offences in the Tamworth Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area and is given in the table.

Offences recorded in the Tamworth crime and disorder reduction partnership area, 2004–05

Offence	*Number of offences*
Violent crime[1]	2,436
Car crime	800
Robbery	80
Domestic burglary	444

[1] Includes offences of violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences involving air weapons there have been in each division of the Staffordshire police force in each year since 2001. [43475]

Hazel Blears: Centrally-collected data for recorded crime involving firearms in England and Wales are only available at police force level. Staffordshire Police recorded 270 offences involving air weapons in 2001–02, 309 in 2002–03 and 274 in 2003–04. The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures before and after this date are not directly comparable.

Criminal Record Checks

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many criminal record checks were carried out in each year since 2002; and how many of these were *(a)* standard disclosure and *(b)* enhanced disclosure. [42570]

Andy Burnham: The total number of standard and enhanced CRB checks issued in each year since 2002 is broken down as follows:

Number

	Standard	*Enhanced*	*Total*
11 March 2002 to 31 December 2002	118,599	808,564	927,163
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	271,952	1,886,197	2,158,149
1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004	286,984	2,198,362	2,485,346
1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005	298,315	2,391,694	2,690,009

The information requested by the hon. Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton regarding CRB checks issued specifically for positions within schools is not available. However, details of the total number of disclosures issued for the education sector are as follows:

Financial year	Number disclosures
2002–03	439,000
2003–04	553,000
2004–05	596,000
2005–31 December	516,000

On average, 93 percent. of disclosures issued to the education sector are at the enhanced level.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many requests for criminal record checks were made by schools in each year since 2002; and how many of these requests were for *(a)* standard disclosure and *(b)* enhanced disclosure. [42571]

Andy Burnham: The total number of standard and enhanced CRB checks issued in each year since 2002 is broken down as follows:

	Standard	Enhanced	Total
11 March 2002 to 31 December 2002	118,599	808,564	927,163
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	271,952	1,886,197	2,158,149
1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004	286,984	2,198,362	2,485,34
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Financial year	Number disclosures
2002–03	439,000
2003–04	553,000
2004–05	596,000
31 December 2005	516,000

On average, 93 per cent. of disclosures issued to the education sector are at the enhanced level.

Criminal Records Bureau

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* basic, *(b)* standard and *(c)* enhanced disclosures have been issued by the Criminal Records Bureau in the last year for which figures are available. [42787]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau issued 298,315 Standard Disclosures and 2,391,694 Enhanced Disclosures between 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2005. In that time no Basic Disclosures were issued because this product has not yet been launched.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the current average time is that a school may expect to wait for an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau for a prospective member of its teaching staff. [44411]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Information is not available to provide an answer to the hon. Member for Mid-Dorset and North Poole in the specific format requested. However, during the 12 month period up to 31 December 2005, the average time for completion of all Enhanced Disclosures is 31.5 days, excluding any time an application has to be returned to a customer.

Animal Welfare

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted of cruelty towards animals in Swindon in each year since 1997. [42169]

Paul Goggins: Persons found guilty for various offences connected with animal cruelty are shown in the table for Swindon petty sessional area, 1998 to 2004.

Number of offenders1 found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in Swindon petty sessional area, 1997–2004

	Number of offenders							
Statute	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Protection of Animals Act, 1911 (as amended)	4	7	11	5	1	1	—	7
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals Act, 1934	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Docking and Nicking of Horses Act, 1949	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pet Animals Act, 1951	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cockfighting Act, 1952	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1954	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—
Animal Health Act, 1981, Sees 40–42, 46 and 49 and Orders made under Sees 8, 9, 37, 38, 39 and 43	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slaughterhouses Act, 1974	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Abandonment of Animals Act, 1960, Sec 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Animal and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 1988	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act, 1962	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Riding Establishments Acts, 1964 and 1970	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slaughter of Poultry Act, 1967	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1968, Sees 1, 2 and 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (except Sec 13)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Number of offenders1 found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in Swindon petty sessional area, 1997–2004

Statute	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	Number of offenders							
Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diseases of Animals Act	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Sees 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	5	8	13	5	3	1	—	8

[1] Principal offence basis.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42892]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Department does not own land or property in the borough of Castle Point, Essex.

Departmental Expenditure

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effects on re-offending rates on release of prisoners having maintained family ties during periods in custody. [41593]

Fiona Mactaggart: No analysis is currently possible on the direct association between the maintenance of family ties during custody and reconviction rates as statistical information is not routinely collected on the family ties of prisoners.

However, the Government recognise the importance of family ties to prisoners and the Resettlement Survey 2003 indicated that over a third (37 per cent.) of prisoners who had at least one visit from family members or a partner reported having employment, training or education (ETE) arranged on release compared with 16 percent of those not receiving any visits. ETE is an important factor in successful resettlement and reducing reoffending.

The findings from this survey (and equivalent surveys for 2001 and 2004) form the basis of a reconviction study which is currently being undertaken. This will include an analysis of any association between family or partner visits (and other factors) and subsequent proven reoffending. Our aim is to publish later in the year.

Departmental Finance

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39978]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The table details the Home Office employer Accruing Superannuation Liability Charges (ASLC) for the financial years requested. These costs are for the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. It is not possible to split these costs by country or region. The data has been broken down by Home Office Department, agency, non-departmental public body or other Home Office public body.

Entries on the table marked by an asterisk show that no ASLC was appropriate for the relevant body in that year. This may be because the body did not yet exist or has ceased to exist. In some cases, machinery of Government changes have moved the body to another Government Department.

The projected figures in the final column (for 2005–06) are extrapolated from the actual costs incurred in that financial year, up to the end of November 2005.

Employer pension costs for Home Office Departments, agencies, non-departmental public bodies and other public bodies.

Department, NDPB or other Home Office public body	*Total ASLC 2002–03*	*Total ASLC 2003–04*	*Total ASLC 2004–05*	*ASLC 2005–06*[1]	£ *Projected ASLC for 2005–06*
Assets Recovery Agency	*	220,394.43	511,594.65	625268.98	937,903.47
Broadcasting Standards Commission	65,027.16	106,906.57	*	*	*
CENTREX	1,561,475.24	2,062,256.51	*	*	*
Core Home Office, including Immigration and Nationality Directorate	49,757,888.51	58,474,892.64	65,016,661.80	61,977,643.31	92,966,464.97
Criminal Cases Review Commission	315,289.25	215,275.19	*	*	*
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel	138,026.04	141,797.15	155,677.81	127,780.15	191,670.23
Criminal Injuries Compensation Panel	428,181.14	416,774.55	395,031.77	374,479.95	561,719.93
Criminal Records Bureau	*	635,012.10	868,61026	784,905.32	1,177,357.98
Electoral Commission	231,150.54	397,762.55	488,259.39	*	*
Fire Service College	582,647.75	636,163.68	720,121.85	684,903.94	1,027,355.91
Forensic Science Service	8,753,230.92	9,327,242.97	9,151,78528	8,495,283.13	12,742,924.70
Information Commissioner	386,519.00	478,483.54	546,491.41	573,084.82	859,627.23
National Offender Management Service	*	*	*	2,512,638.58	3,768,957.87
Parole Board	121,622.75	178,181.81	202,837.97	206,406.09	309,609.14
Police Complaints Authority	241,468.51	254,961.47	*	*	*

Employer pension costs for Home Office Departments, agencies, non-departmental public bodies and other public bodies.

£

Department, NDPB or other Home Office public body	Total ASLC 2002-03	Total ASLC 2003-04	Total ASLC 2004-05	ASLC 2005-06[1]	Projected ASLC for 2005-06
Police Information Technology Organisation	1,792,689.11	2,193,834.90	2,643,128.60	2,561,360.12	3,842,040.18
Prison Service	133,659,518.52	143,155,506.59	148,593,570.69	134,113,712.58	201,170,568.87
United Kingdom Passport Service	5,521,555.43	5,011,449.54	5,553,783.32	5,975,619.36	8,963,429.04
Youth Justice Board	437,504.42	537,860.51	666,486.06	704,691.28	1,057,036.92

[1] Up to November 2005.

Departmental Posts

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time is for identifying candidates for vacant posts in his Department; and if he will make a statement. [42638]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information is not held centrally on average time taken to identify successful candidates for vacant posts in the Department and information varies across the Department. Within the public sector some recruitment responsibilities are devolved to the various business areas. The Home Department operates a number of different arrangements for filling vacancies each with unique features. Time scales for filling a vacancy can vary considerably depending on the approach taken, the post to be filled and local circumstances. It is not possible therefore to provide this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

Departmental Staff (Secondments)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time staff have been seconded to his Department for each year since 2000 from (i) British Telecom, (ii) the Dixons group, (iii) Camelot, (iv) the National Lottery, (v) the Football Association, (vi) Tracker and (vii) the RAC; and if he will make a statement. [42780]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Since 2000 no members of staff, either part-time or full-time have been seconded from the organisations in question.

Drugs Offences

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* fined the maximum amount and *(b)* imprisoned for the maximum period for possessing (i) cannabis, (ii) cocaine and (iii) heroin in each of the past four years; and what percentage of all people convicted of these offences these figures represent. [43572]

Paul Goggins: Information on the number of people fined and imprisoned for the maximum period of possessing cannabis, cocaine and heroin is shown in the tables as follows.

Number of people given a maximum custodial sentence for possession offences

	2001	percentage of all sentences	2002	percentage of all sentences	2003	percentage of all sentences	2004	percentage of all sentences
Cannabis	25	4	38	6	49	6	51	6
Cocaine	58	3	44	2	19	1	79	5
Heroin	72	5	71	5	48	3	49	5

Notes:
1. Cannabis possession maximum period is five years.
2. Cocaine and heroin possession maximum period is seven years.

Number of people given a maximum fine for possession offences

	2001	Percentage of all fines	2002	Percentage of all fines	2003	Percentage of all fines	2004	Percentage of all fines
Cannabis	18	1	19	1	15	1	28	2
Cocaine	4	0	3	0	8	0	4	0
Heroin	17	0	14	0	29	0	17	0

Notes:
1. The maximum fine given in the magistrate court is £1,000.
2. "0" indicates less than one per cent.

Dum-dum Bullets

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of dum-dum-style bullets by the police. [43065]

Hazel Blears: It is for Chief Officers to decide what ammunition and weapons are appropriate to use in order to meet their own operational requirements, subject to the general law that use offeree by the police must be reasonable in the circumstances. Hollow point ammunition (sometimes, misleadingly, called dum-dum bullets) is used by police in a number of countries.

Fireworks Misuse

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices have been issued for the misuse of fireworks, broken down by police force area. [42560]

Hazel Blears: Offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 (made under section 11 of the Fireworks Act 2003) for breach of the national fireworks curfew, the illegal possession of category 4 fireworks and the possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework attract penalty notices for disorder, as well as the offence of throwing fireworks. The offence of

throwing fireworks has been included in the penalty notice for disorder scheme since it was introduced nationally during 2004. The offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 were brought into the scheme with effect from 11 October 2004. The number of penalty notices issued by police force area for 2004 and provisional data from January to September 2005 are provided in the following table.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, by police force area, England and Wales 2004 and January-September 2005

	2004				January-September 2005 (provisional)			
Police force	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*
Avon and Somerset	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Bedfordshire	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Cheshire	6	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Cleveland	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Cumbria	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Derbyshire	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	1
Devon and Cornwall	6	4	—	—	2	—	—	—
Dorset	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	6	—	—	—	6	1	1	2
Gloucestershire	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Greater Manchester	14	—	—	—	9	—	4	4
Hampshire	8	—	1	1	4	1	—	—
Hertfordshire	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Humberside	5	1	1	—	2	—	—	—
Kent	7	—	2	1	2	—	—	—
Lancashire	11	1	1	—	14	2	—	1
Leicestershire	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—
Lincolnshire	20	2	—	—	5	—	—	—
London, City of	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merseyside	56	—	—	1	26	—	2	1
Metropolitan	39	—	—	—	25	—	1	—
Norfolk	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
North Yorkshire	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Northumbria	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
South Yorkshire	5	—	—	—	8	1	1	4
Staffordshire	8	—	—	—	6	—	—	1
Suffolk	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Surrey	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sussex	26	—	—	1	9	—	—	—
Thames Valley	23	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
Warwickshire	1	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
West Mercia	5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	17	—	—	—	7	1	1	—
West Yorkshire	27	1	1	—	18	—	1	2
Wiltshire	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Dyfed Powys	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Gwent	8	—	—	—	1	1	1	1
North Wales	9	1	1	—	8	1	—	—
South Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	332	10	7	4	177	12	12	20

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

Gun/Drug Crime

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned into the link between gun crime and drug crime. [43588]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has commissioned a qualitative study among young men convicted of firearm offences with the aim of exploring criminal pathways into this type of crime as well as the associated motivations and barriers to carrying and using illegal firearms.

The research explores the associations between gun related crimes and the procurement and use of drugs. The Home Office also sponsored the New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) survey, which involved interviewing and drug testing those arrested by the police, included questions on carrying guns.

A paper based on the data has been published by T. H. Bennett and K. Holloway, "Possession and use of illegal guns among criminals in England and Wales" (Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, Vol 43, No 3, pp 237–252).

Sir Iqbal Sacranie

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the investigation by the police of recent statements by Sir Iqbal Sacranie relating to homosexuality. [44451]

Hazel Blears: The chief constable is responsible for the day to day operational management of the force. You may therefore wish to redirect your query to him.

IT Systems

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation areas are connected to the prison OASys IT system; and if he will make a statement. [42632]

Fiona Mactaggart: Five probation areas are currently connected to the Prison Service OASys system. They are Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester.

Licensing Reforms (Offences)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people *(a)* over 18 years and *(b)* under 18 years have been (i) arrested for, (ii) charged with and (iii) convicted of (A) public order offences and (B) public drunkenness since the introduction of 24 hour licensing in England and Wales. [43585]

Paul Goggins: The information requested on arrests and charges is not collected centrally. The information requested on convictions is not currently available. The Licensing Act 2003 came into force on 24 November 2005 and data for convictions in 2005 will not be available until autumn of 2006.

Methadone

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many registered methadone users there are in *(a)* Altcourse, *(b)* Bullingdon, *(c)* Elmley, *(d)* Holme House and *(e)* Hull prisons; and if he will make a statement. [37508]

Fiona Mactaggart: Individual prisons do not hold any central register of individuals who are receiving treatment by particular categories such as methadone.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent in each year from 1 May 1997 on ministerial travel arrangements, broken down by *(a)* provision and running costs of vehicular transport, *(b)* first class travel by rail, *(c)* standard class travel by rail, *(d)* first class travel by air, *(e)* club or equivalent class travel by air and *(f)* economy class travel by air. [27782]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is not held centrally and to provide would incur disproportionate costs. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library.

My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) has asked Roy Burke, chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) to write to the hon. Member with details of the costs of ministerial vehicles provided to Departments in 2004–05. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library. For information for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04 I refer the hon. Member to the letters from the chief executive of the GCDA to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) dated 10 January 2005 and to the then hon. Member for Arundel & South Downs (Howard Flight) dated 13 September 2003. Copies of these letters are available in the Library. In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing 500 or more during each financial year.

The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995–96 to 2004–05. Information for 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

Mobile Phones

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many instances have been recorded of the police using mobile phone location data *(a)* to track a criminal and *(b)* to effect a rescue operation; [42704]

(2) how many instances have been recorded of the police using mobile phone location data *(a)* to track a criminal and *(b)* to effect a rescue operation. [43782]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available centrally from the recorded crime statistics.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the Immobilise Phone Crime Initiative in reducing levels of mobile phone theft. [42577]

Hazel Blears: The Immobilise Phone Crime campaign was launched in March 2003, to publicise that stolen phones could now be blocked across all UK networks. This was a key step in tackling mobile phone theft, as it removed the incentive to steal a mobile phone because it could now be rendered useless.

We do not hold figures for mobile phone theft centrally, but Home Office research (HORS 235) shows that a mobile phone is involved in about half of all robberies. A number of interventions occurred at a similar time to the Immobilise campaign, most notably, the Street Crime Initiative. Figures show that robbery fell by 32 per cent. between 2001–02 and 2004–05 in the areas in which the Initiative was implemented, despite increases in mobile phone ownership. The targeted nature of the Immobilise campaign, and the link between mobile phones and robbery would indicate that the campaign may have contributed to this reduction.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish statistics from the National Mobile Phone Crime Unit on tackling mobile handset theft and related street crime. [42578]

Hazel Blears: Figures for mobile phone theft are not held centrally as it is not a distinct offence category. However, based on Home Office research (HORS 235) we know that a mobile phone is involved in about half of all robberies. The National Mobile Phone Crime Unit (NMPCU) is a dedicated law enforcement unit set up to focus specifically on this serious crime and operates primarily in an intelligence gathering capacity. A key

driver for mobile phone theft has been the ability to re-programme the IMEI number (unique serial number) of a phone, thus turning a useless object into a valuable and re-sellable commodity.

The NMPCU has been proactively targeting individuals engaged in this activity. Since January 2004 there have been 400 individual operations and 34 successful cautions and convictions. This has resulted in a number of custodial sentences and fines under the Mobile Telephones (Re-programming) Act 2002 and related legislation.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for using a mobile phone while driving a vehicle in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Greater Manchester. [43097]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform show that the number of people proceeded against at the magistrates courts for the use of a hand held mobile phone while driving, under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 Reg.110(1) was 54 in Greater Manchester and 475 in England and Wales, 2004. Information for Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Office and that for Northern Ireland for the Northern Ireland Office.

Naturalisation Helpline

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average waiting time was for calls to the 0845 0105200 helpline for inquiries on naturalisation to be answered in the last period for which figures are available; and how many unanswered calls there were in that period. [38143]

Mr. McNulty: The average waiting time for November 2005 was four minutes 25 seconds. The volume of unanswered calls in November 2005 was 109,560 from a total of 141,552 calls offered. A review of staffing levels at the Nationality helpdesk has been conducted to assess what the required level of staffing needed is to meet the demand for the service. It is intended to increase the number of call handlers progressively in the period up to summer 2006 to twice the current level.

Neighbours from Hell Website

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many e-mail messages *(a)* from people living in Gravesend and *(b)* in total have been received by his Department since the Prime Minister urged readers of *The Sun* to shop yobs to the Home Office via the neighboursfromhell@thesun.co.uk e-mail address. [43271]

Hazel Blears: Encouraging members of the public to report antisocial behaviour is an important part of the Government's overall strategy to tackle and not tolerate the problem.

At the time of answering, *The Sun* had forwarded to the Home Office 91 responses to their campaign: none of these have come from people identifying themselves as having come from Gravesend.

Parenting Orders

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many parenting orders have been made in *(a)* Derbyshire and *(b)* Amber Valley. [42940]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since April 2000, the Youth Justice Board has collected the number of parenting orders relating to offending or antisocial behaviour and this is collected by youth offending team areas. 47 of these parenting orders were made in the Derbyshire youth offending team area between 1 April 2000 and September 2005 (the latest data which is currently available).

Since September 2004, the Department for Education and Skills has collected data regarding parenting orders in cases of non-attendance and exclusions from school and this collected by local authority area. Six of these parenting orders were made in the Derbyshire local authority area between September 2004 and 31 July 2005 (the latest data which is currently available). Neither of these sets of data is collected at the sub-Derbyshire level and information cannot therefore be provided for Amber Valley.

Passports

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 378W, on passports, if the Department will also allow the hand of a parent who is holding a baby to appear in a photograph without invalidating it. [43880]

Andy Burnham: If a baby is being supported by a parent when photographed, the hands of the parent must not be visible above the shoulders of the baby. This is to ensure that the passport issuing system does not capture the supporting hand as part of the subject's face. It is recommended that the services of a photographic studio are used when obtaining passport photographs for very young infants.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 378W, on passports, whether the notice added to the UK Passport Service website on photograph standards was published on 22 November 2005 as referred to in the answer or on 21 December as referred to on the UKPS website. [43882]

Andy Burnham: The UKPS website was updated on 22 November to reflect the revised policy adopted after consideration of feedback following the introduction of new photo standards in September 2005. Changes are made to the website as the need arises, and on 21 December a further change was made to advise customers that the digital enhancement of photographs was not recommended. The date on the web page reflects this latter change. The website has been amended to make the timing of these changes clearer.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of forged passports in use in the UK in the latest period for which figures are available. [44114]

Andy Burnham: Although by the very nature of the problem it is impossible to quantify the number of forged passports circulating within the UK, it is a

concern I take very seriously. Our response is led by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's National Document Fraud Unit (NDFU), which is recognised at home and abroad as the leader in its field.

NDFU conducts full forgery detection training for Immigration Nationality Directorate (IND) staff. As a result, in 2004 a total of 8,285 fraudulent documents were detected at UK ports of entry, an increase of 4 per cent. over 2003. Croydon NDFU detected 1,044 fraudulent documents, an increase of 25 per cent.

Our experience in IND, confirmed by agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), shows that abuse of identity documents is increasing, assisted by the spread of computer technology. To combat such abuse NDFU provides forgery detection training to other organisations including the police, Customs and Excise, DWP etc, as well as to the private sector, aiding detection of falsified documents within the UK, and hindering the adoption of false identities.

Police

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidential base there is for the figures of 4,000 officers and 6,000 staff as the minimum size of a police force. [30505]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* The analysis in HMIC's report suggested that there was an optimum size of force, below which it would be hard in the longer term to sustain the required investment in protective service .

There is a clear and statistically significant pattern suggesting that size is a major factor in determining whether a force can attain the requisite performance on the protective services but also insulate against underperformance in other areas HMIC's conclusion was that forces with more than 4,000 officers and 6,000 staff gave the citizen the greatest chance of receiving comprehensive policing services at all levels.

A copy of the paper has been placed on to the police reform website http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/Force-restructuring?view = Standard and in the Library. I wrote to all Members of Parliament on 16 December 2005 updating them on the police force structures review, and including a copy of the 4,000 officer strength threshold for police forces.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time to an emergency call to the police in Staffordshire was in each year since 1997. [42102]

Hazel Blears: Data on time taken to respond to emergency calls is not collected centrally. This is essentially an operational matter for the chief constable and this query could therefore be directed to Staffordshire police.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines apply to a police officer with a family interest in a legal case continuing to serve in the local geographical area in which the alleged offence took place. [44397]

Hazel Blears: There are no national or statutory guidelines governing the placement of police officers. The deployment of resources within the Essex Police area is an operational matter for which the chief constable has sole responsibility.

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the determining factors are in deciding whether to call a public inquiry following a death in police custody. [42680]

Hazel Blears: In some cases, an inquiry can be required by law. In other cases the Secretary of State has a discretion and where there are issues likely to affect the whole of a police force then an inquiry may be an appropriate way of dealing with it. Where, in a specific case, it appears that there has been sufficient investigation of the incident then it is likely that the view will be taken that a further inquiry is unlikely to provide further evidence or to be proportionate.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effect of the police force restructuring proposals on the crime detection rate *(a)* during the restructuring and *(b)* immediately afterwards for each constabulary in England and Wales. [35296]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The Government's Spending Review 2004 public service agreements set a target to improve the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by 2007–08. Within this target, we are committed to bringing about an increase in the sanction detections rate to 25 per cent. over the same period. We remain committed to delivering that improvement and any objectives beyond this period will arise out of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the chief constable of Kent about police restructuring since the publication of Closing the Gap by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. [37593]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary received a business case on police restructuring from the chief constable of Kent, Mr. Fuller, and the chair of the Kent Police Authority, Mrs. Barnes on 23 December 2005.

The Home Secretary has not had any discussions about the restructuring process with the chief constable of Kent. However Mr. Giffard, chief constable of Staffordshire and programme director of the restructuring process, met with the chief constable of Kent and the chair of the Kent Police Authority in London on 15 November. They have also spoken by telephone and in person on a number of occasions. In addition to this there has been regular contact between the Kent project team working on restructuring and the Home Office Review Unit supporting the process.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the salary is of the Police National Bureaucracy Adviser; and if he will make a statement. [42633]

Hazel Blears: The salary of the National Bureaucracy Adviser is £81,555 which is the first increment for an Assistant Chief Constable from Essex police.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department where the office of the Police National Bureacracy Adviser is; and if he will make a statement. [42636]

Hazel Blears: The National Bureaucracy Adviser is based notionally at the Home Office at 2 Marsham Street. However, she spends most of her time visiting forces to spread good practice; challenge, where necessary, existing practices; and drive force-led reductions in bureaucracy.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of serving police officers in Northamptonshire are grade one qualified emergency response drivers. [42526]

Hazel Blears: Information on the number of officers who are grade one qualified emergency response drivers is not collected centrally

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been spent on policing per head of population in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* the Metropolitan police area of London, broken down by police division, in each year since 1995. [14125]

Hazel Blears: Information on force expenditure at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is not held centrally. Total force gross revenue expenditure per head of population is set out in the table. Essex receives its fair share of available resources. This year it is receiving £167.0 million in general grants, an increase of 3.75 per cent. (£6.1 million) over last year. If the funding formula had been strictly applied, Essex would have received £13.6 million less. The local distribution of resources is a matter for the Chief Constable and the Police Authority to determine in the light of operational priorities.

Force gross revenue expenditure per head of population

	Essex police	*Metropolitan police*
1995–96[1]	102.64	240.56
1996–97	105.46	243.31
1997–98	109.49	239.88
1998–99	116.27	243.41
1999–2000	118.97	257.83
2000–01[2]	122.52	290.35
2001–02	128.04	305.65
2002–03	133.25	315.78
2003–04	141.41	364.14
2004–05	155.84	381.21

[1] Actual expenditure figures for 1995–96 were not available for Essex from CIPFA. CIPFA 1995–96 estimates have therefore been used.

[2] As of April 2000, the Metropolitan police force was reduced in size by a transfer of responsibility for policing some areas to the surrounding forces, including Essex. These changes need to be borne in mind when comparing figures before and after April 2000.

Source of expenditure information:
CIPFA—Police Statistics (Actuals 1995–96 to 2003–04, Estimates 2004–05).

Source for resident population figures:
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as used in the calculation of the police funding settlements.

Press Officers

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many press officers are employed by each of the executive agencies of his Department. [44425]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office has two executive agencies—the Criminal Records Bureau and the UK Passport Service. Neither of these agencies directly employ press officers. All media inquiries to and about the work of these two agencies are dealt with by the central Home office press Office in London. The UK Passport Service funds the salary of one press officer (information officer) in the Home Office press office.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many new press officers his Department is planning to employ over the next 12 months; and at what estimated cost. [44495]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There will be no planned growth in press officers over the next 12 months. We will only fill vacancies which we cannot predict in advance.

Prisons

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who have been sentenced to life in prison are on an early release programme. [39664]

Fiona Mactaggart: On 30 November 2005, there were 1,504 life licensees prisoners in the community under active supervision by probation officers. All life licensees are liable to recall to prison for the rest of their lives if their potential risk of harm to the public warrants such action.

There are no early release programmes as such for lifers. Lifers progress through sentence under the framework of a life sentence plan (LSP). This provides the prisoner with a structured means to help him or her reduce their risk.

The bulk of this work is conducted in the secure or "closed" prison estate. Most lifers can normally be expected to progress to open conditions in preparation for possible release, but only where the Secretary of State considers such a move appropriate on risk grounds. Consideration of release cannot take place until the prisoner has served the minimum period of imprisonment deemed necessary for the purposes of retribution and deterrence (the "tariff"). The responsibility for the release of lifers now lies with the independent Parole Board. If the lifer is not released at the tariff expiry point, the Parole Board will consider the

case again at no more than two yearly intervals thereafter. The main criterion governing the Parole Board's consideration is the level of risk of serious harm that the lifer may pose to others.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on rights of prison inmates in relation to a place of worship. [41686]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners have the right to practise their religion, and the opportunity to attend the main religious observance of the week for the faith in which they are registered. The Prison Service is committed to providing the necessary facilities, including suitable places of worship. Chaplaincy HQ together with the Chaplaincy Council and Area Chaplains continue to work with prison establishments to ensure suitable provision for all faith traditions.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adult prisoners were *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* prosecuted for drugs offences while in custody in the last five years for which figures are available. [43584]

Fiona Mactaggart: The number of adult prisoners found guilty of drug offences while in custody is given in the table. Any decision to prosecute a prisoner for drug offences in custody would be taken by the Crown Prosecution Service and the Prison Service does not collate details of prosecutions undertaken.

	Number of prisoners found guilty at adjudication of attempting to smuggle drugs through visits[1]	*Prisoners guilty of supplying drugs*	*Prisoners punished for unauthorised use of a controlled drug*	*Prisoners punished for possession of a controlled drug*
2004–05	1,065	20	8,467	1,145
2003–04	884	21	8,021	1,036
2002–03	988	13	7,056	797
2001–02	1,123	35	9,441	1,336
2000–01	1,169	26	11,060	1,531

[1] These figures are for all prisoners including juveniles and young offenders

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cells in prisons housing adult prisoners in England and Wales were designed to accommodate *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three and *(d)* four prisoners; and how many in each category have been accommodating more prisoners than they were designed to house in the last five years for which figures are available. [43591]

Fiona Mactaggart: The total number of prison cells and other accommodation, or levels of cell occupancy, is not recorded centrally. The standard unit of prison accommodation is the prison place, which may be located in cells, cubicles, dormitories, rooms or wards. The wide range in age and type of prison accommodation means there is no standard design of prison cell. Cell capacity is determined by senior operational managers on the basis of their operational judgment and experience.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* adult males and *(b)* females were in prison and (i) males and (ii) females were in young offender institutions in England and Wales in the latest period for which figures are available. [43592]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the table.

Prison population in England and Wales by age and sex, 30 November 2005

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
Adults	62,156	4,019	66,175
Young adults[1] and 15 to 17-year-olds	10,586	545	11,131

[1] Young adults are prisoners aged 18 to 20 but include 21-year-old prisoners who were aged 20 or under at conviction who have not been reclassified as part of the adult population.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has plans to introduce a long service medal for prison officers. [43885]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service currently has a Director General's Long Service Award, which is awarded to staff in recognition of 25-years service. The Service continues to explore with government colleagues a separate recognition opportunity or medal to reward such very high levels of achievement and long service.

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the projects to build new prisons which have been funded by 'private finance initiatives; how many have been completed; and what stage each of the remaining projects has reached. [44241]

Fiona Mactaggart: Nine new prisons have been opened under the Private Finance Initiative as listed in the table. There are no plans at present to build any new prisons.

1997	HMP/YOI Parc
1997	HMP Altcourse
1998	HMP Lowdham Grange
1999	HMYOI Ashfield
2000	HMP Forest Bank
2001	HMP Rye Hill
2001	HMP Dovegate
2004	HMP Bronzefield
2005	HMP Peterborough

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of inmates *(a)* had access to and *(b)* enrolled in formal education and training schemes in each prison in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44339]

Fiona Mactaggart: All offenders in custody are encouraged to access learning and skills provision. Figures on the numbers enrolled in formal education and training schemes are not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The data will however become increasingly available through Learning and Skills Council management

information arrangements as they take responsibility for planning and funding offender learning and skills during 2006.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what opportunities exist for prisoners to develop *(a)* interpersonal, *(b)* social, *(c)* life, *(d)* self-management and *(e)* coping skills within the Prison Estate; what assessment he has made of the diversity of provision of such education; and if he will make a statement. [44347]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service offers a broad spectrum of opportunities to develop the skills and meet the needs of prisoners including formal education, specialist programmes, work, training and resettlement courses as well as input from other staff, probation, the voluntary sector, other outside organisations and prisoners themselves.

The opportunities available in a particular area or establishment will vary but are subject to regular review. The roll-out of a common offender assessment system across the National Offender Management Service, and improved offender management arrangements that are being introduced will enable the needs of prisoners to be better met.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the supply of *(a)* mobile phones, *(b)* drugs and *(c)* alcohol into the Prison Estate; and if he will make a statement. [44370]

Fiona Mactaggart: A comprehensive range of measures is in place to reduce the amount of drugs and associated paraphernalia, including mobile phones, getting into prisons.

It includes:

passive and active drug dogs;

closed circuit television systems and fixed and low-level furniture;

closed visits and visit bans on visitors suspected of smuggling drugs;

sharing of intelligence with police about drug routes into prisons;

the use of the Supply Reduction Good Practice Guide;

mandatory drug testing;

searching strategies; and

deployment of mobile phone detectors and analysis of recovered handsets.

The good general prison security measures already in place serve to reduce the supply of alcohol. In April 2005 introduced a provision in the prison rules to test prisoners for alcohol.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to develop an over-arching strategy for prison education; and if he will make a statement. [44391]

Fiona Mactaggart: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills set out our strategy to improve the skills and job prospects for offenders in the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" published on 15 December and copied to all Members of Parliament. The document was published jointly on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills, the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. We have now embarked on an extensive period of consultation, running until the end of May, during which we welcome a full range of views.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to bring the number of prisoners held at Leeds prison down to its certified level; and if he will make a statement. [44415]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prison capacity is determined by senior operational managers on the basis of operational judgement and experience. The population at HMP Leeds is currently within its useable operational capacity, which is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold taking into account control, security and the proper operation of the planned regime. We have looked very closely at the population level at the prison and have reduced the operational capacity by 104. This will enable HMP Leeds to focus on the many challenges facing it as a local prison.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money was recovered in West Lancashire as a consequence of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in each year since 2002. [43158]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available in the form requested. The total value of confiscation orders obtained by Lancashire constabulary under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation is as follows: 2002/03—£384,750 2003/04—£88,973, 2004/05—£3,475,486.

The total value of cash forfeiture orders obtained by Lancashire constabulary under the 2002 Act is as follows: 2002–03—£81,155, 2003–04—£31,980, 2004–05—£184,486. In addition the total value of confiscation orders obtained by the North West Regional Asset Recovery Team, which covers Lancashire, in 2004–05 was £251,493. Information on the value of orders obtained by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in Lancashire is not available.

Public Order Act

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance has been issued by his Department on investigations and prosecutions under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986. [44469]

Hazel Blears: Guidance on Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 was issued to police forces and the courts in February 1987 in Home Office Circular 11/1987.

Recorded Offences (Humberside)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded offences of

(a) burglary, *(b)* thefts and *(c)* thefts from cars there have been in each division of Humberside Police in each year since 2002. [42559]

Hazel Blears: The available information relates to offences recorded in basic command units in the Humberside police force area and is given in the table.

Recorded offences in Humberside 2002-03 to 2004-05

Basic Command Unit	*Offence*	*Number of offences* 2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
East Riding of Yorkshire	Domestic burglary	1,569	1,405	1,203
	Thefts	9,423	9,200	7,695
	Of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,574	2,702	2,061
Kingston upon Hull	Domestic burglary	5,794	5,049	3,267
	Thefts	24,691	21,759	17,658
	Of which:			
	Thefts from cars	7,085	5,413	4,459
North East Lincolnshire	Domestic burglary	2,358	2,151	1,966
	Thefts	11,378	12,627	11,467
	Of which:			
	Thefts from cars	3,097	3,239	2,987
North Lincolnshire	Domestic burglary	2,492	1,805	1,359
	Thefts	7,950	8,482	6,540
	Of which:			
	Thefts from cars	2,119	2,456	1,680

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences involving air weapons there were in each division of Humberside police in each of the last five years. [42585]

Hazel Blears: The requested data are not collected centrally.

Reoffending

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people previously in custody have reoffended in *(a)* Wimbledon and *(b)* the London borough of Merton in each year since 1997. [41708]

Fiona Mactaggart: The most recent reoffending data for adults were published in "Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort" which is available through the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm).

The report shows the proportion of offenders who reoffended within two years and were subsequently convicted, and separately identifies offenders given custodial and community sentences. The conviction for the offence is counted even if it occurred beyond the two year follow-up period. Results are given for 2000 and 2002.

Reconviction data for 1997 through 2000 were published in "Prison statistics England and Wales 2002" and data for 2001 were published in "Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003". Both of these publications are available on the Home Office website. These series count only those convictions that were secured within the two year follow-up period.

Reconviction rates should be used with caution as a number of different factors can influence them. Reconviction rates can be adjusted to take account of the changing characteristics of offenders and these adjusted rates are published on the Home Office's website. The most recent data show that there has been a reduction in reoffending for all offenders of 0.2 per cent. against the 2000 baseline. The Home Office public service agreement target is to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2006.

Taxis

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Department has spent on taxis in each of the last five years. [6502]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is contained in the table. Travel by taxi is allowed only in the following circumstances: for journeys for which there is no other suitable method of public transport, where heavy luggage has to be transported to or from the place of departure or arrival, or where the saving of official time is important.

The recorded cost of using taxis over the last two years are given in the following table.

	£
2000-01	133,479
2001-02	306,917
2002-03	362,905
2003-04 1	435,416
2004-05	665,764
Total	1,904,481

Terrorism (UK Airports)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding will be made available to the Bedfordshire police authority for 2006-07 for the provision of counter-terrorism initiatives at London Luton airport; and if he will make a statement. [42465]

Hazel Blears: The provision of police resources at an airport in the United Kingdom is an operational decision for the chief officer for each individual force.

Police forces in England and Wales with responsibility for policing airports which do not hold designated status are entitled to apply for extraordinary funding to provide an appropriate policing presence in line with the current terrorist threat. Bedfordshire, in line with a number of other forces, has applied for such funding.

The level of funding awarded is determined by the Association of Chief Police Officers acting in full consultation with individual forces and the Home Office. For reasons of security we do not comment on the level of funding or which airports are in receipt of such funding.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations his Department plans to make to the independent review of policing at airports; and if he will make a statement. [42467]

Hazel Blears: The independent review of policing at airports is being led by Stephen Boys Smith, as announced by the Secretary of State for Transport on nine January. He has requested representations from a number of interested parties including the Home Office. These representations will be made in confidence to the review. The review's findings and recommendations are expected to be completed in late spring.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what level of funding was made available to each civil airport within the UK for the provision of counter terrorism initiatives in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [42468]

Hazel Blears: Provision of general security at airports within the United Kingdom is the responsibility of the operating authority for the individual airport concerned. Operational decisions about the nature and deployment of police officers on counter-terrorism duties at airports are made by chief officers of individual forces.

Since 2002–03 those police forces in England and Wales with responsibility for policing an airport which does not hold designated status under the Aviation Security Act 1982 are entitled to apply for extraordinary general funding to provide an appropriate police presence in response to the current terrorist threat. The level of funding awarded to each force is determined by the Association of Chief Police Officers in full consultation with the Home Office and the individual force. For security reasons we do not make public the level of funding provided to an individual force for this purpose.

Travellers

Martin Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will encourage *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* local crime and disorder reduction partnerships to use antisocial behaviour orders against those Travellers who persistently cause harassment and distress to local residents in their areas. [42363]

Hazel Blears: Both local authorities and the police have broad powers to deal with antisocial behaviour which apply to Travellers and the settled community alike; they should use these effectively while also working to tackle the causes of antisocial behaviour. Antisocial behaviour orders are one of a number of measures available, which can be used to tackle antisocial behaviour in any community.

Young Offenders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders have been placed under intensive supervision in *(a)* Crosby and *(b)* Merseyside in each of the last five years. [43118]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are three Intensive Supervision and Surveillance schemes in Merseyside. Crosby comes under the scheme for Knowsley, St. Helens and Sefton. Data is only available from April 2003 onwards as shown in the following table.

ISSP scheme	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 (to September 2005)*	*Total*
Knowsley, St. Helens and Sefton	72	56	31	159
Liverpool	117	108	57	282
Wirral	56	63	29	148
Total (Merseyside)	245	227	117	589

WALES

Consultants/Special Advisers

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005 to the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning), *Official Report*, columns 2067–2068W, on consultants/special advisers, what the *(a)* names are and *(b)* periods of service were of the Department's special advisers; [40673]

(2) what the *(a)* names are and *(b)* periods of service were of the Department's special advisers. [43700]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office was established in July 1999. The names and period of service of special advisers were:

Hywel Francis was appointed in October 1999 until May 2000.

Adrian McMenamin appointed December 1999, and resigned during June 2001 general election, he was then re-appointed in June 2001 until July 2002.

Andrew Bold was appointed in June 2000 and resigned during June 2001 general election. He was re-appointed in June 2001 and resigned again in March 2005, in accordance with Government guidance. He was re-appointed after the general election in May 2005.

Owen Smith was appointed in August 2002 until October 2002. He accompanied Paul Murphy to the Northern Ireland Office.

Phil Taylor was appointed in October 2002 until June 2003.

Matthew Burchell was appointed in May 2005.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of his Department in (i) Wales and (ii) each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40100]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Wales Office expenditure on the buildings for the last three years was:

£

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
London:			
Rent	0	10,383	15,761
Rates	46,759	48,222	39,643
Maintenance	199,036	67,785	97,388
Wales:			
Rent	0	120,334	146,544
Rates	0	28,452	30,270

All maintenance cost for Wales are included with the rent charges.

Planned expenditure for financial year 2005–06 are:

	Amount (£)
London:	
Rent	33,879
Rates	48,108
Maintenance	68,419
Wales:	
Rent	146,273
Rates	6,133

(b) In line with the Central Government, the Wales office does not insure its buildings. Central Government has chosen not to take out commercial insurance under conventional procurement techniques, as the premiums payable have not been seen to represent good value for money compared to self-insurance. Full details can be obtained from the Treasury website: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Departmental Functions

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administration costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39951]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office carries out no core functions in Northern Ireland.

The Wales Office has a policy and legislative team in Cardiff. Administration costs for these functions can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Jobs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many and what percentage of jobs in his Department are located in *(a)* England, excluding Greater London, *(b)* Greater London, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* overseas. [39779]

Mr. Hain: Wales Office posts are split between London and Cardiff offices as follows:

Wales Office posts

	Number	Percentage
London-based posts	46.6	74.0
Cardiff-based posts	16.4	26.0

There are no Wales Office posts elsewhere in England or overseas.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40281]

Mr. Hain: There is one civil servant within the Wales Office staff that has regularly worked from home on two days of the week over the last year.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many civil servants were employed in the Wales Office and its predecessors in each year since 1997, broken down by grade and office location; and what the equivalent information is to date in 2005–06. [40811]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office was established in 1999, following devolution and the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales.

The number and grade of Wales Office staff is published annually in our departmental report.

Approximately 75 per cent. of Wales Office staff are based in London, with the remainder being located in Cardiff.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43484]

Mr. Hain: None.

Parliamentary Question

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will update his reply to the former hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent on 20 May 2003, *Official Report*, columns 718–19W, on the availability of digital broadcasting for viewers in Blaenau Gwent. [43884]

Mr. Hain: The Government are committed to ensuring that at digital switchover everyone in the UK who can currently receive the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form will be able to receive them in digital form without needing to pay a subscription.

Switchover for the HTV Wales region will happen in the second half of 2009.

Wales Office

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when the report on the performance of the Wales Office in meeting its targets for 2005 will be prepared; and when the report will be published. [40730]

Mr. Hain: In accordance with Treasury guidance and target dates, the Departmental Annual Report will be prepared during February and March, due for publication the end April.

TREASURY

Cancer

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the survival rates for *(a)* lung, *(b)* breast, *(c)* testicular, *(d)* prostate, *(e)* ovarian, *(f)* bowel and *(g)* other cancers in the most recent period for which figures are available. [45201]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked her to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the survival rates for *(a)* lung, *(b)* breast, *(c)* testicular, *(d)* prostate, *(e)* ovarian, *(f)* bowel and *(g)* other cancers have been in the most recent period for which figures are available. (45201)

Cancer survival rates are only produced for specific cancers and are calculated by combining several years of diagnosis. For this reason no single figure is available for the category 'other cancers'.

Survival rates for 21 common cancers among adult patients in England diagnosed during 1998–2001 and followed up to the end of 2003 (covering about 90 per cent. of all cancer cases in these patients) were published on the National Statistics website on 9 May 2005, and are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D8982.xls

One- and five-year survival rates relating to the cancers listed in *(a)*—*(f)* are given in the attached table.

One and five year age-standardised[1] relative survival (percentage) for adult patients[2] diagnosed during 1998–2001 (England), major cancers by sex

	Percentage	
	Patients diagnosed during 1998–2001, England	
Cancer[3]	*One year relative survival*	*Five year relative survival*
Lung		
Men	24.5	6.3
Women	26.3	7.5
Breast		
Women	93.7	79.9
Testis		
Men	98.0	96.6
Prostate		
Men	89.8	70.8
Ovary		
Women	66.9	38.3
Colon		
Men	68.3	49.4
Women	68.2	50.2
Rectum		
Men	74.7	50.0
Women	76.6	53.6

[1] As cancer survival varies with age at diagnosis, the relative rates for all ages (15 to 99) have been age-standardised to control for changes in the age profile of cancer patients over time, thus making them comparable with previously published figures.
[2] Aged 15 to 99 years.
[3] Cancers registered in 1998–2001 are defined by codes in the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD10). Therefore, lung cancer is defined by codes C33-C34, breast cancer by code C50, testicular cancer by code C62, prostate cancer by code C61, ovarian cancer by codes C56-C57.7, colon cancer by code CIS and rectal cancer by codes C19-C21.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Employment Statistics

John Cummings: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector (i) manufacturing and (ii) service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in Easington constituency in each year since 2000. [45018]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about private and public sector employment in Easington constituency. (45018)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorisation of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by QMS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the number of persons in private sector employment, by the specified splits, and for the public sector, for people resident in the Easington constituency as shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 2001 to February 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Persons in employment resident in the Easington constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousands

	Private Sector				
12 months ending	*Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 2001	10	15	2	6	33
February 2002	7	14	2	9	32

Persons in employment resident in the Easington constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousands

12 months ending	*Private Sector* *Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 2003	8	14	2	8	33
February 2004	8	13	2	6	29

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area labour force survey—generally overestimate public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are agriculture, fishing, energy and water and construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area labour force survey.

London Congestion Charge

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the change in receipts from *(a)* VAT, *(b)* corporation tax and *(c)* national insurance contributions from businesses within the existing London Congestion Charge area since its introduction. [39907]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on VAT, corporation tax and national insurance contributions from businesses within the London Congestion Charge area is not available.

Pensions

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 11 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 775W, on pensions, how allowance was made for future improvement in life expectancy in calculating the estimates of the accrued liability for unfunded public sector pensions. [44831]

Mr. Des Browne: Significant allowance was made for future improvement in mortality, drawing on national population projections and mortality studies undertaken by the actuarial profession. The key actuarial assumptions used to value the liabilities of individual schemes are set out in relevant reports by the scheme actuary and they have, for example, been reported in their respective financial statements such as resource accounts.

Post Office Card Accounts

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people use the Post Office card account for receipt of child benefit *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by region. [45371]

Dawn Primarolo: 622 thousand child benefit recipients were being paid via post office card accounts at December 2005. The breakdown by region is shown as follows.

Number of child benefit customers paid by post office card account: December 2005

Thousand

Government office region	*Number of customers*
United Kingdom[1]	622
England	480
North East	37
Northwest	86
Yorkshire and the Humber	61
East Midlands	41
West Midlands	58
East of England	38
London	66
South East	49
South West	44
Wales	44
Scotland	54
Northern Ireland	40
Abroad and not known	4

[1] Including Abroad and not known

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when staff at the tax credit office first raised the issue of internet fraud with *(a)* managers, *(b)* the head of the Inland Revenue and *(c)* Ministers; and if he will make a statement; [36796]

(2) on what date he was first made aware of the use of the tax credit internet portal for organised fraud. [44995]

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when his Department first became aware that an organised fraud of the tax credit system was being perpetuated via one HM Revenue and Customs website; and if he will make a statement. [44800]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* I refer to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 550–51W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 550–51W, on tax credit, whether the Paymaster General was presented with the option of closing down the online tax credit portal in June 2005; and what the average award of tax credits was to families with *(a)* one child, *(b)* two children and *(c)* three children in the last year for which figures are available. [44244]

Dawn Primarolo: In June 2005 HMRC were satisfied they could continue to manage the balance between providing the internet service for genuine claimants against the risk posed from fraud. HMRC continued to closely monitor this and the decision to close the e-portal was taken in December 2005 after the threat had deemed to have changed.

The average award of tax credits to families for the year 2003–04 is shown in the following table.

	Number
One child	2,122
Two children	2,460
Three children	3,833

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what dates *(a)* he and *(b)* senior HM Revenue and Customs officials have met the (i) police, (ii) National Criminal Intelligence Service and (iii) National Infrastructure Security Co-ordination Centre to discuss tax credit fraud. [44996]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the written statements I and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department issued on 23 January 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the value of tax credit fraud in the financial year to date. [44997]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC are currently undertaking a programme of work on finalised 2003–04 awards—the first year of working tax credit and child tax credit—to provide more information on the level of claimant error and fraud. This is due to be completed in spring 2006.

Trade Deficit

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the UK's trade deficit. [44185]

John Healey: The most relevant measure of the UK trade in goods and services balance for comparative purposes is not the absolute figure, but the trade balance as a percentage of GDP. As quarterly figures can be volatile, it is more informative to look at annual figures. In 2004, the UK trade balance was in deficit at 3.3 per cent. of GDP, compared to 4.1 per cent. of GDP in 1989. The current account deficit was 2.0 per cent. of GDP over the same period, less than half the peak of 5.1 per cent. of GDP in 1989, and is readily financeable.

Winter Deaths

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many excess winter deaths of people aged over 65 years there have been in *(a)* West Lancashire, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [45151]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many excess winter deaths of people aged over 65 years there have been in *(a)* West Lancashire, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. (45151)

Figures available since 1997 on excess winter deaths (the excess number of deaths each winter compared to the average during other months of the year) for West Lancashire local authority, Lancashire and England are included in the table below.

The latest available figures for England are for 2004/2005; These are provisional and are not available for areas smaller than Government Office Regions. The latest available figures for smaller areas are for 2003/2004.

Excess winter deaths1 for persons aged 65 years and over for West Lancashire local authority, Lancashire2, and England, 1997–98 to 2004–05

	England		Lancashire		West Lancashire	
	EWD[1]	Index[3]	EWD[1]	Index[3]	EWD[1]	Index[3]
1997–98	20,070	14.9	440	12.6	20	6.7
1998–9	41,110	31.3	940	27.9	70	21.9
1999–2000	42,080	32.6	1,030	31.4	60	19.5
2000–01	21,650	16.7	600	18.5	90	31.7
2001–02	24,100	18.6	670	20.3	60	19.7
2002–03	20,890	16.0	260	7.5	20	6.6
2003–04	20,420	15.6	540	16.4	20	7.3
2004–05[4]	27,000	21.4	—	—	—	—

[1] Excess winter deaths are defined by the Office for National Statistics as the difference between the number of deaths during the four winter months (December to March) and the average number of deaths during the preceding four months (August to November) and the following four months (April to July). Figures for 1997–98 to 2003–04 are rounded to the nearest 10.

[2] The figures provided relate to the current county of Lancashire. This excludes the unitary authorities of Blackburn and Darwen, and Blackpool, created in 1998, which were part of the former county.

[3] The excess winter deaths index is calculated as the excess number of winter deaths divided by the average number of non-winter deaths, expressed as a percentage.

[4] Figures for 2004–05 are provisional and are rounded to the nearest 100.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Agency

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the additional transport costs which may be incurred by jobseekers as a result of the benefit agency office closure programme; [41819]

(2) what steps he is taking to help jobseekers in rural areas with additional transport costs incurred as a result of the benefit agency office closure programme. [41820]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 24 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions concerning what estimate he has made of the additional transport costs which may be incurred by jobseekers as a result of the Jobcentre Plus office closure programme; and the steps he has taken to help jobseekers in rural areas with additional transport costs so incurred. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

We do not maintain a central record of actual additional costs incurred by jobseekers as a result of changes in the configuration of our office network. This is because any changes in transport costs will vary between individual jobseekers and individual locations. Furthermore the levels of Jobseeker's Allowance already take account of the costs of transport for jobsearch-related activities (which includes the requirement to attend our offices on a regular, usually fortnightly, basis).

However, in developing the plans for their Districts, each District Manager took account of the availability, frequency and costs of transport links to our offices. In the case of jobseekers in rural areas, it is open for Managers to make arrangements for jobseekers to sign on by post, rather than attend the office in person. The general rule for allowing postal signing is where:

a. a customer lives more than one hour, door to door, by public transport (in either direction) from the nearest Jobcentre Plus office or Jobcentre; or

b. attendance would result in an absence from home in excess of 4 hours; or

c. the customer has a mental or physical disability which restricts their mobility.

Jobcentre Plus Business Managers may also use some discretion in offering the postal facility to other customers, even if their journey is possible within the time limits stated above. For example, if the customer would have to use a form of transport which they could not be expected to use on a fortnightly basis, such as an Intercity train, a ferry or a plane.

Occasionally customers are asked to attend a Jobcentre Plus Office or Jobcentre on a day when they are not usually due to attend to sign on (to see an Adviser for example). In these cases travel expenses are classed as additional and are reimbursed.

I hope this is helpful.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of children living in relative poverty in the UK who are in households with *(a)* one or more adults in full-time work, *(b)* one adult only, not in work, *(c)* one adult only, in part-time work, *(d)* one adult only, *(e)* one adult on incapacity benefit, *(f)* one adult on income support and *(g)* one adult on jobseeker's allowance. [41393]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available. The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators.

Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2003–04", available in the Library. The report includes comparisons of incomes against low income thresholds, such as the commonly used relative low income threshold threshold of 60 per cent. of contemporary median income.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children were living in households with incomes of less than 27 per cent. of median income in each year since 1990–91; and if he will make a statement. [41395]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2003–04", available in the Library. HBAI defines low income households' using thresholds of 50, 60 and 70 per cent. of median income.

The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of income thresholds.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the factors affecting child poverty; and if he will make a statement. [41396]

Margaret Hodge: We recognise that poverty and social exclusion are not just about low income, or the goods and services that people can afford. We understand that people's opportunities and quality of life are also shaped by their education, their skills, by access to quality health services, by decent housing and by the security and quality of the areas in which they live.

The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673), published in October 2005, sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion. It contains an annex of indicators tracking the Government's performance on tackling poverty and social exclusion across a range of domains—amounting to around 60 indicators in total, 25 of which are child specific. We will continue to take this approach in the future.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the possible relationship between child poverty and families with higher numbers of children; and if he will make a statement. [41401]

Margaret Hodge: The Government announced in the Child Poverty Review in 2004 that it had a long-term aspiration to improve the financial support available to large families and will consider the best mechanism for achieving this.

Specific information regarding low income for Great Britain is available in "Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 1994/95—2003/04", available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income. The data shows that children in large families—those with three or more children—were more likely to live in low income households, although the risk of relative low income for this group has decreased markedly since 1998–99.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to develop *(a)* a measure of and *(b)* a target for severe relative poverty of children; and if he will make a statement. [41402]

Margaret Hodge: The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators. Our current approach is to present a range of low income thresholds (50, 60 and 70 per cent.). This gives an idea of the depth of poverty and it is simple to interpret. Indeed, the incorporation of two different relative low income thresholds into our new child poverty measure (60 and 70 per cent. of median), together with the absolute tier, further ensures that different depths of poverty will be looked at separately.

Households reporting the lowest incomes may not have the lowest living standards. The bottom 10 per cent. of the income distribution should not, therefore, be interpreted as having the bottom 10 per cent. of living standards. This is a particular issue for lower thresholds, such as 50 per cent. of median. Other higher thresholds are less affected by this.

We have no plans to modify our current approach.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the incidence of child poverty was in families with *(a)* children under the age of 10 years and *(b)* children over the age of 10 years in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [41404]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators.

Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04", available in the Library. The report includes comparisons of incomes against low income thresholds, such as the commonly used threshold of 60 per cent. of contemporary median income.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of the age distribution of children living in relative low income households in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [41434]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in the tables.

Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2003–04", available in the Library. The report includes comparisons of incomes against low income thresholds, such as the commonly used threshold of 60 per cent. of contemporary median income.

There is a stronger relationship between age of youngest child and low income than age of children alone. Results show that for families where the youngest child is older, the children are less likely to experience low income—particularly 'after housing costs'. This is linked with higher risks by size of family, since an older youngest child will correlate with a smaller family size.

Proportion of children living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of median, 2003–04

Age of child	*Before housing costs*	*Percentage After housing costs*
Under 5	18	28
5 to 10	21	29
11 to 15	23	28
16 to 18	19	23
All children	21	28

Composition of children in only those households below 60 per cent. of median by age of child, 2003–04

Age of child	*Before housing costs*	*Percentage After housing costs*
Under 5	23	26
5 to 10	34	35
11 to 15	34	31
16 to 18	9	8
All children	100	100

Proportion of children living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of median by age of youngest child, 2003–04

Age of youngest child	*Before housing costs*	*Percentage After housing costs*
Under 5	20	30
5 to 10	22	29
11 to 15	21	24
16 to 18	12	16
All children	21	28

Composition of children in only those households below 60 per cent. of median by age of youngest child, 2003–04

Age of youngest child	*Before housing costs*	*Percentage After housing costs*
Under 5	40	44
5 to 10	37	36
11 to 15	20	18
16 to 18	3	3
All children	100	100

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the change in the annual maintenance payments of the Child Support Agency which would result from full compliance of all assessed cases; and if he will make a statement. [28385]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 24 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the increase in the annual maintenance payments of the Child Support Agency which would result from full compliance of all assessed cases and if he will make a statement.

In the 12 months to September 2005, the Agency collected 69 per cent.[1] of maintenance charged to non-resident parents on the Agency's collection service, which equates to £678m. Had full compliance been achieved over this same period, this would have resulted in an increase in collections of around £260m.

I hope you find this helpful.

[1] Measured according to the Agency's standard definition of cash compliance. Cash compliance is calculated by expressing the total amount of maintenance received via the collection service as a percentage of the total amount due over the reporting period. The above includes those old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment, and those new scheme cases with either a full maintenance calculation, or a default maintenance decision. Old scheme cases with an punitive interim maintenance assessment are excluded from this analysis in line with the Agency's target definitions, as are new scheme cases being processed clerically.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are being taken to ensure that individuals whose partners are self-employed can still receive Child Support Agency payments. [19809]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 25 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are being taken to ensure that individuals whose partners are self-employed can still receive Child Support Agency payments.

For employed non-resident parents who are initially non-compliant the Agency seeks to use deduction-from-earnings orders to secure maintenance. For self- employed non-resident parents these powers are inappropriate. In these cases the Agency instead uses one or more of a range of its other legal debt enforcement powers.

Enforcement measures available to the Agency include:

Liability Orders

Collection via Bailiffs

County Court Judgements

Third Party Debt Orders (eg bank arrestment)

Charging Order (to realise the debt from the sale of an asset)

Order for Sale

Commitment to Prison or withdrawal of Driving Licence

The Agency's enforcement teams are becoming much more successful in utilising these powers. This is demonstrated by the significant improvement in the in-month cash collections achieved, rising from £0.52 million in January 2005 to £1.42 million in November 2005. An analysis of a sample of debt enforcement cases indicates that approximately 73 % are self-employed non-resident parents.

Departmental Websites

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when his Department's website design was first implemented; for how long the search function of the website has been inoperative; and if he will make a statement. [45380]

Mr. Timms: The Department for Work and Pensions has had an internet site since the Department was formed on the 8 June 2001. The site was updated with a new design on the 15 May 2005. The redesign does not affect the search function, which is fully operational but has been operating on a non-standard port.

From February 2006 the Department's internet site will be running on a new server and the search engine will operate on a standard port. This is in response to an increasing number of internet users-including users within the Department-who have set their computers with high security levels to block information from non-standard ports.

Implementation of the new server will remove the problem.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claiming incapacity benefit have indicated to his Department that they want to work. [44504]

Margaret Hodge: The opportunity to work is vitally important in tackling poverty, supporting inclusion and ensuring economic prosperity for both the individual and society. The right to work is as important as the right to equal treatment or access to services. For too many people on incapacity benefit have been denied this right, written off as incapable of work and locked into lifelong dependency on benefits.

We know that the vast majority of people on incapacity benefit have genuine health problems or disabilities. But we also know that a large proportion of these people want to work. In the early stages of an incapacity benefit claim 80–90 per cent. of people expect to get back to work and around 1 million disabled benefit claimants want to work. So we want to ensure that they are given the opportunity to do so. Our task is to break down the barriers that incapacity benefit recipients face and give them the support they need, so that they can get a job and enjoy all the benefits that work can bring.

Local Housing Allowance

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what funding has been allocated to support piloting of the local housing allowance in the social rented sector; [44551]

(2) whether he plans to publish a consultation paper on his proposals for piloting the local housing allowance in the social rented sector; [44552]

(3) what research he has commissioned into the impact of the local housing allowance on the rental income streams of *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations; [44598]

(4) which *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations have expressed an interest in piloting the local housing allowance in the social rented sector. [44599]

Mr. Plaskitt: 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', which was published on 24 January, sets out our proposals for reforming housing benefit. Publication of this paper signals the start of a 12-week period of consultation on a number of issues and seeks stakeholder views on options for reforming housing benefit for tenants in the social rented sector.

It is clearly desirable that we consult with those having an interest in social housing issues before making decisions about the direction of reform and it would be premature to commission research or put forward specific proposals for reform until after the end of the consultation period.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of replacing the single room rent restriction with the shared room rate restriction available to under-25s under the local housing allowance. [44600]

Mr. Plaskitt: No estimate has been made of the costs of replacing the single room rent nationally with the shared room rate under the local housing allowance.

New Deal

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will make a decision on the Jobcentre Plus contracts for the new deal, with particular reference to providers of basic skills training. [41510]

Margaret Hodge: Contracts for the new deal for young people and new deal 25 plus programmes, which include the provision of basic skills training, are currently being re-tendered. We announced the providers who have been successful at the first stage on the 16 January.

Pension Credit

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single women pension credit recipients are in receipt of the guaranteed credit, broken down by constituency. [43375]

Mr. Timms: I have placed the requested information in the Library.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the average time taken to process applications for pension credit. [44506]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service's internal target for processing applications for pension credit is 10 working days. The average time taken as at December 2005 was 8.66 working days. The year to date figure is 8.63 working days.

Pension Service Partnership Fund

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the work of the Pension Service Partnership Fund. [45197]

Mr. Timms: The objective of The Pension Service Partnership Fund is to pilot ways of increasing benefit take-up, particularly among harder to reach older people. The focus is on innovative partnership approaches involving local authorities and the voluntary and community sector. The Department for Work and Pensions awarded 172 contracts with a total value of £13 million. The majority of contracts run for two years from March 2005, although there are a number of shorter contracts which will terminate later this year.

All Fund contractors provide regular statistical returns and narrative reports to the DWP on the progress of their activity which will inform both the evaluation of the individual schemes and the fund as a whole.

Learning and best practice will be shared with partner organisations, and other interested groups, towards the end of the two year contract period; in the interim, a regular update is provided to partner organisations through the Partnerships Against Poverty Forum.

Pensions

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many companies have been fined for failing to offer stakeholder pensions in each year since 2002. [44507]

Mr. Timms: Since 2002 one employer has been fined for failing to designate a stakeholder Pension. This fine was imposed by the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA) in 2003.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of companies which are required to offer stakeholder pensions but do not. [44508]

Mr. Timms: Employers with five or more employees and who do not offer an occupational pension scheme to the whole of the work force, or do not offer at least a 3 per cent. employer contribution to a personal pension, are required to designate a stakeholder pension scheme. There are an estimated 350,000 such firms at any one time, and it is estimated that around 70,000 of those are not complying with the requirement to designate a stakeholder pension scheme. Of those non-compliant firms, it is estimated that nearly 80 per cent. have fewer than 10 employees.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what circumstances an individual may receive pension payments by cheque. [44412]

Mr. Plaskitt: Cheque payments, which are cashable at a post office, are available for those customers who are unable to open or manage a bank account to support the direct payment method. This might be through illness or disability, or because they rely on different carers to collect their money for them.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many representations on pensions policy have been received by his Department since the publication of Lord Turner's final report on 30 November 2005; and if he will publish them. [41342]

Mr. Timms: Since the publication of The Pensions Commission's final report, the Department has received in excess of 800 letters from members of the public on pensions policy, 240 of these directly responding to the Pensions Commission's recommendations.

In addition, as part of the wider National Pensions Debate, DWP Ministers' have engaged with a wide range of members of political parties, stakeholders and members of the public about pensions policy.

As these individual representations were not invited as part of a formal consultation process on Government proposals for reform, we do not intend to publish them.

However, all of these discussions and the correspondence we have received will Inform the next stages of the National Pensions Debate which will in turn inform ministerial decisions on pensions reform.

The Government will work towards the publication of a White Paper in the spring which will set out its response to the Pensions Commission's recommendations. This will include a summary of the main themes of the representations received as part of the National Pensions Debate. A formal consultation exercise on the Government's proposals will be launched with publication of the White Paper.

Post Office

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people use the Post Office card account for receipt of *(a)* state pension, *(b)* pension credit and *(c)* other benefits (i) in total and (ii) broken down by region. [45370]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. The following table shows the latest available information on the number of benefit and pension accounts which are paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account.

Number

Region	*State retirement pension*	*Pension credit*	*Other benefits*
North East	109,200	66,500	127,100
North West	252,000	133,000	274,200
Yorkshire and Humber	194,200	97,600	166,800
East Midlands	149,500	65,500	106,700
West Midlands	194,600	104,600	165,000
East of England	153,900	66,300	89,400
London	123,500	85,700	194,600
South East	182,400	73,300	112,400
South West	181,000	68,400	97,100
Wales	152,300	67,800	146,500
Scotland	193,900	108,000	205,800
Total	1,886,500	936,700	1,685,600

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Figures refer to payment accounts.
3. People in receipt of more than one benefit/pension will be counted for each separate benefit/pension in payment.
4. People who have their benefit/pension combined and paid at the same time will only be counted through the paying benefit.

Winter Fuel Payments Allowance

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many UK nationals who are residents of *(a)* Florida, *(b)* Spain, *(c)* Italy, *(d)* South Africa and *(e)* Australia are in receipt of the winter fuel payments allowance; and at what cost to public funds in 2005–06. [43422]

Mr. Timms: Citizenship does not affect entitlement to a winter fuel payment as entitlement is based on residency in the UK. So far this winter we have made 20,373 winter fuel payments to qualifying former UK residents now living in Spain at a cost of £3,215,200 and 545 winter fuel payments to qualifying former UK residents now living in Italy at a cost of £90,400.

People who are resident in Florida, South Africa and Australia are not entitled to winter fuel payments. We are aware of a very small number of cases where people have received payment in countries outside the EEA. This has been where notification of their change of circumstances has been received after payments have been issued, in these cases payments are stopped and repayment sought.

Workplace Accidents and Health Report

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the letter sent to hon. and right hon. Members on 14 November on the Health and Safety Executive's annual report on workplace accidents and health, if he will make available the equivalent figures for last year. [40365]

Mrs. McGuire: The information has been placed in the Library.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* central government receives the additional revenue from increasing a council tax collection rate; and whether (i) local authorities and (ii) central government lose revenue from a low council tax collection rate. [43033]

Mr. Woolas: The grant distribution formula for local authorities does not take account of council tax collection rates. A collection rate for council tax in excess of, or below, the billing authority's budgeted level will, other things being equal, mean increased or reduced revenue for a billing authority and its precepting authorities.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local authorities retain additional income received from reducing or removing the council tax discount on empty property; and how much additional revenue has been raised for central government from reductions in the discounts in each year since the powers to reduce the discounts were introduced. [43030]

Mr. Woolas: Local authorities do not retain the additional income generated from reducing or removing the council tax discount on long term empty properties. It is estimated that the additional amounts of council tax generated in 2004–05, the first year that billing authorities had powers to reduce or remove the discount, was £49 million. Figures for 2005–06 are not yet available.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recommendations for changes to council tax regulations noted in the Valuation Office Agency Local Authorities Liaison Group meeting minutes for 27 September 2004 were submitted to his Department by the Valuation Office Agency. [42597]

Mr. Woolas: The proposals for changes to council tax regulations referred to in the minutes of the Valuation Office Agency Local Authorities Liaison Group meeting minutes for 27 September 2004 relate to regulation 3 of the Council Tax (Chargeable Dwellings) Order, SI 1992/549. The Government have no current plans to amend this regulation.

Councillors (Pensions/Income)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1964–5W, on councillors (pensions/income), if he will list the regulations or circulars that

have changed the rules relating to allowances and pensions since May 1997 and the dates of their commencement. [42599]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is as follows.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1998/556 Came into force: 1 April 1998

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1998/557 Came into force: 1 April 1998

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1999/1086 Came into force: 30 April 1999.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1999/1087 Came into force: 30 April 1999

The Local Government Act 2000 Came into force: 28 July 2001 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001/1280 Came into force: 4 May 2001

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003/1021 Came into force: 1 May 2003

The Local Government Pension Scheme and Discretionary Compensation (Local Authority Members in England) Regulations 2003/1022 Came into force: 1 May 2003

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003/1692 Came into force: 31 July 2003

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2004/573 Came into force: 1 April 2004, Changes to decision, notification and dispute resolution procedures 1 June 2004.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Civil Partnership) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005/3069 Came into force: 5 December 2005.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1964–65W, on councillors (pensions/income), what estimate he has made of the equivalent average monetary value of a councillor's pension after *(a)* four years, *(b)* eight years, *(c)* 12 years and *(d)* 16 years participation in the Local Government Pension Scheme. [42601]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. It is a matter for individual local authorities to consider.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39110]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002 and information prior to this date is not available. Expenditure shown as follows relates to advertising, marketing and publications and relates only to ODPM Central. A breakdown of expenditure for each agency, non departmental body and statutory body sponsored by the ODPM could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	£
2002–03	[1]16,496,127
2003–04	7,836,792
2004–05	8,551,328
2005–06 to date	8,312,919

[1] This figure includes expenditure from both ODPM and the Department for Transport (DfT) and which could not separately be identified.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40338]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its Agencies spent a total of £62,476.11 on bottled water in 2004–05.

This sum does not include bottled water supplied to delegates attending the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, or provided for students at the Fire Service College. The sum also does not include for any bottled water provided at 1 High street, Glossop, Ashdown House, Hastings and Temple Quay House, Bristol where this information is not recorded. Bottled water used in 26 Whitehall has been included within the answer provided by the Cabinet Office [ref], who manage the building.

Bottled water at three sites is dispensed from water coolers. Only the dispenser at Temple Quay House, Bristol is held on a rental agreement, the cost of which in 2004–05 was £860.53. This cost is included in the above total.

The figure provided is exclusive of Value Added Tax.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41346]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its Agencies own and lease the following cars:

Cars	*(a) Owned*	*(b) Leased*	*Model*	*Fuel*	*Metric urban (cold) (l/100km)*	*Metric extra urban (l/100km)*	*Metric combined cycle (l/100km)*
ODPM	2		1 x Citroen Synergie LX 2.0 HDI	Diesel	33.6	50.4	42.2
			1 x Ford Mondeo 5 door hatchback 1.8 TDCi LX	Diesel	n/a	n/a	n/a
		2	2 x Peugeot 307 2003A estate 2. 0 Tds Hdi 90	Diesel	7.1	4.5	5.4
ODPM total	2	2					
Agency	10	0	1 x Ford Galaxy 1.9 PD Tdi	Diesel	8.6	5.5	6.6

Cars	(a) Owned	(b) Leased	Model	Fuel	Metric urban (cold) (l/100km)	Metric extra urban (l/100km)	Metric combined cycle (l/100km)
			(115ps)				
			3 x Ford Focus 3/5 door Saloon 1.8 TDCi (100ps)	Diesel	6.7	4.3	5.2
			3 x Ford Focus 4 door Saloon and estate 1.8 Duratorq TDCi	Diesel	6.8	4.4	5.3
			3 x Ford Toureno Connect 1.8 Duratorq TDCi	Diesel	7.9	5.8	6.6
Agency total	10	0					
Total	12	2					

The fuel efficiency of these cars has been provided in the metric urban (cold), metric extra urban and metric combined cycles; this data is for the vehicles when new.

Where possible the data has been sourced via the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) on-line database. The data for the Citroen Synergie is not available on the VCA site and this has had to be obtained from another commercial source. Reliable data for the Ford Mondeo cannot be located.

For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport has asked the Chief Executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

This answer does not include cars used by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments,

Design for Manufacture

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the homes being constructed as part of the Design for Manufacture competition *(a)* are being constructed for £60,000 and *(b)* are intended to be classed as affordable housing, broken down by location. [33490]

Yvette Cooper: The Design for Manufacture competition is being run by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. English Partnerships is currently evaluating bids from developers for Stage 3 of the Design for Manufacture competition.

A minimum of 30 per cent. of the housing units within the competition will be built to a target cost of £60,000 and the remainder will be larger and smaller dwellings that should be built at an equivalent cost-efficiency.

At this stage, and subject to final planning applications, the number of homes on each site is as follows:

Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Phase 2 site. Total of 145 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Oxford Road, Former Territorial Army Centre, Aylesbury Vale. Total of 100 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Upton, Northampton, Site D2. Total of 165 homes, or which 36 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Allerton Bywater Millennium Community, Leeds, Yorkshire. Total of 150 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable.

School Road, Hastings. Total of 12 homes, with affordable housing level to be determined.

Horns Cross, Stone, Dartford. Total of 37 homes, of which 11 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Rowan High School site, Merton, London. Total of 180 homes, of which 54 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Renny Lodge Hospital, London Road, Newport Pagnell, Bucks. Total of 60 homes, of which 20 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Park Prewett Hospital, Kingsclere Rd, Basingstoke. Total of 137 homes, of which 47 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Linton Hospital site, Maidstone. Total of 123 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and English Partnerships are working to prepare a publication drawing out the lessons that have been learned from the Design for Manufacture competition. It will include information about costs, technologies and construction strategies. We aim to be able to publish this document by spring 2006.

Fire and Rescue Services

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much funding his Department is making available to regional fire and rescue authorities to take into account housing expansion in the South East in their annual budgets in real cash terms per year in the years from 2001 to 2009; [43909]

(2) what account he has taken of the expansion of Milton Keynes in the new Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes fire authority budget. [43910]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The local government finance settlement provides formula grant to local authorities, including single service fire and rescue authorities, in England. The provisional local government finance settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 that was announced on the 5 December 2005 took account of projected population growth in each authority's area. This grant combined with council tax, specific grants and reserves determine the annual budget of an authority. There is no specific grant available to fire and rescue authorities relating to housing expansion.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighters served the West Lancashire area *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available. [45138]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information on the number of firefighters employed at constituency level is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Homelessness

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many homeless families in *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* Staffordshire (i) were living in temporary accommodation and (ii) sleeping rough in each of the past five years; [42077]

(2) how many beds were available for homeless families in *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* Staffordshire in each of the last five years. [42078]

Yvette Cooper: Information about the number of households with children in temporary accommodation, as arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation, has only been collected since March 2002 and this information together with that for the latest three years is presented in the following table for Tamworth and Staffordshire. Also presented in the table is number of people sleeping rough on any single night of the year, in each of the past five years.

Each local authority in England has a duty to provide accommodation to households who have been accepted as homeless and are owed a main housing duty under homelessness legislation. If the authority cannot provide a settled solution straight away the household will be placed in temporary accommodation. For this reason, authorities will not have a set number of beds for homeless households.

All households, and households containing children or an expectant mother, in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by local authorities under homelessness provisions of Housing Acts, and numbers of persons sleeping rough[2]

	Households in TA as on 31 March Of which:		
	Total	*with children*	*Rough sleepers*
2001			
Tamworth	105	[3]—	0
All LAs in Staffordshire	270	[3]—	7
2002			
Tamworth	94	90	0
All LAs in Staffordshire	230	150	7
2003			
Tamworth	83	75	0
All LAs in Staffordshire	290	200	0
2004			
Tamworth	[4]—	[4]—	0
All LAs in Staffordshire	210	120	3
2005			
Tamworth	[4]—	[4]—	0
All LAs in Staffordshire	300	210	3

[1] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative housing as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

[2] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates.

[3] Not collected.

[4] Data not reported.

Note:

Figures for Staffordshire, which include estimates for partial and non-response, have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly) and HSSA returns (annual)

House Building (Aylesbury)

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the cost implications for the retained fire service of the planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [44161]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No assessment has been made to the cost implications to Aylesbury Vale in relation to planned housing expansion in regards to the 2006–07 local government finance settlement. However, the provisional local government finance settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 that was announced on the 5 December 2005 by my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government, (Mr. Woolas) included the use of population projections as the dominant data drivers of population in the settlements.

House Repossessions

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department has commissioned into strategies to reduce the number of house repossessions in the UK. [43189]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) jointly commissioned report "Homeowner Risks and Safety-nets: Mortgage Payment Protection and Beyond, University of York 2004" was a major piece of research that has informed the development of the Government's strategy on sustainable home ownership. The ODPM has also been involved in research commissioned by others through its membership of the "SUSHO Partnership Steering Group". The Council of Mortgage Lenders, the Association of British Insurers and Department of Work and Pensions are also members of this group, whose aim is to produce an enhanced safety-net for home buyers that results in fewer households getting into arrears and losing their homes.

The numbers of repossessions has fallen dramatically since the early 1990s when mortgage possessions peaked at 38,930 in the first half of 1991 and the numbers are expected to remain small: the total number of repossessions in 2004 was 6,230. The Government is working closely with the industry to ensure that home ownership is sustainable, and to improve the links between private provision and state intervention. A key part of this initiative is the wider availability and take up of mortgage payment protection insurance and similar products providing cover for borrowers during periods of difficulty.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what training his Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41278]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No specific identity fraud training is provided to staff in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). No 'front desk' facilities are provided by the ODPM to meet members of the public. Administrative staff are advised to request that members of the public put any requests for information, financial or otherwise, in writing.

Influenza Pandemic

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he has given to local authorities about steps to be taken in the event of an influenza pandemic. [43870]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have been asked to reply

The Government have provided advice on pandemic influenza planning to local authorities and other category one responders under the Civil Contingencies Act in a variety of forms and through a range of mechanisms. This includes the general advice contained in the UK pandemic contingency plan as well as tailored advice for local authorities via the Local Government Association and the Regional Resilience Teams based in the Government offices in the English regions.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much Government grant was given to Oxfordshire county council by his Department in the financial year *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [44542]

Mr. Woolas: The following table sets out the amount of grant payments made to Oxfordshire county council by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since 2004–05.

Funding

	Grant payment (£ million)
2004–05	356.318
2005–06	376.470
Total	732.788

Jim Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* proposed total and *(b)* percentage net change in formula grant is between 2005–06 and 2006–07, taking into account the 2004–05 and 2005–06 amending reports for the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and how many local authorities in (i) Greater London, (ii) metropolitan authorities, (iii) all purpose authorities and (iv) shire counties had a (A) larger and (B) smaller percentage increase on a similar basis than the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. [44595]

Mr. Woolas: The proposed net change in formula grant on a like-for-like basis, taking into account the 2004–05 and 2005–06 amending reports for the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne between 2005–06 and 2006–07 is £5.424 million or 3.7 per cent.

The following table shows the number of authorities that had a *(a)* larger and *(b)* smaller percentage increase than Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Number

Class of authority	*(a) Authorities with an increase larger than Newcastle-upon-Tyne*	*(b) Authorities with an increase smaller than Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
London boroughs including the city of London	1	32
Metropolitan districts	1	34
Unitary authorities including the Isle of Scilly	8	39
Shire counties	2	32

Regional Reorganisation

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has given to *(a)* other Government departments and *(b)* executive agencies within other Government Departments on reorganising their administrative functions on a regional basis. [41118]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) does not provide specific guidance to other Government Departments, or their executive agencies, on reorganising their administrative functions regionally. The ODPM works closely with other Departments on a range of issues to develop the most effective policies, structures and institutions.

For example, the Government Offices in the Regions now incorporate the work often Departments into a single, regional organisation to ensure that policies and programmes are co-ordinated efficiently and effectively to achieve maximum effect.

Social Housing

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent meetings he has held with *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* other interested groups concerning the development and maintenance of council housing; and if he will make a statement. [44466]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has regular meetings with local authorities and outside interest groups concerning housing policy at which a number of issues are discussed.

Standards Board/Adjudication Panel

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total expenditure of the *(a)* Standards Board for England and *(b)* Adjudication Panel was in each year since it was established; and what the budget is for (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [42612]

Mr. Woolas: Information on the amount of grant provided each year to the Standards Board for England and expenditure on the Adjudication Panel, the costs of which are included in the board's budget, is tabled as follows:

£000

	Grant to standards board including costs of adjudication panel	*Expenditure on adjudication panel*
2001–02	2,423	—
2002–03	6,159	—
2003–04	7,932	436
2004–05	8,940	386
2005–06	9,181	476
2006–07[1]	9,429	478

[1] Preliminary estimate.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list each property data variable and type allowed within the Valuation Office Agency's automated valuation model computer system. [42924]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 26 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 447W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Valuation Office Agency has *(a)* to publish online and *(b)* to make publicly available (i) business property and (ii) domestic property attribute information; and if he will make a statement. [42925]

Mr. Woolas: Attribute data for the majority of business properties is currently available on the Valuation Office Agency's website at: www.voa.gov.uk, through the summary valuation scheme. The Valuation Office Agency has no plans to make attribute information publicly available for domestic property following the postponement of the council tax revaluation in England.

HEALTH

Acute Hospital Portfolio

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the results of the acute hospital portfolio 2005–06 service user satisfaction surveys; and if she will make a statement. [43299]

Jane Kennedy: The acute hospital portfolio service users satisfaction survey is part of reviews of diagnostic services and medicines management being carried out by the Healthcare Commission at acute trusts. The chairman of the Commission has confirmed that the national results of the reviews, including those from the service users satisfaction survey, will be published in the summer.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost is of inoculating everyone in the UK against the H5N1 strand of avian influenza. [43774]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 19 January 2006]*: The cost of such a policy is dependent on a number of factors including some which would be commercially confidential. As such, an estimated cost cannot be provided for such a strategy.

Barts and the London NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when *(a)* she and *(b)* other Ministers at her Department first saw the full business case for redevelopment at the Barts and the London NHS Trust. [43427]

Jane Kennedy: Department officials have not yet concluded their review of the full business case for the Barts and the London private finance initiative scheme. When this is complete, it will be submitted to my office for approval. Therefore, I understand that neither the Secretary of State nor any other Minister has seen the full business case.

Alcohol-related Illnesses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes for alcohol-related illnesses there have been in England for *(a)* patients aged under 18 years and *(b)* patients 18 years and over, broken down by health authority in each year between 1987 and 1997. [42331]

Caroline Flint: The data are not available for years earlier than 1996–97, data for 1996–97 are shown in the table.

Counts of finished consultant episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected alcohol[1] related diseases

Strategic health authority of residence	*Aged under 18*	*Aged 18 and over*	*Age not known*	*Total*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	109	929	44	1,082
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	142	620	2	764
Essex HA	70	749	—	819
North West London HA	56	1,217	11	1,284
North Central London HA	65	881	6	952
North East London HA	57	989	1	1,047
South East London HA	70	1,023	2	1,095
South West London HA	105	876	2	983
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	227	1,661	7	1,895
County Durham and Tees Valley HA	257	1,084	2	1,343
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire HA	144	992	2	1,138
West Yorkshire HA	229	1,584	2	1,815
Cumbria and Lancashire HA	254	2,474	—	2,728
Greater Manchester HA	271	3,093	1	3,365
Cheshire and Merseyside HA	363	3,672	6	4,041
Thames Valley HA	69	1,020	—	1,089
Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	104	1,271	—	1,375
Kent and Medway HA	117	862	—	979
Surrey and Sussex HA	160	1,699	5	1,864
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	149	1,459	—	1,608
South West Peninsula HA	127	1,079	—	1,206
Dorset and Somerset HA	78	997	1	1,076
South Yorkshire HA	153	887	—	1,040
Trent HA	198	2,172	—	2,370
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	97	779	—	876
Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	158	1,119	—	1,277
Birmingham and The Black Country HA	172	2,352	3	2,527
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	171	1,537	2	1,710
Scotland	2	22	—	24
England—not otherwise specified	3	363	5	371

Counts of finished consultant episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected alcohol[1] related diseases

Strategic health authority of residence	*Aged under 18*	*Aged 18 and over*	*Age not known*	*Total*
Wales	17	101	—	118
Foreign	6	43	1	50
Unknown	49	658	607	1,314
Northern Ireland	—	18	—	18
Total	4,249	40,282	712	45,243

[1] Alcohol related diseases defined as following International Classification of Disease-10 (ICD-10) codes recorded in primary diagnosis:
F10: Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
K70: Alcoholic liver disease
T51: Toxic effect of alcohol
Source:
NHS Hospitals, England 1996–97

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many admissions to hospital via accident and emergency departments who had an alcohol-related diagnosis were *(a)* aged 18 years and over and *(b)* aged under 18 years, broken down by health authority area in each year between 1987 and 1997. [42332]

Caroline Flint: The data are not available for years earlier than 1996–97. Data for 1996–97 are shown in the table.

Counts of finished admission episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected alcohol[1] related diseases and admission methods[2], 1996–97

Strategic health authority of residence	*Aged under 18*	*Aged 18 and over*	*Age not known*	*Total*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	102	352	14	468
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	135	350	1	486
Essex HA	65	438	—	503
North West London HA	54	751	10	815
North Central London HA	65	595	5	665
North East London HA	56	693	1	750
South East London HA	67	643	2	712
South West London HA	99	469	—	568
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	217	737	6	960
County Durham and Tees Valley HA	238	446	2	686
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire HA	141	506	2	649
West Yorkshire HA	222	796	2	1,020
Cumbria and Lancashire HA	220	1,278	—	1,498
Greater Manchester HA	259	1,232	1	1,492
Cheshire and Merseyside HA	352	1,654	6	2,012
Thames Valley HA	59	484	—	543
Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	91	584	—	675
Kent and Medway HA	95	365	—	460
Surrey and Sussex HA	145	791	3	939
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	111	471	—	582
South West Peninsula HA	109	407	—	516
Dorset and Somerset HA	67	507	1	575
South Yorkshire HA	150	424	—	574
Trent HA	186	778	—	964
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	89	243	—	332
Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	137	405	—	542
Birmingham and The Black Country HA	162	932	3	1,097
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	158	837	1	996
Scotland	2	17	—	19
England—not otherwise specified	3	234	5	242
Wales	15	35	—	50
Foreign	6	28	1	35
Unknown	43	376	545	964
Northern Ireland	—	5	—	5
Total	3,920	18,863	611	23,394

[1] Alcohol related diseases defined as following International Classification of Diseases-10 (ICD-10) codes recorded in primary diagnosis:
F10: Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
K70: Alcoholic liver disease
T51: Toxic effect of alcohol
[2] Selected Methods of Admission:
Emergency (via accident and emergency (A&E) services including the casualty department of the provider)
Emergency (other means, including patients who arrive via A&E department of another healthcare provider)
Source:
NHS Hospitals, England 1996–97

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the premises occupied by her Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42879]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's five main office premises are all fitted with audible fire alarms.

Brain Tumours (Treatment)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence appraisal consultation document on the use of carmustine implants and temozolomide for treatment of newly diagnosed and high grade glioma; [42479]

(2) what assessment she has made of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence preliminary recommendation that *(a)* temozolomide and *(b)* carmustine implants should not be used for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma; [42480]

(3) if she will make a statement on the clinical effectiveness of the use of *(a)* carmustine implants and *(b)* temozolomide for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma. [42484]

Jane Kennedy: The Department will respond by 1 February 2006 to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) appraisal consultation document on carmustine implants and temozolomide for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma. Consultation responses will be published on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk in due course. NICE expects to publish its final guidance in August 2006.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by her Department to speed up the licensing by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence of new treatments for brain tumour patients. [42491]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence does not license drugs.

Medicinal products for human use containing a new active substance and for which the therapeutic indication is the treatment of cancer, are assessed through the centralised procedure which is administered by the European Medicines Agency.

Children's Hospices

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been allocated to children's hospices serving Staffordshire in each year since 1997. [37828]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Children's hospices are funded from a number of sources, including primary care trusts (PCTs), based on their assessment of children's needs and their priorities locally. This is a matter for local decision. There are no limits to the amount of funding which PCTs may provide.

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health after how many months a patient's registration lapses in the case of a patient who is registered with *(a)* a dentist operating under the general dental service contract and *(b)* a dentist operating under a personal dental service contract, for the purposes of collecting dental registration statistics. [33267]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For dentists operating under general dental services, a patient's registration lapses if he does not return to see that dentist within a 15-month period.

For dentists operating under pilot personal dental service arrangements, the dental practice board records patients seen in a 30-month period. This reflects the practice's total patient base.

From April 2006 all practices operating under the new contract will retain patients on their list for 30 months.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental *(a)* nurses, *(b)* hygienists and *(c)* therapists there were in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex, (iii) Hertfordshire, (iv) Greater London and (v) England in the last 10 years for which figures are available. [34292]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on dental nurses and hygienists is not held centrally as most dental care professionals are employed by independent general dental practitioners. It may be assumed that virtually all practising dentists will employ a dental nurse. Information on the numbers of dentists working in the relevant areas is shown in the following table as a rough indicator of the number of dental nurses.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS). Numbers of GDS and PDS dentists in England and the specified areas as at 30 September each year.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
England	16,670	17,199	17,755	18,167	18,722	18,946	19,260	19,722	20,890
of which:									
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	707	733	758	777	794	805	834	858	924
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	638	672	714	739	775	770	771	808	873
Essex SHA	530	543	562	595	590	566	574	595	662
North West London SHA	1,004	1,080	1,089	1,058	1,059	1,012	1,038	1,078	1,145
North Central London SHA	632	639	667	699	709	710	713	713	766
North East London SHA	537	567	574	597	610	590	614	649	720
South East London SHA	633	637	638	674	670	651	673	694	741
South West London SHA	629	643	665	681	702	683	681	689	756
Southend on Sea PCT	57	62	64	65	65	62	61	60	66

Notes:

1. The dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts are excluded from the data.

2. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. primary care trust (PCT) and strategic health authority (SHA) areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics all fields postcode directory.

3. Data includes all notifications, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 2 November 2005 for England and 19 October 2005 for

PCT and SHA data. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Information relating to dental therapists directly employed in the hospital and community health is shown in the following table.

National health service hospital and community health services: Qualified dental therapists in England by Government office region (GOR) and by strategic health authority (SHA) area in England as at 30 September each specified year

GOR code	Strategic health authority	SHA code	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	England	—	137	130	126	119	122	125	148	203	164	175
	of which:											
G	East of England total	—	6	7	4	6	4	8	15	15	15	18
	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	3	4	3	5	3	7	14	14	15	18
	Essex	Q01	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q03	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	—
H	London total		17	19	18	12	15	21	17	17	16	17
	North Central London	Q05	2	3	3	4	5	4	3	3	2	3
	North East London	Q06	4	4	2	—	—	—	2	5	5	6
	North West London	Q04	4	3	3	2	5	7	6	7	5	5
	South East London	Q07	2	4	5	2	2	3	3	—	—	—
	South West London	Q08	5	5	5	4	3	7	3	2	4	3

Note:
1995–2001 data is estimated based on 2002 organisational structure.
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) her Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which her Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by her Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40136]

Jane Kennedy: Three properties, buildings and land combined, have been sold since 7 May 1997. All three properties were owned by the Department.

Sale of departmental properties since 7 May 1997

Property	Date of sale	Sale price (£)	Sale price (estimated current value) (£)
St. Charles Centre, Brentwood	1 February 2000	3,000,000	3,467,462
Capital Drive, Milton Keynes	5 January 2001	3,725,000	4,214,845
Glenthorne Youth Treatment Centre, Birmingham	14 May 2002	3,607,067	3,963,270

The money accrued from the sales was retained by the Department.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by her Department in Castle Point. [42893]

Jane Kennedy: Neither the Department nor the Secretary of State for Health owns land or property in Castle Point.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40153]

Jane Kennedy: The expenditure on buildings and insurance for the Department, non-departmental public bodies (NDPB) and executive agencies in each of the last three years, plus planned expenditure for 2005–06 is shown in the table.

Details of expenditure for other public bodies in each region are not held centrally. The cost of collating this data would be disproportionate.

Department, NDPB and Executive agencies expenditure on buildings and insurance 2002–03 to 2005–06

£000

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Department				
Buildings	27,280	28,591	29,653	27,119
Insurance	102	134	160	147
NDPB				
Buildings	789	2,082	952	1,350
Insurance	12.5	24	24	28.5

Department, NDPB and Executive agencies expenditure on buildings and insurance 2002–03 to 2005–06

£000

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Agencies				
Buildings	1,185	1,930	1,407	1,211
Insurance	79	84	74	39

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent by her Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41246]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has spent the following amounts on refreshments and food since 2002, previous years are not available due to a change in contractor:

	£
2002	693,928
2003	705,889
2004	701,236
2005	794,021

This figure includes working breakfasts or lunches, meetings and official entertainment.

All expenditure of official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in "Government Accounting"

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent by her Department on salaries paid to civil servants in each year since 1997. [41590]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the Department's administration costs, including paybill, for years from 1999–2000 is given in the Departmental Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6524). The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (Cm 6639) gives some provisional information on the 2004–05 outturn for departmental administration costs.

Information for earlier years to 1997–98 is not available on a consistent basis, and information on the Department's running costs for those years is given at table 13.1 in the departmental report 2000–01 (Cm 4603).

Drug Treatment Centres

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the addresses of drug treatment centres which specialise in *(a)* opiate addiction and *(b)* cocaine addiction. [44639]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The information requested is not available in the format requested. Comprehensive details of all drug treatment services is available on the National Treatment Agency's website at:

www.nta.nhs.uk and on DrugScope's website at:

www.drugscope.org.uk/drugbaseii/home.asp.

There are approximately 683 drug treatment services[1] currently available in England, the majority of which specialise in treatment of opiate addiction; there are few services which specialise in the treatment of cocaine addiction. All drug misusers have access to a wide variety of services including structured counselling, harm reduction, aftercare and complementary therapies.

Source:
DrugScope

Genetically Modified Foods

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to commission research into the public health effects of genetically modified foods. [43860]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has a research programme on the safety of novel and genetically modified (GM) foods and its research requirements are published at regular intervals via its website. Genetically modified foods are approved in the European Union on a case-by-case basis after an extensive safety assessment. The FSA currently has no plans to commission research into public health effects of GM foods.

Health Care Fraud

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of the cost to the NHS of people accessing free care to which they are not entitled. [42722]

Jane Kennedy: Anyone who is ordinarily resident in this country is entitled to receive free national health service hospital treatment. Anyone who is not ordinarily resident is subject to the provisions of the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, as amended. Successive Governments have not required the national health service to provide statistics on the number of overseas visitors seen or treated under the provisions of these Regulations or on the costs of treatment. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Healthcare Commission

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of staffing levels at the Healthcare Commission; and if she will make a statement. [40658]

Jane Kennedy: The chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that as at 5 January 2006 there were 684 whole time equivalent staff on the Commission's payroll. This included permanent and fixed term contractor staff. There were also 176 interim and temporary staff.

High Cholesterol

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many diagnoses of high cholesterol there have been in England in each year since 1997–98; and how many of these diagnoses were made in those under the age of 18 years. [43535]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

All diagnosis count of finished consultant episodes and patients for high cholesterol[1] in national health service hospitals, England 1997–98 to 2004–05

Age group	1997–98 Finished consultant episodes	1997–98 Patient counts	1998–99 Finished consultant episodes	1998–99 Patient counts	1999–2000 Finished consultant episodes	1999–2000 Patient counts	2001–01 Finished consultant episodes	2001–01 Patient counts
Under 18	167	121	200	167	244	198	298	209
18 and above	53,537	39,373	72,748	53,420	94,622	67,977	132,880	91,718
Not known	226	153	35	32	42	40	257	133
Total	53,930	39,647	72,983	53,619	94,907	68,215	133,436	92,060

Age group	2001–02 Finished consultant episodes	2001–02 Patient counts	2002–03 Finished consultant episodes	2002–03 Patient counts	2003–04 Finished consultant episodes	2003–04 Patient counts	2004–05 Finished consultant episodes	2004–05 Patient counts
Under 18	344	240	336	270	393	318	558	426
18 and above	162,655	111,682	200,733	134,702	225,665	155,308	288,424	195,375
Not known	202	200	141	139	87	87	70	70
Total	163,201	112,122	201,211	135,111	226,145	155,713	289,052	195,871

[1] High cholesterol can be coded as either a diagnosis or as a test result. If the case notes states this as a firm diagnosis of high cholesterol then E78.0, pure hypercholesterolemia code would be used if it is recorded as an abnormal test finding then R79.8, other specified abnormal findings of blood chemistry code would be used. High cholesterol counts include both of the aforementioned defined International Category of Disease-10 (ICD-10) codes where they were recorded in the primary or in any of the secondary diagnosis fields.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date she ordered an additional 200,000 doses of winter influenza vaccine to act as a contingency reserve. [31911]

Caroline Flint: We ordered an additional 200,000 doses of flu vaccine for delivery in January on 3 November 2005.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doses of influenza vaccine were *(a)* ordered for and *(b)* administered as part of the routine seasonal influenza immunisation programme excluding the Department's contingency stock, in each year since 1997–98; what the size of the contingency stock of seasonal influenza vaccine was in each year; and what the size of each at-risk group eligible for free influenza vaccines has been in each year. [33198]

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people in each priority group for influenza vaccination in England in each of the last three years. [32490]

Caroline Flint: The data for the United Kingdom as a whole, is shown in the table.

	Number of vaccine doses issued in UK[4]	Size of government stockpile	Number in at-risk groups[2]
1997–98	7.2 million	0	n/a
1998–99	7.6 million	0	n/a
1999–2000	7.8 million	0	n/a
2000–01	10.9 million	0	[3]12.88
2001–02	11.4 million	500,000	12.93
2002–03	11.9 million	500,000	13.09
2003–04	11.8 million	0	13.09
2004–05	12.3 million	400,000 rising to 2.9 million	13.17
2005–06	[4]13.6 million	400,000 rising to 1.2 million	[5]13.26

n/a = Not available.

[1] Based on manufacturer's UK distribution figures. Does not include Government stockpile.

[2] These figures do not include carers, whom it has always been at the discretion of general practitioners to vaccinate.

[3] This is the first year in which the Department conducted a targeted campaign, when the policy of vaccinating all of those over the age of 65 was first introduced, and so is the first year for which the number in at risk groups are available.

[4] Estimated production.

[5] Individuals with liver disease were added to the at risk groups in this year.

Flu vaccine uptake data in the over 65 age group was first collected from the start of the flu campaign in 2000, and data on vaccine uptake in those under 65 years in a medical risk group has been collected since 2004.

Vaccine uptake in the 65+ group is as follows:

	Percentage
2000–01	65.3
2001–02	67.7
2002–03	68.5
2003–04	71.0
2004–05	71.5

Vaccine uptake in at-risk groups under 65 years of age for 2004–05 was 54 per cent.

Lone Heath Care Staff (Safety)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the potential of MobileSOS and similar technology to protect lone healthcare and social workers; and whether she plans to make such technology available to healthcare and social workers. [42580]

Jane Kennedy: Guidance on how national health service health bodies should properly protect NHS loneworking staff, including how they should evaluate the use of technology for this purpose, was published by the NHS security management service (NHS SMS) in March 2005. NHS SMS has responsibility for all policy and operational matters related to the management of security delivery within the NHS. It is raising standards

of security work in a comprehensive, inclusive and professional manner to ensure real, permanent improvements are made.

An extensive evaluation of a mobile phone based device specifically designed to protect NHS staff was carried out by the NHS SMS in 2004. The evaluation report is available from their website at: www.cfsms.nhs.uk.

The decision on whether to purchase such technology, and what system should be bought, must be a decision for the individual NHS health body, based on a comprehensive assessment of their staff's needs and the risks they face.

Maternity Units

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many maternity units achieved *(a)* level one, *(b)* level two and *(c)* level three of the clinical negligence scheme for trusts in each year since 2000. [42942]

Jane Kennedy: The first year of formal clinical negligence scheme for trusts (CNST) maternity standards assessments was 2003–04 when all national health service trusts and two primary care trusts (PCTs) with significant maternity services were assessed by the NHS Litigation Authority, unless they had demonstrated compliance during the pilot exercise held in 2002–03.

The table shows the number of trusts at each level of the CNST maternity standards at the end of the last two financial years and end of the third quarter 2005–06. These are the latest available figures.

	31 March 2004	*31 March 2005*	*31 December 2005*
Pending	0	0	1
Level 0	20	0	2
Level 1	108	102	94
Level 2	24	46	54
Level 3	1	5	7
Total	153	153	[1]158

[1] This figure includes PCTs with midwifery-led units, which were not previously assessed.

Mental Health Treatment

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of treatment was following referrals to *(a)* psychiatrists, *(b)* clinical psychologists, *(c)* psychotherapists, *(d)* cognitive and behavioural therapists and *(e)* other therapists in the last year for which figures are available, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40891]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information available about the average length of treatment for hospital admissions following referrals to psychiatrists in 2004–05 has been placed in the Library. Information is not available in respect of other categories.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for treatment following referral to *(a)* a psychiatrist, *(b)* a clinical psychologist, *(c)* a psychotherapist, *(d)* a cognitive and behavioural therapist and *(e)* other therapists in each of the last five years, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40893]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect information on waiting times for appointments with non-consultant-led services. Information on the estimated average waiting time from general practitioner written referral to first outpatient appointment with a psychiatry consultant in each mental health provider trust in each of the last five years has been placed in the Library.

NHS Sites (Car Parking Charges)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* other NHS organisations on charging for car parking space on NHS sites in the last three years. [42953]

Jane Kennedy: Guidance on implementing car parking charges was last issued to the national health service in 1996 but remains extant. It is a matter for individual NHS trusts to decide whether or not to charge for car parking, and the level of charges in the light of local circumstances.

Older People

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Commission for Social Care Inspection is taking *(a)* to promote the health of older people and *(b)* to improve chronic disease management in care homes; and if she will make a statement. [39435]

Mr. Byrne: The chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that the Healthcare Commission has identified supporting improvement in the care and treatment of older people and people with long-term conditions amongst its priorities.

This commitment is reflected in its programme of activities which includes;

assessing performance against national targets to make sure that care in these and other national priority areas continues to improve;

other improvement activities targeted at services for older people and people with long-term conditions, including improvement reviews of services for people with heart failure and diabetes, a national study of services for people with COPD and the funding of a programme of national clinical audits which includes a number of major long-term conditions and elements of the care of older people; and

publication in February of a major report on services used by older people, produced jointly with CSCI and the Audit Commission.

Osteoporosis

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans changes to the use of *(a)* biphosphonates, *(b)* ralox and *(c)* strontium ranelate as treatments for osteoporosis on the NHS. [42435]

Jane Kennedy: Raloxifene and strontium ranelate are licensed for the treatment and prevention of post-menopausal osteoporosis and the drugs may be used in the national health service within those licensed indications. The class of drugs called biphosphonates, which includes strontium ranelate, includes a number of different brands which are licensed for the treatment of

various indications. It is for manufacturers of those drugs to apply for changes to the licensed indications in order for their use in the NHS to change.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines are given to her Parliamentary Response Unit on dealing with questions of a scientific nature. [41138]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's answers to all parliamentary questions are drafted in accordance with the Cabinet Office document "Guidance to officials on drafting answers to parliamentary questions", copies of which are available in the Library.

Press Releases

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many press releases were issued by her Department in each year since 1992. [41969]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

Press releases issued by Department of Health, 1992-93 to 2005-06

Financial year	*Number*
1992–93	553
1993–94	625
1994–95	619
1995–96	431
1996–97	296
1997–98	330
1998–99	559
1999–2000	743
2000–01	697
2001–02	609
2002–03	441
2003–04	431
2004–05	427
2005–12 January 2006	266

Private Finance Initiative

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review the use of the private finance initiative for major hospital rebuilding projects. [43547]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The private finance initiative (PFI) has been a major contributor to the largest hospital building programme in the national health service's history. Since May 1997, PFI has led to the construction of 48 new hospital schemes. Going into the future, we remain committed to the continued use of PFI as a mechanism for delivering the required capital investment into the NHS. Individual projects need a sound business case to be affordable and are scrutinised carefully.

Social Services (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many clients aged 16 to 19 years were seen by social services in Tamworth in each of the last five years. [36029]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of all referrals of children and young people to social services departments is published in the Department for Education and Skill's (DfES) "Referrals, Assessments and Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers" statistical volume, which is available on the DfES website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000553/index.shtml

For clients aged 18 to 64, 2,940 new clients were assessed and 2,820 existing clients were reviewed in 2003–04 by Staffordshire council with social service responsibilities. Data for earlier years is not available on a comparable basis.

Testicular Cancer

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent campaigns her Department has undertaken to raise awareness of testicular cancer. [38237]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We encourage men to be aware of the early signs and symptoms of testicular cancer. To increase awareness of testicular cancer we have collaborated with Cancer Research UK in the production of the leaflet, "Testicular Cancer: Spot The Symptoms Early". The leaflet is available in all primary care settings and in 2005–06 £600,000 copies for the leaflet were produced.

Also in 2003–04 we provided £30,000 to the men's health forum to help fund their publication, the men and cancer manual. This manual gives men information, in plain English, on all cancers including testicular cancer.

NORTHERN IRELAND

"A Shared Future"

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures he is planning to prioritise the aims and objectives of "A Shared Future" in the spending plans of each Northern Ireland department. [43830]

Angela E. Smith: The measures that Departments will take to prioritise the aims and objectives of "A Shared Future" will be reflected in the triennial action plan, which ill be announced by March 2006.

Departmental spending plans will further reflect the policy objectives of "A Shared Future".

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what resources will be provided for implementing the "Shared Future" strategy. [43831]

Angela E. Smith: Expenditure planned in 2006–07 on "community relations/good relations" activities across departments, which is about £15 million, will be specifically used to support the objectives of "A Shared Future".

Administration Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39848]

Mr. Woodward: The administrative costs in the 2004–05 financial year for each Agency in the Northern Ireland Office are as follows:

Total administrative costs 2004–05

Agency	*£000*
Northern Ireland Prisons Service	13,196
Compensation Agency for Northern Ireland	4,332
Forensic Science Agency for Northern Ireland	7,229
Youth Justice Agency for Northern Ireland	2,327
Total	27,084

All the costs of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) relate to "Northern Ireland" as per the public expenditure statistical analyses and are regarded as identifiable.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40056]

Mr. Woodward: The administration budgets regime which Treasury oversee is for Whitehall Departments only. This type of regime does not apply to non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs). However, information on NDPBs can be found on the public bodies database which is held on the Cabinet Office's "Civil Service Agencies and Public Bodies" website http://www.knowledgenetwork.gov.uk/ndpb/ndpb.nsf. The database gives full information, summary statistics and analysis only for bodies sponsored by UK Government departments (this includes the Northern Ireland Office).

All the costs of the Northern Ireland Office relate to "Northern Ireland" as per the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses.

Chronic Back Pain

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what initiatives are being taken in his Department to help civil servants with chronic back pain. [34987]

Mr. Woodward: The following initiatives are being taken in the Northern Ireland Office to help civil servants with chronic back pain

Referral to appropriate Occupational Health Services for assessment on condition and for recommendation on adjustments taking account of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Availability of Health and Safety Adviser, Premises Officer, Welfare Service and Disability Liaison Officer to provide appropriate advice.

Availability of an orthopaedic chair if approved by the Department's Medical Adviser.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37475]

Mr. Woodward: For the financial year 2004–05 the value of catering contracts let in Northern Ireland was £48,000. The Northern Ireland Office has not let catering contracts in any other region of the UK. The NIO does not have any entertainment contracts.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40135]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is as follows.

(i) Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Core Department

		Sale price at:		*Money accrued was:*	
	Asset type	*Time of sale (1) (£)*	*Current prices (2) (£)*	*(x) Retained by Department*	*(y) Claimed by Treasury*
1997–98	One house	150,000	184,381	(x)	—
1998–99	Four houses	417,500	496,182	(x)	—
1999–2000	Two houses	169,500	198,399	(x)	—
2000–01	Two houses	223,495	254,073	(x)	—
2001–02	Three houses	1,798,000	2,008,614	(x)	—
2002–03	Three houses	264,000	290,070	(x)	—
2003–04	One house	145,000	154,837	(x)	—
2004–05	14 houses	1,874,500	1,943,777	(x)	—
2005–06	13 houses	3,052,500	3,052,500	(x)	—
	Land	56,000	56,000	(x)	—
Total	—	8,150,495	8,638,833	—	—

(ii) (A) Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs)

Please see following tables for the only NIO NDPBs which have sold land and buildings since 1997—the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI).

PSNI

	Sale price at:		Money accrued was:	
Asset type	*Time of sale(1) (£)*	*Current prices(2) (£)*	*(x) Retained by Department*	*(y) Claimed by Treasury*
2001–02				
Land and buildings	9,000,000	9,979,381	(x)	—
2003–04				
Land and buildings	500,000	524,000	(x)	—
2004–05				
Land and buildings	570,000	584,182	(x)	—
2005–06				
Land and buildings	530,000	533,861	(x)	—
Land and buildings	100,000	100,000	(x)	—
Land and buildings	400,000	400,000	(x)	—
Land and buildings	730,000	731,890	(x)	—
Total	11,830,000	12,853,691	—	—

PBNI

		Sale price at:		Money accrued was:	
	Asset type	*Time of sale (1) (£)*	*Current prices (2) (£)*	*(x) Retained by Department*	*(y) Claimed by Treasury*
2002–03	Building	275,000	303,017	(x)	—
2003–04	Building	230,000	245,604	(x)	—
Total		505,000	548,621	—	—

(B) Agencies

Please see following table for the only NIO Agency which has sold land and buildings since 1997 Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS).

NIPS

	Sale price at:		Money accrued was:	
Asset type	*Time of sale (1) (£)*	*Current prices (2) (£)*	*(x) retained by Department*	*(y) claimed by Treasury*
1998–99				
Land	140,000	164,766	(x)	—
1999–2000				
Land	115,000	133,718	(x)	—
Land	25,000	29,245	(x)	—
Land	5,500	6,434	(x)	—
Building	30,000	34,841	(x)	—
2000–01				
Land	5,000	5,658	(x)	—
Land	48,000	54,503	(x)	—
2001–02				
Land	12,250	13,614	(x)	—
2002–03				—
Building	196,448	211,408	—	(y)
2003–04				
Land	45,000	48,000	(x)	—
Total	622,198	702,187		

Notes:

1. Remaining land at HMP Maze prison site was gifted to The Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) in March 2003.
2. Land at HMP Belfast site was gifted to the Department of Social Development in July 2003.
3. The Youth Justice Agency transferred land and buildings, valued at £400,000, to NIPS at nil value in April 2004.

(C) independent statutory bodies

None of the NIO's independent statutory bodies have sold land or buildings since 7 May 1997.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40286]

Mr. Woodward: In relation to the Northern Ireland Office this is a nil return.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43490]

Mr. Woodward: The following warnings issued to NIO staff are in relation to poor attendance, performance and conduct. It is not possible to identify the number of staff where action was commenced but did not result in any warning being issued or to identify the number of staff who also received a sanction as a result of a warning being received. This could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

	Warnings
2005	25
2004	18
2003	56
2002	67
2001	31

Diabetes

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which of the Health and Social Service Boards in Northern Ireland has appointed a network manager to lead in the development of the diabetes service. [44565]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Health and Social Services Board has identified the provision of diabetes services as an area of healthcare, which they wish to provide through a Managed Clinical Network (MCN). The framework for the development of an MCN includes the nomination of a network manager and this is included in the Board's proposal for the Diabetes MCN. The Board advises me that a network manager has not yet been identified.

To date, no other Health and Social Services Board has indicated plans to develop a Managed Clinical Network in diabetes.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision is made in Northern Ireland for counselling and psychological support for people diagnosed with diabetes; and if he will make a statement. [44566]

Mr. Woodward: Each of the four Health Boards is aware of the need to ensure appropriate psychological and emotional support to assist people to come to terms with diabetes and having a life-long chronic condition. Counselling and psychological support is provided to patients by specialist diabetic nurses who are specifically trained to do so. However it is recognised that there is a lack of specialist clinical psychologists input to the process and Boards are currently taking steps to increase the level of clinical psychology support.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what strategy each Health Board in Northern Ireland has put in place for identifying people likely to develop *(a)* type 1 and *(b)* type 2 diabetes. [44568]

Mr. Woodward: The UK National Screening Committee has stated that there is no justification for universal (population) screening for Diabetes in the United Kingdom. However there is some support for screening population subgroups that are at a higher risk of undiagnosed diabetes and coronary heart disease. Further work is required in this area and a number of pilot projects are under way elsewhere in the UK, which would influence any decisions to introduce such screening programmes in Northern Ireland. The majority of early identification of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes will take place in primary care and there are regular reviews of patients with diabetes. This would include screening and investigation of the complications which may arise from diabetes.

Dog-fighting

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals have been prosecuted for participating in organised dog-fighting in Northern Ireland in each of the last seven years. [43755]

Mr. Hanson: Under the Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 1972, it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal by causing, procuring or assisting at the fighting or baiting of an animal or to take part in such an episode. Under the same Act, it is also an offence to permit or cause cruelty to animals.

The following table provides statistics for calendar years 1997 to 2003 for the number of prosecutions for the offences of causing unnecessary suffering, cruelty to animals and permitting cruelty to animals; however it is not possible to determine the type of animal involved.

Data for 2004 is not yet available.

Prosecutions for specific offences under the Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 1972: 1997–2003

	Causing unnecessary suffering to animals	*Cruelty to animals*	*Permitting cruelty to animals*	*Total*
1997	6	5	0	11
1998	8	15	0	23
1999	16	16	1	33
2000	10	8	0	18
2001	13	4	0	17
2002	6	2	0	8
2003	11	13	2	26

Educational Attainment

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of 18-year-olds in the Northern Ireland population achieved two or more A level grades A-E in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [44298]

Angela E. Smith: The percentage of 18-year-olds in the Northern Ireland population achieving two or more A levels at grades A-E for the 2003/04 academic year is 38. Figures for 2004/05 will be available by March 2006.

Elderly People (Care Packages)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many elderly people living in the Causeway Health Trust area in 2005 who have been assessed as requiring a care package while continuing to live in their own homes were waiting longer than one month from the assessment for that care to be delivered. [43625]

Mr. Woodward: At 30 September 2005, there were 258 people in the Causeway Health and Social Services Trust area who were in the Elderly Care Programme of Care and who were waiting in the community for five weeks or more for a care package to be delivered. This figure includes those people who were still waiting for part of a domiciliary care package to be delivered, unless the element awaited was not substantial.

Fixed Penalties (Speeding)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many fixed penalty notices for speeding were issued in each *(a)* district council area and *(b)* parliamentary constituency area in Northern Ireland in each year since 2002; and how many such notices were issued where the offence was detected by a traffic camera in each year. [42414]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record statistics by council area or parliamentary constituency, but by district command unit. The following table covers the period 2002-05 and show *(a)* the total number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding and *(b)* the number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding following detection by mobile and fixed safety cameras.

DCU area	*Total number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding*	*Fixed penalty notices issued for speeding following detection by mobile and fixed safety cameras*
2002		
Antrim DCU	493	256
Armagh DCU	770	434
Ballymena DCU	2,240	1,741
Ballymoney DCU	1,091	936
Banbridge DCU	2,097	1,652
Belfast East DCU	598	440
Belfast North DCU	364	296
Belfast South DCU	268	183
Belfast West DCU	258	202
Carrickfergus DCU	535	357
Castlereagh DCU	1,424	1,296
Coleraine DCU	864	557
Cookstown DCU	267	90
Craigavon DCU	2,841	2,359
Down DCU	1,113	515
Dungannon DCU	572	338
Fermanagh DCU	1,986	1,661
Foyle DCU	1,019	742
Larne DCU	388	228
Limavady DCU	607	401
Lisburn DCU	965	725
Magherafelt DCU	714	382
Moyle DCU	186	171
Newry and Mourne DCU	806	556
Newtown abbey DCU	693	455
Newtownards DCU	1,242	824
North Down DCU	1,135	1,015
Omagh DCU	936	660
Strabane DCU	417	335
Not recorded	3	0
Total	26,892	19,907
2003		
Antrim DCU	698	12
Armagh DCU	1,371	1,165
Ballymena DCU	1,759	993
Ballymoney DCU	615	333
Banbridge DCU	1,898	1,644
Belfast East DCU	2,057	1,617
Belfast North DCU	919	557
Belfast South DCU	879	375
Belfast West DCU	250	139
Carrickfergus DCU	496	230
Castlereagh DCU	5,142	4,677
Coleraine DCU	639	264
Cookstown DCU	279	18
Craigavon DCU	1,176	631
Down DCU	705	237
Dungannon DCU	444	153
Fermanagh DCU	873	548
Foyle DCU	1,009	536
Larne DCU	276	110
Limavady DCU	513	208
Lisburn DCU	643	71
Magherafelt DCU	690	331
Moyle DCU	200	149
Newry and Mourne DCU	1,135	887
Newtownabbey DCU	558	34
Newtownards DCU	897	528
North Down DCU	1,049	727
Omagh DCU	566	200
Strabane DCU	288	201
Total	28,024	17,575
2004		
Antrim DCU	772	81
Armagh DCU	248	66
Ballymena DCU	803	186
Ballymoney DCU	219	22
Banbridge DCU	1,419	1,165
Belfast East DCU	3,762	2,789
Belfast North DCU	1,779	1,571
Belfast South DCU	861	257
Belfast West DCU	708	624
Carrickfergus DCU	185	54
Castlereagh DCU	3,730	3,503
Coleraine DCU	763	92
Cookstown DCU	241	60
Craigavon DCU	980	470
Down DCU	814	371
Dungannon DCU	521	207
Fermanagh DCU	303	102
Foyle DCU	1,364	622
Larne DCU	185	0
Limavady DCU	442	16
Lisburn DCU	674	5
Magherafelt DCU	779	208
Moyle DCU	91	39
Newry and Mourne DCU	2,000	1,601
Newtownabbey DCU	386	7
Newtownards DCU	342	90
North Down DCU	1,918	1,513
Omagh DCU	658	463
Strabane DCU	116	0
Total	27,063	16,184

DCU area	Total number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding	Fixed penalty notices issued for speeding following detection by mobile and fixed safety cameras
2005		
Antrim DCU	1,043	0
Armagh DCU	344	66
Ballymena DCU	760	85
Ballymoney DCU	204	19
Banbridge DCU	2,396	2,064
Belfast East DCU	2,394	1,556
Belfast North DCU	1,268	1,004
Belfast South DCU	1,182	538
Belfast West DCU	338	271
Carrickfergus DCU	84	7
Castlereagh DCU	2,298	2,037
Coleraine DCU	814	91
Cookstown DCU	369	194
Craigavon DCU	982	277
Down DCU	1,062	347
Dungannon DCU	992	431
Fermanagh DCU	497	141
Foyle DCU	1,352	666
Larne DCU	210	0
Limavady DCU	547	118
Lisburn DCU	677	14
Magherafelt DCU	893	342
Moyle DCU	107	9
Newry and Mourne DCU	1,946	1,288
Newtownabbey DCU	321	0
Newtownards DCU	439	126
North Down DCU	996	680
Omagh DCU	899	467
Strabane DCU	197	0
Total	25,611	12,838

Note:
The total number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding includes those fixed penalty notices issued following detection by mobile and fixed safety cameras.

Hamill Review

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in the implementation of the Hamill Review. [44517]

Mr. Woodward: As I announced on 6 June 2005, the Hamill report will be taken forward in the context of developing a Strategic Development Plan for the Northern Ireland Prison Service. The subsequent Blueprint programme encompasses the Hamill report in seeking to modernise and develop the Service. The programme is being project managed in six separate but interlinked strands.

Much work is nearing completion on the first four strands including assessments of population projections and prisoner needs, the development of the estate, alternative approaches to contestability and options for court escorting. Where appropriate, proposals will be published for comment or consultation during the spring.

Strand 5, covering staff reward and recognition, incorporates a range of issues which will be addressed during the course of this year.

Strand 6 covers a variety of separate improvement and efficiency projects, the full implementation of which will span a longer timescale. I have however already announced last autumn, the transfer to DHSSPS by 1 April 2007 of responsibility for prisoner healthcare.

IRA Disarmament

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of IRA disarmament in Northern Ireland. [43725]

Mr. Woodward: The Chairman of the Independent International Commission for Decommissioning (IICD), General John de Chastelain, announced on 25 September 2005, that it had witnessed full and final decommissioning by the PIRA of arms and weaponry.

The seventh Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) report published on 19 October 2005, recognised that statement as

"very significant"

and that

"initial signs following the PIRA statement are encouraging".

Subsequent IMC reports will provide a clear indication of whether or not the PIRA have met the commitments they have made to end all activity.

Murders/Punishment Beatings

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people under the age of 16 have *(a)* been murdered and *(b)* received a punishment beating in Northern Ireland for each of the last eight years. [43721]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI has provided the following statistical information in response to this question:

	Persons under the age of 16	
	Murders	Casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults
1998	[1]10	2
1999	1	8
2000	1	3
2001	2	16
2002	1	8
2003	2	7
2004	0	10
2005	2	3
Total	19	57

[1] Includes victims of the Omagh bomb

Organised Crime

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his assessment is of the extent of Provisional IRA involvement in organised crime in Northern Ireland. [44805]

Mr. Woodward: There have been significant changes in PIRA activity, including in the area of criminality, since the July statement. However, there are complex assessments to be made to distinguish between criminality by individual PIRA members for their own gain and criminality carried out by PIRA members which is authorised by the organisation.

It is the job of the Independent Monitoring Commission to comment on these issues and to consider whether PIRA have met the commitments they have made to end all activity, including involvement in organised crime. I look forward to receiving the Commission's forthcoming report, and successive reports, to assess progress in this area.

The Government remains fully committed to tackling organised crime in Northern Ireland, from whatever source.

People Smuggling

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate the police has made of the number of *(a)* people smuggled illegally into Northern Ireland and *(b)* females brought into Northern Ireland to work as prostitutes in each of the last five years. [36214]

Mr. McNulty: I have been asked to reply.

(a) It is not possible to state with accuracy the number of people smuggled illegally into Northern Ireland over each of the last five years. The nature of facilitation is such that many of those who have been facilitated may state if encountered that they entered by themselves on a false passport or stowed away without assistance, or similar response. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary it is often not possible to disprove the subject's claimed method of entry.

(b) The Police Service of Northern Ireland has conducted a number of inquiries into suggestions of people-trafficking to Northern Ireland for the purposes of prostitution. There is presently no evidence to suggest that this is taking place in Northern Ireland. The Police Service of Northern Ireland is acutely aware of the problems experienced in other jurisdictions and they continue to monitor the situation closely.

Police Officer Training

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) for what reasons drill is included in the foundation training curriculum for police officers in Northern Ireland; [40934]

(2) whether it is essential for a trainee police officer *(a)* to pass a competence test and *(b)* to achieve competency in drill as a prerequisite for successfully completing foundation training; [40935]

(3) what the *(a)* frequency and *(b)* duration was of drill performed by each intake of trainee police officers in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005; [40936]

(4) how many trainee police officers in each intake in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005 reported injuries as a result of performing drill; how many were forced to interrupt their initial training as a result; and for how long each was absent on sick leave. [40937]

Mr. Woodward: These inquiries refer to operational decisions which are the responsibility of the chief constable. The hon. Gentleman should pursue them directly with the chief constable.

Rail Travel

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of the standard fare for the train journey between Coleraine and *(a)* Belfast and *(b)* Londonderry in each of the last five years. [44802]

Mr. Woodward: The standard fare for the train journey between Coleraine and Belfast in each of the last five years is as follows:

As at January	£
2006	7.20
2005	6.80
2004	6.50
2003	6.20
2002	5.90
2001	5.60

The standard fare for the train journey between Coleraine and Londonderry in each of the last five years is as follows:

As at January	£
2006	5.50
2005	5.20
2004	4.90
2003	4.70
2002	4.50
2001	4.30

Speed Cameras

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorists have been caught speeding by mobile speed cameras in each of Northern Ireland's parliamentary constituencies over the past 24 months. [41111]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record statistics by parliamentary constituency, but by District Command Unit. The table below shows the number of Fixed Penalty Notices and Conditional Offers issued by PSNI following the use of mobile safety cameras during the period 2004–05.

DCU Area	*2004*	*2005*
Antrim DCU	81	0
Armagh DCU	66	66
Ballymena DCU	186	85
Ballymoney DCU	22	19
Banbridge DCU	1,165	2,064
Belfast East DCU	864	643
Belfast North DCU	104	81
Belfast South DCU	257	538
Belfast West DCU	8	38
Carrickfergus DCU	54	7
Castlereagh DCU	398	456
Coleraine DCU	92	91
Cookstown DCU	60	194
Craigavon DCU	470	277
Down DCU	371	347
Dungannon DCU	207	431
Fermanagh DCU	102	141
Foyle DCU	622	666
Limavady DCU	16	118
Lisburn DCU	5	14
Magherafelt DCU	208	342
Moyle DCU	39	9
Newry and Mourne DCU	1,601	1,288
Newtownabbey DCU	7	0
Newtownards DCU	90	126
North Down DCU	1,513	680
Omagh DCU	463	467

DCU Area	2004	2005
DCU not recorded	3	0
Total	9,074	9188

Note
Larne and Strabane do not currently have any identified camera locations for mobile safety cameras.

Stormont (School Visits)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many schoolchildren have participated in visits to Parliament Buildings, Stormont, in each of the last three years. [43621]

Angela E. Smith: The number of schoolchildren visiting Parliament buildings in each of the last three years was;

	Number
2003	3,852
2004	4,582
2005	4,783

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17878]

Mr. Woodward: I am sorry for the delay in replying.

An office notice was issued to all staff on 12 June 2001 advising them of the Active Community Scheme launched the previous year by the Prime Minister. The aim of the circular was to encourage staff who were not already involved in voluntary activities to consider how they might participate.

The following table sets out the number of staff who volunteered over the last five years.

	Number of staff who took part in voluntary work
2000	0
2001	1
2002	1
2003	4
2004	1
2005	3

Water Meters

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether it is his policy that the Government should bear the cost of *(a)* buying and *(b)* installing domestic water meters. [44798]

Mr. Woodward: No. Although there will be no 'up front' charge for meter installation, the cost of supplying and installing domestic water meters will be included in the metered tariff and will, therefore, be borne by metered water customers. This is similar to practice in England and Wales.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 25 January 2006

TRANSPORT

A19

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will put the *(a)* four major interchange improvements along the A19 from Hebburn to Seaton Burn and *(b)* major realignment of the A19/A1058 Coast Road interchange into the trunk road programme; and if he will make a statement. [45534]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government announced in December 2004 that they would seek the regions' advice on their priorities for schemes for housing, regeneration and transport expenditure. Indicative allocations for the next 10 years were given to each region. The North East Interim Regional Transport Board has been established to determine each region's priorities. The four junction upgrade schemes on the A19 around Tyneside at Testos, Coast Road, Moor Farm and Seaton Burn junctions, are part of that process.

We are expecting to receive each region's advice and priorities at the end of January. Once these have been assessed there will a further announcement of the Department's initial response to the proposals.

East West Rail (Western Section)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the proposed East West Rail (western section); and what estimate he has made of its cost. [43293]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport continues to work with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and local stakeholders to investigate the transport needs of the Milton Keynes to Oxford corridor as part of the Sustainable Communities agenda. East West Rail (western section) scheme is one potential component and we continue to investigate it.

The last cost estimate for the scheme is £55 million capital costs (based on basic scheme—Oxford to Bedford, December 2003). These costs require further development and should be seen as indicative.

Humber Bridge

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much of the debt on the Humber Bridge has been written off; when it was written off; for what reasons; and what mechanism was used. [45337]

Dr. Ladyman: Under a loan agreement signed between the Humber Bridge Board (the Bridge Board) and the Secretary of State on 1 July 1998 and subject to an order under the Humber Bridge (Debts) Act 1996—The Humber Bridge (Debts) Order 1998 which came into force on 19 August 1998, it was agreed that the Bridge Board would not have to repay a £62 million debt owed to the Public Works Loan Board. This was part of a package of measures designed to help ensure the long-term financial future of the bridge.

Light Rail Schemes

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new light rail schemes in large cities are planned; how many light rail schemes have been delivered in the last five years; and how many he expects will be delivered by July 2010. [40844]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answers of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1385–6W and 24 January 2006 [UIN40581] to the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell (Chris Grayling).

Railways

Mr. Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the consultants' report on the review of the Northern Rail franchise; and whether he expects the results of that review to be incorporated into the 2006 timetable. [44826]

Derek Twigg: The review of the Northern rail franchise is continuing, and an announcement will be made in due course. It has yet to be decided whether any train service changes recommended by the review would be incorporated in the December 2006 timetable, or at a later date.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, on train operating companies, what mechanisms exist to ensure that the interests of *(a)* passengers and *(b)* the public purse are protected through the franchise specification and tendering process for train operating companies. [39387]

Derek Twigg: Passenger interests are protected by ensuring that franchises specify an appropriate level of service, backed by punctuality and reliability targets and penalties for non-compliance. The public purse is protected by developing a financial model of the franchise against which bids are assessed to ensure value for money and by the competitive tendering process itself.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of domestic freight traffic is transported by rail. [40863]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1384W to the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell (Chris Grayling).

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to ensure that railway ticket prices represent value for money for passengers. [42514]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1383W to the hon. Member for Windsor (Adam Afriyie).

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Strategic Rail Authority expects to report the findings of its consultation on the future of the Watford junction to Brighton service. [41605]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has reviewed the work carried out by the Strategic Rail Authority on the Brighton main line route utilisation strategy (RUS), which included recommendations on the future of the Watford junction to Brighton service. The finalised RUS will be published shortly.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what percentage of the rail network has the train protection and warning system; and if he will list those lines which do not; [40567]

(2) on which lines train safety systems have been installed since 2000. [40573]

Derek Twigg: Operation of the rail network in Great Britain is the responsibility of Network Rail (NR). I have asked NR to write direct to the hon. Member.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will make an announcement on the future of the direct train link between Hastings and London Victoria. [43958]

Derek Twigg: The direct Hastings to Victoria service is being considered as part of the Brighton main line route utilisation strategy (RUS). An announcement about the publication of the RUS will be made shortly.

Road Accidents

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether an individual who is subject to medical treatment in a hospital over a period including midnight following a road accident is automatically classified in official statistics as having been seriously injured. [44668]

Dr. Ladyman: Personal injury road accident data in Great Britain are collected by the police and reported to the Department using the STATS19 accident report format. Any casualty who is admitted to hospital as an in-patient should be coded as a serious casualty in this system. Furthermore, casualties with certain types of injury such as fractures, should be coded as a serious casualty regardless of whether they were detained as an in-patient or not. However, not all personal injury road accidents are reported to the police.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious road traffic accidents occurred in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each year since 1997. [45266]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious personal injury road accidents in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham between 1997 and 2004 (the latest year which figures are available), is given in table.

Year of accident	*(a) Fatal accident*	*(b) Serious accident*
1997	6	136
1998	6	147
1999	6	148
2000	4	127
2001	6	135
2002	4	113
2003	6	94
2004	6	102

Source:
Transport for London (TfL)

Stage Cottage (East Sussex)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his plans are for Stage Cottage, Hurst Green, East Sussex, following the Highways Agency's purchase of the cottage under a compulsory purchase order. [43957]

Dr. Ladyman: A compulsory purchase order has not yet been published for this scheme. Stage Cottage was a discretionary purchase in view of the preferred route announcement for this scheme. The A21 scheme was given regional status following the Highways Agency's announcement in December 2004 as part of the Spending Review round. It is too premature to declare this property surplus. The Highways Agency is making arrangements through its managing agent to rent out this property until the outcome of the Regional Transport Board's recommendations are known and agreed by Ministers.

Rolling Stock

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail vehicles *(a)* were delivered in each year since 1996 and *(b)* are due to be delivered in each year to 2012, broken down by manufacturer; and what the total value of rolling stock orders (i) delivered in each year since 1996 and (ii) due to be delivered in each year to 2012 is, broken down by manufacturer. [42714]

Derek Twigg: The following table shows the number of new vehicles introduced into revenue earning service each year, broken down by manufacturer. The most recent new order is for vehicles which are due to be introduced into service in 2009. Not included are the orders anticipated but not yet in place for the replacement fleet for the existing HST—high speed trains—currently planned to enter service from 2012.

New vehicles introduced into revenue earning service

	Bombardier	*Alstom*	*Siemens*	*CAF/Siemens*	*Hitachi*	*Number Total*
1996	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	20	0	0	0	0	20
1999	145	8	0	0	0	153
2000	160	60	0	0	0	220
2001	332	222	0	48	0	602
2002	444	166	0	8	0	618
2003	228	259	172	8	0	667

New vehicles introduced into revenue earning service

	Bombardier	Alstom	Siemens	CAF/Siemens	Hitachi	Number Total
2004	773	178	409	0	0	1,360
2005	427	12	284	0	0	723
2006	6	0	157	0	0	163
2007	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0	168	168
Total	2,535	905	1,022	64	168	4,694

The following table shows the estimated value of the orders placed for the aforementioned vehicles, broken down by manufacturer. The values are listed by year in which the order was placed.

Estimated value of new vehicle orders placed

	Bombardier	Alstom	Siemens	CAF/Siemens	Hitachi	£ million Total
1996	11	0	0	0	0	11
1997	257	92	0	0	0	349
1998	624	265	0	55	0	944
1999	47	663	0	0	0	710
2000	125	0	0	9	0	134
2001	19	0	679	9	0	707
2002	1,122	0	0	0	0	1,122
2003	163	0	200	0	0	363
2004	0	0	125	0	0	125
2005	7	0	0	0	235	242
Total	2,375	1,020	1,004	73	235	4,707

Town and Parish Councils

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether his Department is considering proposals to award town and parish councils statutory rights to object to all vehicle operators licence applications and renewals; [45600]

(2) whether his Department is considering proposals to make town and parish councils statutory consultees for all vehicle operators licence applications and renewals. [45602]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to review the categories of persons who may object to, or make representations against, the issue of a goods vehicle operator's licence by a traffic commissioner. These persons include county, district and unitary authorities and individuals who own or occupy land in the vicinity of a proposed operating centre for goods vehicles. The existing arrangements provide adequate opportunity for persons who may be affected by the issuing of a licence to have their views considered. The most effective way for parish councils and similar bodies to comment on licence applications is to work with the local authorities who do have a right to object.

Transport Infrastructure Projects

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the transport infrastructure projects with a potential cost of more than £5 million on which the Highways Agency has carried out feasibility studies since 1997. [43354]

Dr. Ladyman: All schemes with an estimated cost of more than £5 million are subject to an appraisal of economic and environmental benefits and costs before they enter the Highways Agency's investment programme, known as the 'Targeted Programme of Improvements'. Since 1997, 112 schemes have entered this programme and 32 have been completed as listed as follows:

Completed TPI Schemes

A1 Willowburn—Denwick Improvement
A1(M) Wetherby—Walshford
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 1 Bean—Tollgate
A5 Nesscliffe Bypass
A5 Weeford—Fazeley Improvement
A6 Great Glen Bypass
A6 Rushden and Higham Ferrers Bypass
A6 Rothwell—Desborough Bypass
A6 Clapham Bypass
A6 Alvaston
A10 Wadesmill Colliers End
A11 Roudham Heath—Attleborough Improvement
A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction
A27 Polegate Bypass
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement
A41 Aston Clinton Bypass
A43 Silverstone Bypass
A43 Whitfield Turn—Brackley Hatch Improvement
A43 M40—B4031 Dualling
A46 Newark—Lincoln Improvement
A63 Selby Bypass
A66 Stainburn and Great Clifton Bypass
A120 Stansted—Braintree Improvement
A500 Basford, Hough, Shavington Bypass
A650 Bingley Relief Road
A1033 Hedon Road Improvement
M25 J12–15 Widening
A47 Thorney Bypass

A1 Stannington Junction
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge
M5 Junctions 17–18a Northbound Climbing Lane (Hallen Hill)
A64 Colton Lane GSJ
Total—32 Schemes

TPI Schemes not yet completed

A1(M) Ferrybridge—Hook Moor
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 2 Tollgate—Cobham
A2/A282 Dartford Improvement
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass
A249 Iwade—Queenborough Improvement
A303 Stonehenge
A421 Great Barford Bypass
A500 City Road and Stoke Junction Improvement
M60 J5–8 Widening
A11 Attleborough Bypass
A11 Fiveways—Thetford Improvement
M6 Carlisle to Guardsmill extension
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction
A14 Haughley New St.—Stowmarket Improvement
A3 Hindhead Improvement
A38 Dobwalls Bypass
A595 Parton—Lillyhall Improvement
A1 Peterborough—Blyth GSJ
M62 Junction 6 Improvement
A46 Newark—Widmerpool Improvement
A30 Bodmin Indian Queens
A483 Pant- Llanymynech Bypass
A5117/A550 Deeside Park Junctions Improvement
A419 Blunsdon
A66 Temple Sowerby and Improvement at Winderwath
A1 Dishforth to Leeming
A1 Bramham—Wetherby (Including Wetherby Bypass)
A1 Leeming to Barton
A64 Rillington Bypass
M40/A404 Handy Cross Junction Improvement
A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling
A66 Greta Bridge to Stephen Bank Improvement
A66 Carkin Moor to Scotch Corner Improvement
A428 Caxton Common to Hardwick Improvement
A30/A382 Merrymeet Junction
A66 Long Newton Junction
A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass
A419 Commonhead Junction
M5 Junctions 19–20 Southbound Climbing Lane (Naish Hill)
M5 Junctions 19–20 Northbound Climbing Lane (Tickenham Hill)
M1 J19
A14 Ellington—Fen Ditton Improvement
A57/A628 Mottram in Longdendale, Hollingworth and Tintwistle Bypass
A45/A46 Tollbar End Improvement
M1 Junction 6a to 10 Widening
M1 Junction 10 to 13 Widening
A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling
A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling
A1/A19/A1068 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement
A19/A184 Testos Grade Separated Junction
A5-M1 Link (Dunstable Northern Bypass)
A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13
A21 Tonbridge to Pembury
M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge)
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass
M20 Junction 10A
A30 Garland Cross to Chiverton Cross
A3Q Temple to Higher Carblake Improvement
A27 Southerham to Beddingham Improvement
M1 J21–30
M25 J1b-3 Widening
M25 J5–7 Widening
M25 J16–23 Widening
M25 J23–27 Widening
M25 J27–30 Widening
A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Bypass
A23 Handcross to Warninglid Widening
A453 Widening (M1 J24 to A52 Nottingham)
M25 Junction 28/A12 Brook Street Interchange
M27 J11 to J12 Climbing Lanes
M27 J3 to J4 Widening
M1 J30 to J31 Widening
M1 J31 to J32 Widening
M1 J32 to J34S Widening
M1 J34N to J37 Widening
M1 J37 to J39 Widening
M1 J39 to J42 Widening
M1 J31 to J32 Northbound Collector/Distributor
M62 J25 to J27 Widening
M62 J27 to J28 Widening
Total—80 Schemes

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Air Quality Management Zones

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many air quality management zones have been created in England and Wales in each year since they were established. [43120]

Mr. Bradshaw: The number of local authorities in England and Wales who have passed orders declaring Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in each year since the first declaration in 1999 are as follows:

	Number of authorities passing orders declaring AQMAs
1999	1
2000	10
2001	58
2002	29
2003	27
2004	31
2005	71
2006	1

Some local authorities have declared AQMAs in more than one year. Other local authorities have revoked or amended AQMAs in subsequent years. The total number of local authorities in England and Wales which currently have AQMAs declared is 170.

Animal Welfare Charities

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many British animal welfare charities have been awarded Government funds in each of the last two years; and how much was awarded to each charity. [43709]

Mr. Bradshaw: No British animal welfare charity was awarded Government funds in financial year 2004–05. One British animal welfare charity, the Welfare Fund for Companion Animals, has been awarded Government funds totalling £25,000 in financial year 2005–06.

Avian Influenza

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the oral statement of 26 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 307–09, what further work her Department has undertaken on the possibility of an avian influenza outbreak in the United Kingdom; what the results of that work have been; what *(a)* further work and *(b)* further work in conjunction with the Department of Health is planned; and if she will make a statement. [37103]

Mr. Bradshaw: An updated Qualitative Risk Assessment covering outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 virus in the period since the end of October 2005 was published on 17 January 2006. It takes account of outbreaks in village poultry in Turkey, Romania, Ukraine and South Federal district of Russia (European Russia), and also in the south west of China.

This update and commentary does not alter our previous overall conclusion regarding the increased but still low likelihood of the introduction of the virus to the UK from the affected regions. Nevertheless, the increasing number of outbreaks in Eastern Europe raises concerns that the virus may be more widespread than previously anticipated in the affected region. Should the number of virus detections continue to increase in Eastern European countries, this may change the likelihood of introduction of the virus to the UK. Defra continues to monitor developments and assess the situation.

Defra is working closely with the Department of Health on all issues related to the protection of human health during an outbreak of avian influenza, both to ensure the protection of individuals who would be involved in the control of disease and possibly exposed to diseased birds, and to prevent the resortment of the virus and the development of human influenza.

Badgers

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the culling of badgers; and whether the option of vaccines for badgers is being considered as an alternative. [44695]

Mr. Bradshaw: Responsibility for tackling bovine tuberculosis is a devolved matter and what happens in Wales is, of course, a matter for the Welsh Assembly. However, in England, we are currently consulting on both the principle and method of a badger culling policy. Developing a TB vaccine for badgers and cattle is one of our key longer-term goals, and significant research is focused on this.

OTMS

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the over-30-month-scheme will come to an end. [44040]

Mr. Bradshaw: The over-30-month-scheme (OTMS) came to an end at midnight on 22 January 2006. The Older Cattle Disposal Scheme replaced the OTMS on 23 January 2006.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the number of abattoirs allowed to process over thirty months cattle. [44043]

Mr. Bradshaw: The decision to seek an approval to slaughter over-30-month (OTM) cattle for the food chain, is a commercial one.

There is no ceiling on the number of abattoirs allowed to process these cattle, although to be approved an abattoir must be able to demonstrate that it has the facilities and procedures in place to effectively test cattle for BSE. As at 18 January, 33 abattoirs had been approved in the UK. We expect more to seek approval as the market for OTM beef expands.

Birds' Eggs (Thefts)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people were prosecuted for the theft of rare birds' eggs in each of the last seven years; and what steps she is taking to tackle such thefts. [43712]

Jim Knight: The information we hold on offences under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 does not distinguish between egg theft offences and other offences under that section.

However, information on the total number of defendants subject to proceedings at magistrates courts for offences relating to stealing of birds eggs in England and Wales, 1998–2004[1] is set out in the following table:

Act	*Offence description*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Game Act 1831 sec. 12, 23, 3, 24	Killing game illegally. Killing or taking without certificate. Laying poison to destroy or injure game. Taking or destroying the eggs of game, wild fowl etc., or having eggs so taken in possession	20	25	9	7	7	16	10
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 sec. 1	Protection of nests and eggs of wild birds	19	14	10	31	10	17	18

Act	Offence description	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 sec. 3	Protection of the nests and eggs of wild birds in sanctuaries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 sec. 6	Sale etc. of live or dead wild birds, eggs etc.	3	2	4	1	0	1	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

Source:
RDS Office for Criminal Justice Reform
Ref: IOS 020–06

The Government are committed to combating wildlife crime, and, through the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime, supports the network of Police Wildlife Crime Officers who enforce these controls. In particular, the police response to egg thefts—'Operation Easter'—has made an important impact on this type of crime, and the criminals involved.

Cattle Movement Regulations

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 311W, on farming, in what circumstances an error regarding cattle movement regulations which occurred before 2003, where the animal is now dead, would be considered an infringement of loss compliance rules. [38906]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* To reiterate the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 311W, a breach of the relevant requirements on or after 1 January 2005 will be regarded as a non-compliance and will be assessed for a penalty as required by the EC regulations. Breaches which commenced prior to the introduction of cross compliance and are continuing, through an act or omission of the farmer, into 2005, will also be assessed for a penalty.

The Cross Compliance Statutory Management Requirements covering cattle identification are the legal requirements set out in Council Regulation 911/2004, Commission Regulation 1760/2000 and the related domestic implementing legislation. Any act or omission that breaches this legislation, which took place before 1 January 2005, but which could have been rectified prior to being discovered at any cross compliance on the spot check will be regarded as a non-compliance.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many litter enforcement notices were served on members of the public for dropping chewing gum in the Chewing Gum Action Group campaign pilot areas during the pilot period. [42532]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 January 2006]* There were two litter fixed penalty notices for dropping chewing gum issued during the pilot campaigns—one by Manchester city council and one by Preston city council.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what evidence there is from the Chewing Gum Action Group campaign pilot areas of reductions in the quantity of illegal littering of public areas by chewing gum; [42533]

(2) how much less gum there was on relevant streets at the end of the Chewing Gum Action Group campaign pilots compared with the beginning of the pilot period. [42534]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Reliable figures on the reductions in gum deposition are only available from Preston city council, as both Maidstone borough council and Manchester city council experienced problems over the accurate measurement of gum deposits. In Preston there was a 76 percent. reduction in levels of gum deposition in the control areas at the end of the campaign, and subsequent assessments have found that significant reductions in those areas have been sustained.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* fixed penalty notices have been issued and *(b)* successful prosecutions have been brought for each section of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 that has been introduced to date, grouped by each local authority area in England and Wales. [45667]

Mr. Bradshaw: The fixed penalty provisions in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 will not be introduced until April 2006.

Figures for prosecutions will not be available until after this fiscal year has ended.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Minister of State will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 3rd November 2005, reference: 29765. [41974]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* A reply was sent on 31 December 2005, I apologise for the delay.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when her Department will reply to the letter of 10 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding climate change. [44700]

Mr. Morley: I apologise for the delay in replying to my right hon. Friend's letter of 10 November 2005 regarding climate change. A reply will be sent shortly.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance her Department has given to executive agencies that fall under the remit of her

Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if she will make a statement. [41644]

Jim Knight: No formal targets, advice or guidance has been given to Defra executive agencies on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis.

Eight of the nine Defra executive agencies already have headquarters outside the London region and/or a presence across the regions.

Farm Waste Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government expects to introduce the Farm Waste Directive. [43833]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no Farm Waste Directive as such. Following a public consultation exercise and an adverse judgment by the European court of justice on infraction proceedings by the European Commission against the UK, we are now finalising the waste management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. The main purpose of the Regulations is to repeal the exclusion in section 75(7)*(c)* of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to apply to agricultural waste the national controls that are already in place to comply with the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive. Our aim is to make and lay the Regulations before Parliament by 31 March 2006.

Glue Traps

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to make illegal the *(a)* sale and *(b)* use of glue traps; and if she will make a statement. [41944]

Mr. Bradshaw: The use of glue traps is currently a lawful method of pest control and there are no plans to make their sale or use illegal.

However, when choosing to use glue traps instead of other methods such as spring and cage traps, or chemical control (warfarin for rats), the operator should consider their responsibilities in ensuring that the use of a glue trap does not cause any unnecessary suffering under Section 1, subsection (1) and Section 15 of the Protection of Animals Act 1911.

Habitats Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many species the UK has requested to be added to the EU habitats directive 1992 in each year since 1992. [44868]

Jim Knight: The UK has not asked for any species to be added to the EU habitats directive.

However, the European Commission has set up a Marine Expert Group, which includes the UK. This group is looking to make an initial assessment of the marine chapters in the annexes of the habitats directive with a view to possible adaptations.

Horse Exports

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that exported horses are categorised for export as for *(a)* breeding, *(b)* riding, *(c)* exhibition and *(d)* slaughter; and if she will take steps to ban the export of horses for slaughter. [42650]

Mr. Bradshaw: European Union animal health rules, which set out the requirements for exporting horses to other member states, do not stipulate different rule for horses being exported for breeding, riding, exhibition or slaughter. A unilateral ban on the export of live horses for slaughter would be illegal under EU law.

Under national animal welfare rules, we have a licensing system for the export of horses. Applicants wishing to export horses are asked the reason for export. However there is no evidence of a slaughter trade in this country or any demand for one. Information on reasons for export under the licensing arrangements can be found on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/farmed/transport/horsestats.htm http://defraweb/animalh/welfare/farmed/transport/horsestats.htm

House Building (Aylesbury)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the additional waste recycling capacity that will be required as a result of the planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale; [44162]

(2) what assessment she has made of whether a new waste treatment facility will be required to take account of the Government's planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [45347]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities and regional assembles are the responsible bodies to plan for the management of all waste types within their areas. Any growth in waste volumes needs to be seen in the context of wider trends in waste volumes linked to overall economic performance as well as any waste growth linked to planned expansion of housing. In defined growth areas, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) have held regional seminars to discuss how waste arising from increasing population, particularly from construction, demolition and excavation can be properly planned for to ensure that the necessary infrastructure can be developed.

The ODPM are also in discussions with the Environment Agency to carry out a study to predict quantities and types of waste that are likely to arise in the Thames Gateway region and the results from this study will be applicable to other designated growth areas. Additionally, the Environment and Quality of Life sub-group of the Milton Keynes South Midlands ((MKSM) Inter-Regional Board is conducting a desk study into waste strategies across the MKSM growth area, the results of which will be fed back through liaison with county and regional bodies.

The Government continue to encourage all local authorities to move towards innovative methods of waste disposal which will reduce amounts of waste sent to landfill. In the 2004 Spending Review the Government announced an increase in the EPCS

Formula Spending Share block of £888 million by 2007–08 over 2004–05. Over the three-year period to 2005–06, authorities are also benefiting from a total of £294 million invested through the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund and its successor the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant, will provide a further £260 million over the three years to 2007–08. Finally, through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), credits worth £355 million have been made available over the three years to 2005–06 as an extra source of funding, with a further £535 million available in 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Influenza Pandemic

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the security and sustainability of food supplies in the event of an influenza pandemic. [43538]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA is keeping the position under review with industry, in particular with help from our Food Chain Emergency Liaison Group which comprises representatives from all key food sectors, to ensure that the food supply chain can cope with the effects of an influenza pandemic. The main potential pinch point identified for the food industry is possible HGV driver shortages caused by drivers falling sick. We are exploring the option, for example, of increased sharing of driver resources.

Landfill Allowances

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the timetable is for the implementation of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme; and what the timescale is for the introduction of fines for local authorities exceeding their individual landfill allowances. [42909]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) was launched on 1 April 2005 with key target years 2010, 2013 and 2020. Section 9(1) of the Waste and Emissions Trading Act (WET Act) places each waste disposal authority (WDA) under a duty to secure that the amount of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) sent to landfills in that year does not exceed the amount authorised by the landfill allowances available to that authority for the year.

At the end of the each scheme year (31 March annually), there will be a six month reconciliation period. Authorities will have three months to submit their end of year data. During the following two months, the monitoring authority will provide each authority with a draft reconciliation between the amount of BMW the authority landfilled and the number of allowances it holds. Should an authority have landfilled more waste than it holds allowances for, it can then use the sixth month to trade or borrow allowances to balance the figures. Any authority which has landfilled in excess of the allowances it holds at the end of the reconciliation period will be liable to a financial penalty of £150 per tonne (Section 9(2) of the WET ACT). In a target year the Government will reserve the right to pass some or all of any fine imposed by the European Court of Justice. Guidance on the procedure for the application of penalties under section 9(2) of the WET Act and on the Secretary of State's powers to waive, and to extend the time for paying, penalties and interest with respect to landfilling of BMW in excess of allowances held has been published on the DEFRA website at

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/localauth/lats/guidance.htm.

Local Government Inspections

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role her Department plays in local government inspection. [39493]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA does not carry out inspections of local authorities. The Audit Commission carries out inspections of local authorities within the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Framework. The Comprehensive Performance Framework includes a requirement to consider the performance of local authority environmental services.

DEFRA has interests in a range of local authority inspection and other regulatory activity including in relation to animal health and welfare, and environmental protection.

Methane Emissions

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to reduce methane emissions in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [43702]

Mr. Morley: UK methane emissions have fallen every year since 1990 and by 2004 had dropped to about half of 1990 levels. The main sources of methane emissions in the UK are landfill sites, agriculture, coal mining, gas distribution, and oil and gas production.

Landfill site operators that continue to accept waste must fulfil the requirements of the Landfill Directive including taking appropriate measures to collect, treat and use landfill gas to produce useful energy or, where that is not possible, flare it. Other Government measures to reduce the levels of biodegradable waste being sent to landfill include the landfill tax escalator, the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (designed to meet the Landfill Directive targets), and public awareness campaigns. Together these measures have resulted in a decrease of about 63 per cent. in landfill methane emissions between 1990 and 2004.

The nature of emissions from agriculture make them a more difficult target for reduction than in other sectors. Nonetheless, improvement in animal diet and productivity has produced an 11 per cent. decrease in methane emissions from animals since 1990, and further reductions are expected. Recent research from the Rowett Research Institute, based in Aberdeen into anti-methane feed ingredients has yielded promising results, and in initial trials a reduction of up to 70 per cent. in emitted methane has been achieved. The UK Government remain committed to research into reducing methane emissions from ruminants. We are also committed to exploring techniques for methane recovery from agricultural waste and its use as a clean energy source.

With regard to methane from coal mining, UK Coal signed up to the UK Emissions Trading scheme in 2002, with the target of reducing methane emissions from their installations by 400,000 tonnes by 2006. Furthermore methane extracted from abandoned coal mines and used as fuel has been exempt from the climate change levy since 2003. This exemption encourages the owners of mining facilities and decommissioned mines to invest in systems that capture methane that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere. In addition the Coal Authority and the Department of Trade and Industry are developing a scheme further to encourage the mitigation of methane from abandoned mines. Methane emissions from coal mining (including closed mines) fell by some 73 per cent. between 1990 and 2004.

Fugitive emissions from natural gas dropped by about 39 per cent. between 1990 and 2004. National Grid Gas plc, which owns and maintains the UK gas distribution network, is continuing to make improvements to the UK gas network. The planned replacement of 91,000 km iron gas mains with polyethylene pipes will lead to a further reduction in methane emissions from gas transmission.

Methane emissions from offshore production of oil and gas fell by 53 per cent. between 1990 and 2004 in line with trends in numbers of installations and production levels.

Operation of Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. [42306]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are satisfied with the operation of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

Recycling

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to encourage industry to create recyclable products. [43259]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government recognises the importance of encouraging industry to develop recyclable products. Since it began work in 2000 the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has had a positive impact in developing markets for recycled materials and removing barriers to recycling. WRAP is engaged with producers and purchasers and has developed guidance along with the provision of advisory services to increase the take up of recycled products throughout a range of industries.

Producer responsibility legislation, such as the Packaging, End of Life Vehicle (ELV) and forthcoming Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations, places obligations on producers to recycle products when they come to their end of life, providing an incentive for them to ensure their products are more recyclable from the outset.

Finally, as disposal costs continue to rise due to increased landfill tax, there should be an indirect pressure on manufacturers to make products more recyclable.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many recycling points there are per 1,000 population in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency. [43289]

Mr. Bradshaw: Requested figures, based on the 2003–04 DEFRA municipal waste management survey and 2003 mid-year population estimates are shown in the following table. Recycling points are considered as both civic amenity and recycling sites within the area.

	Recycling points per 1,000 population
England	0.41
Tees Valley	0.18
Middlesbrough unitary authority	0.09
Redcar and Cleveland unitary authority	0.10

Notes:

1. The Tees Valley includes the unitary authorities of: Stockton-on-Tees, Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Darlington.
2. Results for the unitary authorities of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland have been provided as data at constituency level are not available.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are being taken to ensure that the recycling rate of *(a)* household and *(b)* business refuse in the Tees Valley region is brought up to the national average. [43290]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information is as follows:

(a) Waste strategy 2000 set out national recycling and composting targets for household waste, of 17 percent. in 2003–04, rising to 25 percent. in 2005–06, then 30 percent. in 2010 and 33 percent. in 2015. Each local authority was also set a statutory target for 2003–04 and 2005–06 and to assure that further progress is made, I recently launched for consultation options for further recycling/composting targets in 2007–08. All of the Tees Valley authorities met their 2003–04 targets and most are making good progress towards their 2005–06 targets.

In addition to the recycling targets, the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 requires waste collection authorities—subject to certain exemptions—to provide a kerbside collection service of at least two recyclable materials by 2010. Furthermore, waste disposal authorities have been set challenging landfill diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste which will drive authorities to ensure that the recycling of this waste is maximised.

The Government recognise the challenge local authorities in England face meeting their statutory performance standards in recycling and composting. Accordingly, the 2004 Spending Review announced an increase in the environmental, protective, and cultural services block of £888 million by 2007–08 over 2004–05.

Funding is also being provided from a variety of other sources to help authorities meet and exceed their targets. DEFRA's waste minimisation and recycling fund and its successor, DEFRA's waste performance and efficiency grant, are providing funding totalling £294 million over

the three years to 2005–06 for specific projects to expand recycling operations of which the Tees Valley authorities have in total received around £5.5 million.

The Tees Valley authorities have also benefited from consultancy support for the development of a joint waste management strategy through DEFRA's waste implementation programme which has devoted over £150 million over the three years to 2005–06 to strategic measures helping authorities to divert waste from landfill.

The waste resources and action programme—a not-for-profit company supported by funding from the Government—has provided support to the Tees Valley authorities on home composting and over £270 000 for funding local communications in four of the five authorities. Each of the Tees Valley authorities is also participating in a £66,000 household incentive pilot scheme funded by DEFRA. The scheme will provide valuable information to all authorities on what household incentives provide the best increases in recycling rates in different types of community in the region.

Within the context of the regional spatial strategy, which will provide the overarching framework for growth in the North East over the next 15 to 20 years, a regional waste strategy is being developed to encourage greater re-use and recycling of waste resources, moving them higher up the 'waste hierarchy'. The Government have also set up the North East regional support fund which has provided over £100,000 over the last two years for waste research chosen by the North East authorities—including strong Tees Valley representation.

(b) There are different mechanisms in place to encourage businesses to recycle more and divert more waste from landfill sites. These include:

The landfill tax escalator:

The standard rate of landfill tax, which applies to active wastes, has been increased by £3 per tonne in 2005–06, and will be further increased by at least £3 per tonne in the following years to reach a medium—to long-term rate of £35 per tonne. The rate is currently £18 per tonne. The landfill tax was introduced to stimulate reductions in the levels of waste going to landfill and encourage the development of more sustainable waste management practices.

The BREW programme:

The business resource efficiency and waste (BREW) programme, which recycles revenue generated through the landfill tax, provides new support to business that specifically targets waste minimisation and the diversion of waste away from landfill.

The landfill diversion targets:

These will apply to biodegradable commercial waste that is collected by a local authority. As the cost of disposing of this waste will increase, authorities that collect commercial waste will have an incentive to ensure that as much of the waste is recycled as possible.

Economics:

The economic incentive for businesses to recycle is often much more clear-cut than it is for households as businesses generally pay for the volume of waste they create whereas householders pay a flat fee as part of council tax.

Packaging waste regulations:

These regulations set annual business targets for recovery and recycling of packaging waste designed to meet the national targets. Any business handling more than 50 tonnes of packaging and with a turnover of more than £2 million is obligated. To date, businesses have recovered 53 percent in 2003 of packaging waste, compared with 33 percent in 1998; and recycled 47 percent. compared with 29 percent. in 1998.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidelines the Department provides to councils regarding reprimanding businesses and households who refuse to comply with recycling requirements. [45122]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities can require householders to recycle their recyclables using their powers under section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 contains provisions which, when commenced in April 2006, will enable local authorities to issue fixed penalty notices to those breaching notices issued under sections 46 or 47 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

However, Government strongly believe that the right approach to changing behaviour is to continue to work with householders to ensure that they are given every opportunity to take part in recycling through the provision of a high quality recycling service, before enforcement is considered as an option.

Local authorities are not required to collect waste from businesses unless requested by the business and a charge can be levied for the service. The local authority would be at liberty to negotiate a requirement to separate recyclables as part of the contract.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Government funding *(a)* the Ruislip-Northwood constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon received to support recycling in each year since 1997. [41828]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA does not hold information on funding allocated to individual constituencies.

The main source of funding for local authorities' waste management services is the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block of annual Government grant. It is for the local authorities to decide what proportion of the block is invested in waste management services, including recycling.

Funding is also being provided from a variety of other sources to support recycling, the amounts received by the London borough of Hillingdon are shown in the following table:

£

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund	202,500	200,000	—	—
Direct Consultancy Support	—	—	18,018	16,481
Grant to relieve spending pressures in the waste area	—	—	117,565	—
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	—	—	—	225,905

Roman Snail

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the roman snail (*helix* pomatia) was not added to Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act Review in 2002. [44866]

Jim Knight: Every five years the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) advises Government about the animals and plants that need legally protected through inclusion on schedule 5 (animals) or schedule 8 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The Committee's current review is considering the inclusion of the roman snail (*helix* pomatia) on schedule 5. No decision has been made to date as the review is still ongoing.

School Milk

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are in place to ensure that local authorities who discharge their responsibilities under the School Milk Subsidy scheme via contractors meet their legal obligation to ensure that free school milk is available to those children who qualify. [43868]

Jacqui Smith: I have been asked to reply.

There is no statutory requirement for milk to be provided in local authority maintained schools. It is a matter for local authorities and schools to decide. However, where a local authority provides milk, education legislation requires them to provide it free to pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following: income support; income based job seeker's allowance; support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; child tax credit, provided that they are not entitled to working tax credit, and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that from 6 April 2005 does not exceed £13,910; or the guarantee element of state pension credit. In addition, children who receive income support or income based jobseeker's allowance in their own right are entitled to free school milk where it is provided.

It is this Department's view that where a local authority engages a contractor to supply milk to the schools in their area, the contractor is deemed to be acting on behalf of the local authority. In these cases the local authority would remain responsible for providing free milk to eligible pupils. The Department will investigate any complaints related to a failure to carry out duties imposed by education legislation. Ultimately, the Secretary of State may direct a local authority to carry out their duty in relation to free milk provision where they are failing to do so.

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to tackle the importation into the UK of illegal timber from *(a)* Indonesia, *(b)* China, *(c)* Brazil and *(d)* other timber exporting countries; and if she will make a statement. [44796]

Mr. Morley: The most important recent development is the adoption, in December 2005 under the UK presidency of the EU, of the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation. This will allow the EU to enter into Partnership Agreements with developing countries and provide them with assistance to tackle illegal logging. This assistance will include a licensing system designed to identify products and license them for export to the EU. It will be reinforced by powers for HM Customs to take a range of actions relating to unlicensed products from partner countries; this will allow member states to prohibit the import of illegal timber from those countries into the EU for the first time.

The first Partnership Agreements will be signed in 2006. The Department for International Development (DfID) has recently announced that it will be setting aside 24 million over the next five years for this FLEGT negotiation process and for tackling illegal logging more generally.

The Government also have been giving specific help to producer countries to prevent trade in illegal timber. Examples from the countries mentioned are as follows:

(a) Indonesia

In Indonesia there is a programme of work under a Memorandum of Understanding (signed in 2002) that commits both governments to tackle illegal logging and associated trade.

(b) China

The Eighth EU-China summit, held in Beijing on 5 September 2005, agreed that the EU and China would work together to tackle the problem of illegal logging in the Asian region. The Government are working to take this forward.

(c) Brazil

The UK has contributed £14 million to the multi-donor pilot programme for the Preservation of Brazilian Rain Forests and is a major contributor to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) which is creating and maintaining protected areas in the region through the Amazon Region Protected Areas Programme.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the proportion of imported timber which comes from illegal sources; and what steps she is taking to prevent such imports. [44871]

Mr. Morley: The UK is the world's fourth largest importer of wood products. However, we are unable to estimate how much illegally logged timber is coming into the UK as timber is not identified as legal or illegal at ports of entry.

Once the recently adopted EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation comes into force it will enable member states to enter into partnership agreements with developing countries and provide them with assistance to tackle illegal logging. This assistance will include a licensing system designed to identify products and license them for export to the EU. It will be reinforced by powers for HM Customs to take a range of actions relating to unlicensed products from partner countries; this will allow member states to prohibit the import of illegal timber from those countries into the EU for the first time.

Waste Management

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much waste was collected by each London borough in the most recent period for which information is available; and how much was *(a)* recycled, *(b)* sent to UK landfill sites, *(c)* incinerated and *(d)* sent overseas for landfill by each borough in that period. [44453]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest available information is from the Defra and GLA joint Municipal Waste Management Survey 2003–04. Figures provided in table below show total municipal waste tonnages collected by all London boroughs and by disposal methods by all London authorities with disposal responsibilities. Amounts collected for recycling and composting by collection authorities have been included. The collection authority recycling and composting tonnages exclude waste collected centrally at civic amenity sites by the four London joint waste disposal authorities. The four London joint waste disposal authorities include both civic amenity recycling and composting as well as recycling and composting undertaken by their constituent collection authorities.

Landfill refers to UK landfill sites. No waste should have been exported from any London borough for landfill overseas since this is illegal under UK legislation.

2003–04 Total municipal waste collected with methods of disposal (tonnes)

Unitary authorities	*Total waste collected*	*(a) Recycled and composted*	*(b) Landfill*	*(c) Incinerated*
Bexley	132,340	26,967	95,767	9,606
Bromley	172,437	29,296	100,259	42,882
Croydon	198,931	26,815	171,986	130
Greenwich	124,021	12,966	32,441	78,614
Kingston-upon-Thames	76,847	14,342	62,505	0
Lewisham	137,040	9,403	25,694	101,943
London Corporation	54,259	481	53,771	7
Merton	100,765	11,924	88,776	65
Southwark	134,714	8,985	94,429	31,300
Sutton	99,300	25,477	73,642	181
Tower Hamlets	103,396	4,088	99,292	16
Westminster	213,910	12,846	70,077	130,987

Waste disposal authorities with corresponding collection authorities

	Total waste collected	*(a) Recycled and composed*	*(b) Landfill*	*(c) Incinerated*
East London Waste Authority	[1]	37,707	435,820	36,218
Barking and Dagenham	81,381	3,553	[1]	[1]
Havering	100,350	7,349	[1]	[1]
Newham	129,446	2,938	[1]	[1]
Redbridge	100,851	8,509	[1]	[1]
North London Waste Authority	[1]	104,324	453,313	393,681
Barnet	161,816	23,857	[1]	[1]
Camden	133,625	18,481	[1]	[1]
Enfield	127,538	20,294	[1]	[1]
Hackney	116,014	5,378	[1]	[1]
Haringey	121,497	8,715	[1]	[1]
Islington	110,005	5,624	[1]	[1]
Waltham Forest	114,929	13,139	[1]	[1]
West London Waste Authority	[1]	115,429	727,867	487
Brent	119,023	9,919	[1]	[1]
Baling	129,807	16,129	[1]	[1]
Harrow	99,338	13,193	[1]	[1]
Hillingdon	115,817	32,440	[1]	[1]
Hounslow	113,805	15,952	[1]	[1]
Richmond upon Thames	107,295	21,204	[1]	[1]
Western Riverside Waste Authority	[1]	53,129	435,507	906
Hammersmith and Fulham	90,375	9,595	[1]	[1]
Kensington and Chelsea	90,820	10,958	[1]	[1]
Lambeth	141,884	10,285	[1]	[1]
Wandsworth	134,888	17,306	[1]	[1]

[1] type of activity not undertaken by authority.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what sanctions will be applied to packaging producers and compliance schemes that did not discharge their recycling responsibilities appropriately in 2004. [40466]

Mr. Bradshaw: This is a matter for the Environment Agency and potentially the Courts.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what volume of street litter, exclusive of that which is collected from public litter bins, was collected by each local authority in each year since 1997. [45642]

Mr. Bradshaw: Waste collection authorities under Schedule 2 of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992 will include such services as street sweeping, bulky waste

collection, hazardous household waste collection, litter collections, household clinical waste collection and separate garden waste collection (not for composting). These type of wastes have been annually recorded in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey under the category "Other collected household waste". Authorities are not required to record street litter separately. Therefore the information requested is not held by the Department.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of Hammersmith and Fulham Council's response to her Department's consultation on new waste regulations which place a duty of care on householders for their household waste. [45914]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government consulted on household duty of care in their 'Living Places: Powers, Rights, Responsibilities' consultation in 2002. The Government considered responses to the consultation from the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, as well as other stakeholders. It took on board comments that a full waste duty of care requirement would be too onerous on householders, and difficult for local authorities to enforce. Instead, a partial waste duty of care was brought in by the Waste (Household Waste Duty of Care) (England & Wales) Regulations 2005.

The household duty of care has been brought in to ensure that England is in full compliance with Article 8 of the Waste Framework Directive.

Wild Mammals

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. [42301]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are satisfied with the operation of The Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996.

DEFENCE

C-130 Hercules

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the defensive aids fitted to each *(a)* C130K and *(b)* C130J. [43369]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The following defensive aids are currently employed on the Hercules C130K and C130J fleet:

Directional Infra Red Counter Measures
Missile Approach Warning Systems
Radar Warning Receiver
Countermeasures Dispensing System
Lamp Infra Red Counter Measure
Flight Deck Armour

Only Hercules with appropriate defensive countermeasures are deployed to operational theatres.

Information relating to the defensive aids employed on each C130K and C130J airframe is being withheld because it would be likely to prejudice the security of the UK's armed forces.

Departmental Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to relocate staff in his Department and related agencies into London and the south-east. [31747]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence is fully committed to relocating 3,900 posts out of the south-east under the Lyons review. All relocation proposals are judged on the basis of value for money as demonstrated in a business case. A proposed move into London or the south-east must therefore offer significant value for money, efficiency and business benefits.

Currently the only confirmed move of posts into the south-east is a result of the collocation of the two existing RAF headquarters into a single integrated HQ at High Wycombe. This is an element of the Ministry of Defence's efficiency programme and will achieve significant manpower and financial savings, but will result in a net increase of 96 posts at High Wycombe.

There are some other proposals which might entail a move of posts into the south-east, the business cases for which are at varied stages of consideration. As at 20 January, however, none have been approved.

There are no confirmed or proposed relocations into London.

Documentary Guidance (Evidence/Documentary Access)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is with regard to *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department giving evidence to the (i) Scottish Parliament, (ii) National Assembly for Wales and (iii) Northern Ireland Assembly committees; and to what categories of document he gives (A) full access, (B) restricted access and (C) no access to (1) the Scottish Parliament, (2) National Assembly for Wales, (3) Northern Ireland Assembly and (4) House of Commons select committees. [37396]

Mr. Touhig: Requests for the attendance of Ministers or officials to give evidence to the devolved legislatures, and for the provision of information to the Assemblies, will be considered on a case by case basis. This consideration will reflect: the principles set out in the Cabinet Office guidance "Departmental Evidence and Response to Select Committees" (July 2005); the policy outlined in the Department for Constitutional Affairs' Devolution Guidance Note #12 "Attendance of UK Ministers and Officials at Committees of the Devolved Legislatures"; and the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. The principles underlying the provision of information to House of Commons Select Committees are set out in "Departmental Evidence and Response to Select Committees", particularly sections 4B and 4C.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41204]

Mr. Touhig: Specific data on external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, summaries of MOD expenditure on external assistance, of which consultancy is a part, are available in the Library of the House for the years 1995–96 to 2004–05.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many ships from the navies of other countries called at Gibraltar in the last 12 months, broken down by country. [44535]

Mr. Ingram: During the last 12 months, the number of ships from the navies of other countries that have called at Gibraltar and used MOD facilities are as follows:

	Number
USA	6
The Netherlands	1
Germany	1
Australia	1

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft from other countries' air forces landed at RAF Gibraltar in the last 12 months. [44536]

Mr. Ingram: During the last 12 months, the number of aircraft from other countries' air forces that have landed at RAF Gibraltar are as follows:

Countries	*Number of aircraft*
United States of America	5
The Netherlands	3
Germany	3
Canada	1
Switzerland	1

Glencorse Barracks

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many new homes he estimates will be required to house the families of soldiers stationed at Glencorse Barracks; [44634]

(2) how many civilian jobs he estimates will be created at Glencorse Barracks over the next three years; [44635]

(3) how many Army personnel will be stationed at Glencorse Barracks over the next three years. [44636]

Mr. Touhig: We estimate that in the region of 650 army personnel will be stationed at Glencorse Barracks over the next three years.

151 new Service Family Accommodation house types are being built on the re-developed area of the old Milton Bridge Camp; this additional housing will ensure the requirements of the families of soldiers stationed at Glencorse Barracks are met.

Under current plans it is estimated that in the region of 40 civilian jobs will be created at Glencorse Barracks over the next three years.

Gurkhas

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will publish the findings of his review of Gurkhas' terms and conditions of service. [44044]

Mr. Touhig: Because of the complexity of some of the issues involved, the review of Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service is taking longer than originally planned. We hope that an announcement can be made before the Whitsun recess.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his US counterpart about the comparative incidences of Gulf War illnesses in US and UK forces involved in the invasion of Iraq in 2003; and what the results of those discussions were. [44217]

Mr. Touhig: Defence Ministers have not held any formal discussions with the United States counterparts about the comparative incidence of "Gulf War illness" following the start of the current Iraq deployment (Operation Telic). A British Liaison Officer is based permanently in Washington DC and is tasked with ensuring that the United Kingdom has full visibility of US research into Gulf health issues and with providing a channel for communicating our own work to interested US parties. There has also been other discussions on the subject at official level.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel from the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Operation Telic have since been diagnosed with recognised neurological illnesses. [44226]

Mr. Touhig: Information on illnesses reported by service personnel who have served on Operation Telic is not held centrally. Although the medical records of individuals who have left the services are held by each service at individual central locations, the records of personnel who are still serving are normally held at their unit medical centre.

However, data has been collated since September 2004 on how many service personnel, deployed on Operation Telic, reported to UK medical facilities in theatre with neurological disorders (including paralysis and altered consciousness). Between September 2004 and November 2005 inclusive, there were:

562 instances of personnel reporting to first line medical facilities with a neurological complaint; 54 were admitted bedded down; 18 were referred for specialist consultation.

The assessment of such disorders is made at the point of access to primary health care and is not a formal medical diagnosis. Additionally, it does not take into account any subsequent change in diagnosis.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are in place regarding the air transportation of British troops from Germany to Iraq. [45145]

Mr. Ingram: A scheduled air service, comprising a mix of Royal Air Force and commercial aircraft, operates between the United Kingdom and Iraq five days a week, also calling in Germany on two of those days. Additionally, when the main body of troops in Iraq changes, dedicated aircraft move those troops to and from the country in which they are normally stationed, which may include Germany.

Joint Casualty Treatment Ship

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Joint Casualty Treatment Ship programme. [44175]

Mr. Ingram: The Joint Casualty Treatment Ship programme aims to deliver a ship-borne medical facility broadly similar in scope to a field hospital, capable of treating a full range of casualties, whether from sea, land or air environments. It is intended to replace the capability currently provided by RFA Argus. A review of the programme is currently taking place which will inform the requirement further.

Merchant Fleet

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on measures to protect the British merchant fleet of the planned reduction in the fleet of commissioned frigates and destroyers; and if he will make a statement. [45193]

Mr. Ingram: The global threat to merchant shipping is kept under constant review, and the Royal Navy, in conjunction with other Government Departments and international partners, remains fully capable of providing support and assistance to British merchant shipping via its Maritime Trade Operations policy.

Nursing Services

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel at 1 April 2006 will comprise the *(a)* Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps and *(b)* Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service. [43694]

Mr. Touhig: The latest available information on the strength of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (QARANC) and the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service (PMRAFNS) is given in the following table.

Number

	Strength 1 December 2005
QARANC	830
Officers[1]	260
Other Ranks	570
PMRAFNS	420
Officers	120
Other Ranks	300

[1] Excludes the ranks colonel and above.

Source:
DASA (Tri-Service).

QinetiQ

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work *(a)* the Department and *(b)* QinetiQ is undertaking to support the European Defence Agency's review of training and evaluation. [44172]

Mr. Ingram: Representatives from the Ministry of Defence participate, alongside their colleagues from other European nations, in a European Defence Agency (EDA) working group examining possible measures to rationalise the Defence Test and Evaluation base in Europe. QinetiQ is not directly involved in these discussions, but is consulted by the Ministry of Defence on matters of mutual interest. The EDA discussions are at an early stage, and no firm conclusions on the prospects for rationalisation have been reached.

RAF Bentley Priory

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future of RAF Bentley Priory; what assessment he has made of its historic significance; and what discussions he has had on the subject with the Battle of Britain Fighter Association. [42319]

Mr. Touhig: Studies within the Ministry of Defence have concluded that there is no current defence requirement for retaining Bentley Priory and therefore the Department is considering options for its disposal. This work is being taken forward through Project MoDEL, which aims to consolidate the defence estate in Greater London to ensure that it is the right size and quality to support our future operational outputs and to improve working and living conditions for current and future generations of service personnel in London. The MOD is in the process of selecting an industry partner to take the project forward.

The MOD is well aware of the unique historical importance of RAF Bentley Priory. Defence Estates has completed a detailed Heritage Assessment, which was shared with English Heritage in July 2004. The Department has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the future of RAF Bentley Priory, including the Battle of Britain Fighter Association (BoBFA), and understands their aspirations. Meetings have also been facilitated between BoBFA and the two short-listed industry bidders for the Project MoDEL contract. Defence Estates' staff are also engaging with BoBFA over the development of a formal Conservation Statement, which will act as the definitive identification of the site's heritage importance.

The MOD wishes to identify a long-term and sustainable solution that will ensure that the site is preserved in a way that is appropriate to its significant importance, whilst seeking to enhance public access. In doing so, it is important that we maintain the momentum of Project MoDEL, in order to realise the benefits it will deliver at the earliest opportunity.

Royal Ordnance

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on ammunition supplied to his Department by Royal Ordnance from overseas; and how much of the ammunition supplied was rejected as being unsuitable for use in 2004–05. [43905]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence procures a range of defence general munitions from BAE Land Systems (Formerly Royal Ordnance) through a Framework Partnering Agreement. Sourcing is principally a matter for the company, which is free to make commercial decisions to source components or complete rounds of ammunition from overseas. MOD monitor the performance of all ammunition in service, whether sourced in the UK or overseas. Statistics on ammunition rejected and the original source country are not held centrally, and could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Swimmer Delivery Vehicles

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what representations he has received from the Royal Navy regarding the operational implications of the loss of underwater launch facilities for swimmer delivery vehicles supplied by HMS Spartan; [44030]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects on *(a)* insertion teams and *(b)* transportation units of the loss of underwater launch facilities for swimmer delivery vehicles; [44032]

(3) in what year he expects underwater launch facilities for swimmer delivery vehicles to be restored. [44033]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding this information on the grounds that disclosure would prejudice the defence of the UK and the capability and effectiveness of the armed forces.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what factors were taken into account when HMS Spartan was selected *(a)* as the sole submarine capable of the underwater launch of swimmer delivery vehicles and *(b)* for decommissioning prior to other fleet submarines. [44031]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The decision to reduce our attack submarines from 12 boats to 10 was taken as part of the Strategic Defence Review. HMS Spartan was selected as one of the submarines to be withdrawn from service taking into account such factors as her age, material state and capability. I am withholding the further information requested on the grounds that disclosure would prejudice the defence of the United Kingdom and the capability and effectiveness of the armed forces.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* second lieutenants, *(b)* lieutenants, *(c)* captains, *(d)* majors, *(e)* lieutenant-colonels and *(f)* Territorial Army personnel with five-year service bars are serving in the Territorial Army; [43687]

(2) how many five-year service bars have been awarded to Territorial Army personnel in each of the last five years. [43686]

Mr. Touhig: The Volunteer Reserves Service Medal (VRSM) is awarded to members of the volunteer reserve forces subject to completion of 10 years continuous qualifying service. For the purposes of the reply, it is assumed that it is details of the number of clasps to the VRSM, awarded for subsequent continuous periods of five years' service, that are sought. This information is provided in the following table:

Rank	*Number currently serving with VRSM clasp(s)*
Second Lieutenant	1
Lieutenant	9
Captain	35
Major	28
Lieutenant Colonel	1
All TA Personnel	1,063

Calendar year	*Number of VRSM clasps issued*
2001	126
2002	334
2003	396
2004	267
2005	34

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average age is of Territorial Army *(a)* recruits, *(b)* privates, *(c)* non-commissioned officers, *(d)* officers and *(e)* personnel as a whole. [43690]

Mr. Touhig: Of the 37,430 personnel who were on the strength of the Territorial Army (including TA mobilised reservists) as at 1 December 2005, the average age was as follows:

	Average age (years)
Recruits	23
Trained Privates	28
Non-Commissioned Officers	38
Officers	40
TA as a whole	31

Notes:
1. Figures exclude full-time reserve service (FTRS) and non-regular permanent staff (NRPS).
2. Figures include officer training corps.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence upon which sections of the Territorial Army the call-out notices for Operation Telic 8 are being served. [43692]

Mr. Touhig: Call-out notices for Operation Telic 8 are being served upon volunteers from across a variety of regiments and corps in the Territorial Army, including: the pool of Watch Keepers; the Royal Armoured Corps; the Royal Artillery; the Infantry; the Royal Logistics Corps; and the Army Medical Services.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to increase the number of soldiers in the Territorial Army. [44723]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The number of new recruits into the Territorial Army (TA) remains relatively high. We continue to recruit through professional advertising campaigns and recent TV campaigns have generated a lot of interest in people joining the TA. A new and integrated recruiting process will be introduced under Project One Army Recruiting (OAR) which will provide greater integration and coherence between Regular Army and TA recruiting. In addition, a manning action plan has been introduced to improve recruitment and retention which includes: improved and more flexible Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS); better integration of training with the Regular Army

including increased levels of training support and availability of equipment; and enhancements to support administration, welfare, recruiting and employer support activities.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* tax rates and *(b)* tax allowances are used when Territorial Army personnel are on deployment; and what advice is available after deployment about personal tax issues. [43674]

Mr. Touhig: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs are notified of an individual's impending change in employment status prior to mobilisation, and a change of tax code is issued calculated under the normal pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) rules. Under these rules, the tax rates and allowances that apply vary according to an individual's income and personal circumstances.

Until the change of tax code is received and applied, which is normally during the second month of deployment, an emergency tax code is used for all Territorial Army personnel. This assumes that they are only entitled to the basic personal tax allowance.

Mobilised Territorial Army personnel on deployment are able to seek advice on tax issues in theatre from the regimental administration officer who, if necessary, can seek expert advice on more complex issues from armed forces pay officials within the United Kingdom.

Transport Aircraft

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's expenditure on RAF *(a)* tanker and *(b)* transport aircraft was in each financial year since 1996–97. [44170]

Mr. Ingram: A number of areas within the Department incur expenditure on the RAF's Air Refuelling (AR) and transport fleets. The financial information requested is not held centrally and could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. The figures provided in the table are the logistic support costs of the Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) that can be directly attributed to the fixed wing aircraft fleets in the financial years for which costs are readily available.

The AR fleet is comprised of Tristar and the VC10 aircraft. The transport aircraft are C-17, Hercules C-130J/K, Tristar, VC10, BAe 125 and BAe 146.

The table does not include contract lease costs for three commercially owned military registered Twin Squirrel helicopters, which are used in the VIP transport role, as these costs are commercially sensitive.

£ million

Financial year	*RAF's air refuelling (AR)*	*Transport aircraft*[1]
1996–97	58	—
1997–98	53	—
1998–99	53	—
1999–2000	45	—
2000–01	44	—
2001–02	41	—
2002–03	50	218
2003–04	47	229
2004–05	45	207

[1] These figures include the lease cost of the C-17 fleet which is managed by the Defence Procurement Agency (DPA). The value of the lease is commercial-in-confidence and is not identified separately.

Note:
DLO and DPA staff costs are not included.

Troop Safety

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will bring forward legislation to make it a criminal offence for individuals *(a)* to place the safety of UK troops on active service in danger by their actions and *(b)* who question the reputation of British troops without basis. [45302]

Mr. Ingram: There is always a distinction to be drawn between the freedoms appropriate to a democracy and the abuse of those freedoms by an individual seeking to cause harm.

An individual who sought, deliberately and actively, to endanger the lives of UK troops may well be committing an offence under existing law, for example the Official Secrets Acts or the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The Government would not envisage bringing forward legislation to make it a criminal offence to question the reputation of British troops. However, the relevant laws in respect of defamation may apply.

Veteran's Badge

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Midlothian residents *(a)* are eligible for and *(b)* have received a veteran's badge. [44885]

Mr. Touhig: It is not possible to say how many residents of Midlothian are eligible for the Veterans' Badge, as we do not know how many would fulfil the criteria. The badge was introduced in May 2004 and we cannot readily identify by postal area the location of badges issued in the initial year. However, since April 2005, 78 residents from Midlothian have received Veterans' Badges.

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to extend the Veterans' Badge to those who left the services recently. [44493]

Mr. Touhig: My predecessor announced on 20 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1039–1041, that from 1 February 2005, a Veteran's badge would be included as part of the Service leavers' packs, subject to certain conditions. One of these conditions was that this was to be a one-year trial. This trial will end shortly and work is under way to consider the way ahead.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Instant Justice Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps will be taken to protect *(a)* innocent people from conviction and *(b)* civil liberties under the proposed instant justice scheme; whether defendants will be able to seek independent legal advice before accepting a penalty; and whether they will have the option of going to court if they dispute the allegation made against them. [44843]

The Solicitor-General: The Government's aim is to deliver a speedier, more proportionate and cost effective response to low level offending that better meets the needs of victims and the wider community. The proposals at this stage relate to extending the conditional caution scheme and dealing with some minor documentary motoring offences and TV licence cases administratively. The Government are at an early stage in considering whether there might be a role for a prosecutorial fine, as is currently the case in Scotland.

Under all our proposals the accused will still be able to consult a lawyer before deciding whether to accept the disposal proposed and go to court to dispute either the allegation or the suggested penalty.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42810]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Cabinet Office figures are fewer than five and have been suppressed as disclosure could lead to identification of the people involved.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Correspondence

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter dated 23 August 2005 from the hon. Member for Torridge and West Devon, with regard to Mr. J. Moody. [44146]

James Purnell *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The hon. Member's letter was sent to my right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry and the Regions and it was received in DCMS on 8 December 2005. I wrote to the hon. Member for Torridge and West Devon on 17 January 2006.

Departmental Estate

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what she has identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of her Department's estate. [44706]

Mr. Lammy: The Department has identified its most significant sustainable development issues in relation to the operation of its estate as the following:

energy consumption
water use
Carbon levels
hazardous substances used
timber and timber products
biodiversity (in relation to the Royal Parks)
food procurement

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many staff employed by her Department live in Castle Point. [42811]

Mr. Lammy: There are no staff employed by DCMS who live in Castle Point.

Historic Sites

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 955W, on historic sites, what the name and address is of each historic site in Hammersmith and Fulham that has *(a)* featured on this list, *(b)* been added to the list and *(c)* been removed from the list in the last five years. [45287]

Mr. Lammy: The following historic sites have featured every year on English Heritage's Building at Risk register for the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham for the last five years:

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Harrow Road, NW10

Kent House including Front Boundary Railings and Gate, 10 Lower Mall, W6

St. Paul's Churchyard, Queen Caroline Street, W6

Dimco Machine Tools—former Central Railway generating station Wood Lane, W12

and the Lodge on the north east side of entrance to Fulham Palace, Fulham Palace Road, SW6.

Those historic sites that have been added to the Register in the last five years are:

The Walls of the Old Garden, Fulham Palace, SW6—in 2002

34 Black Lion Lane, St Peters Square, SW6—in 2003

The Black Bull sculpture outside Ravenscroft Arms Public House, 257 King Street, Hammersmith, W6—in 2003

The Black Bull sculpture was taken off the Register—in 2004

Other historic sites that have been removed from the Register in the last five years are:

11 Stamford Brook Road, W6—in 2002

and 282 North End Road, SW6—in 2003

Library/Leisure Facilities

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total library service book stock was in Lancashire in each year since 1997. [45101]

Mr. Lammy: The total bookstock held by Lancashire County Libraries for each year between 1997–98 and 2003–04 is shown in the table. These figures are drawn from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's annual Public Library Statistics (Actuals). Copies are kept in the House of Commons Library.

	Total bookstock
1997–98	3,113,918
1998–99	2,486,056
1999–2000	2,386,475
2000–01	2,316,941
2001–02	2,309,223
2002–03	2,184,021
2003–04	2,107,879

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the Deputy Prime Minister on the demand for *(a)* libraries and *(b)* leisure facilities arising from the planned housing expansion in Aylesbury Vale. [45346]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not had any discussions with my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on the demand for libraries and leisure facilities in Aylesbury Vale. The Department has, however, been taking steps to ensure that adequate cultural infrastructure forms part of new developments across all of the growth areas including that covering Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) The Department and its non-departmental public bodies have, for instance, been contributing to the work of the MKSM inter-regional board to ensure that the requirements of the cultural sector are reflected in proposals for development in the sub region and this led to the publication of the "Living Spaces Culture and Sustainable Communities in the MKSM, guide for Local Delivery Vehicles" consultation document, launched in March 2005.

Pornography

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2536W, on pornography, what measures are in place to ensure that vulnerable groups, with particular reference to children, are not harmed by this material. [45467]

Mr. Lammy: There are a number of relevant pieces of legislation which have an impact on the dissemination of pornographic material, including the Obscene Publications Act, the Indecent Displays Act, the Communications Act, the Video Recordings Act, and the Protection of Children Act.

Sustainable Development

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what parts of her Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate. [45438]

Mr. Lammy: All parts of the Department's estate are covered by the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

International AIDS Vaccine Initiative

2. **Dr. Evan Harris:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution his Department has made to the budget of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) for 2005–06; and what proportion of IAVI's total budget that represents. [45075]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development has committed £8 million to the International Aids Vaccine Initiative, for the financial year 2005–06. IAVI financial years coincide with calendar years.

The £8 million committed for 2005–06 is accounted for in IAVI's 2005 accounts where it represents 31 per cent. of the total funds received.

World Trade Organisation (Hong Kong Talks)

6. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the implications for developing countries of the outcome of the World Trade Organisation trade talks in Hong Kong. [45079]

Hilary Benn: We did not make substantial progress in negotiations in Hong Kong, although conditional agreements were reached on ending export subsidies by 2013; agreeing new controls on food aid; and providing duty and quota free access for the world's Least Developed Countries for most, though not all products. Increased Aid for Trade is now included, for the first time, in the Hong Kong Declaration.

However in the key areas of agricultural market access and trade distorting domestic support the outcome was disappointing. There is now a great deal of work to be done to reach an outline agreement ("modalities") by the new deadline of 30 April, and schedules of commitments based on this outline by 31 July.

Disaster Relief

7. **Ms Barlow:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of his Department's budget for 2005–06 is allocated to preparedness and risk reduction for natural disasters; what proportion is allocated to disaster relief; and if he will increase the funds available for disaster preparedness and risk reduction. [45080]

Mr. Thomas: Our spending on humanitarian assistance including response to disasters increased from £186 million in 1997–98 to £370 million in 2004–05. We are committed to give a higher priority to disaster risk reduction.

14. **Malcolm Bruce:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he proposes to improve the humanitarian response to natural disasters and long-term reconstruction thereafter. [45088]

Hilary Benn: I made proposals in a speech in New York on 23 January. We have worked with the UN to establish a new Fund which will channel money to disasters quickly. We are calling for a strengthened role for UN humanitarian co-ordinators; improvements to the UN Flash Appeals system; and for the UN to develop proposals to increase staffing capacity.

The UK supports a clear role for the World Bank to support and co-ordinate longer-term recovery and reconstruction following natural disasters, properly co-ordinated with the UN. The Bank should ensure it has mechanisms in place for prompt and sustainable response to changed country needs.

East Africa

8. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on good governance in East Africa. [45081]

Hilary Benn: The picture is mixed. I am encouraged by the recent constitutional referendum in Kenya, and the recent presidential and the parliamentary elections in Tanzania. The first multi-party elections for more than 20 years in Uganda next month will also be an important test of democracy but I am concerned about what has been happening there recently. I am also worried about corruption in Kenya, which I raised with President Kibaki last week, including the latest allegations in the Kenyan and UK press. It is essential that these are fully and swiftly investigated.

Developing World (Conflict)

9. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to address the humanitarian consequences of conflict in the developing world; and if he will make a statement. [45082]

Mr. Thomas: Conflict is one of the biggest obstacles to poverty reduction. DFID has taken a number of steps to address the humanitarian consequences of conflict. In 2005 DFID provided more than £29 million to support the work of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and in 2004 £36.5 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross. We expect to spend £175 million in Africa this year on humanitarian relief, including in conflict affected countries. A draft humanitarian policy will be available for consultation this week. DFID also works on preventing conflict, so as to reduce the humanitarian consequences, including through the Africa and Global Conflict Prevent Pools and the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit.

Trade Barriers

10. **Mr. Gauke:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to encourage the reduction of barriers to trade between the EU and developing countries. [45083]

Hilary Benn: Increased trade has the potential to help developing countries grow economically and therefore help them tackle the problems of poverty. We will continue to make the case in Europe that a more open import regime can be good for developing countries as well as helping the EU itself become more competitive and prosperous. We will continue to assist developing countries in formulating their own trade policies and priorities, help them to negotiate these priorities, and help them to capture the potential benefits of increased trade.

Since 1998 we have spent £181 million through our trade related capacity building programmes to help developing countries, and we have announced our intention to increase the amount we spend on so-called Aid for Trade to £100 million per year by 2010.

Sudan

11. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Darfur. [45084]

Hilary Benn: Despite recent surveys showing mortality and malnutrition rates in Darfur below emergency thresholds, the situation remains critical. Around 1.8 million people are displaced, almost entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance.

The recent upsurge in violence in West Darfur has caused the UN and other agencies to reduce staffing levels, and limit access to some areas. Although the UN is implementing contingency plans, any prolonged period without access will inevitably have a harmful effect on the population.

The UN launched its humanitarian workplan for 2006 last month. $650 million is being sought for Darfur. We have committed £40 million to the overall programme, and are encouraging other donors to respond generously.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to ensure that international donors fulfil their pledges for $4.5 billion for humanitarian aid in Southern Sudan. [44825]

Hilary Benn: Approximately $4.5 billion was pledged for Sudan at last April's Oslo Donors' Conference. These pledges related to the whole of Sudan, including Darfur, not just to the south, and were for both humanitarian and development needs over the three years 2005–07.

It is important that these pledges are converted into cash. There will be an opportunity to formally review how well this is progressing at the donors' conference in Paris in early March, where there will undoubtedly be pressure on donors to fulfil their earlier pledges. We know that of the $194 million pledged for the first year of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for development assistance, some $150 million has already been paid in, over $100 million of this is for the south. Last year, donors also contributed or firmly committed over $1 billion in humanitarian assistance.

Nevertheless, Sudan's needs remain acute, and we continue to take every suitable opportunity to encourage other donors to respond as generously as they can. We have particularly sought to persuade donors to contribute to the newly established Common Humanitarian Fund, administered by the UN. Sudan remains a priority country for DFID, and this year we will spend over £100 million there on aid.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Darfur, Sudan. [44209]

Hilary Benn: Despite recent surveys by the UN showing that average crude mortality and malnutrition rates in Darfur have fallen below emergency thresholds, the situation there remains critical. According to the UN, approximately 1.8 million people remain displaced in the region. They remain almost entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance.

The recent upsurge in violence and tension in West Darfur has led to the UN raising its security level to phase 4 (the highest before evacuation), causing the UN and other agencies to reduce staffing levels, and severely limiting access to some areas of the state. Although the UN is working hard to implement contingency plans, any prolonged period without access will inevitably have a harmful affect on the population.

The UN launched its Sudan-wide humanitarian work plan for 2006 last month. $650 million is being sought for the international response in Darfur. DFID has

already committed £40 million to the overall programme, and are encouraging other donors to respond as generous as they can.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent reports he has received of abuse of women and children in Darfur, Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [44210]

Hilary Benn: The UN Security Council report of 23 December 2005 stated that

> "the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence in and around camps of internally displaced persons remained high throughout Darfur",

and that the authorities were still failing to act

> "with due diligence to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of rape".

Such attacks are abhorrent and unacceptable. We have made clear to the Government of Sudan that more must be done to provide security for the people of Darfur, and that the perpetrators must be brought to justice. Last month, the UK with other representatives of the international community, participated in a joint mission to assess human rights in West Darfur. The mission paid specific attention to sexual violence, and produced a number of recommendations. We are pressing the Government of Sudan to implement these as a matter of urgency.

With our partners, we are encouraging the Africa Union Mission in Darfur to scale up patrols and provide protection for women and girls when they leave their camps. Where this happens the number of reported rapes has decreased significantly. Next month the UN will launch a new information system that will record details of all incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, better data helping to ensure better prospects of prosecution. Separately, DFID is providing funding for protection as part of our humanitarian and rule of law programmes.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on UK Government *(a)* aid and *(b)* humanitarian assistance projects in the Darfur region of Sudan. [44211]

Hilary Benn: We are responding generously to the humanitarian needs of Sudan, including Darfur, contributing £70 million in 2005. We are doing this by directly supporting the UN humanitarian work plan, and by our funding of international NGOs and other agencies.

In the main, our funding is not earmarked for any specific region, but a substantial proportion of our work plan contribution goes to the principal UN agencies working in Darfur, such as UNICEF (water and sanitation, especially in camps for displaced people), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Food Programme (emergency food supplies). Of the main international NGOs working in Darfur, we are supporting Oxfam (water); Goal (provision of basic humanitarian services); Médecins Sans Frontières (health care); Action Contre Faim (nutrition); and CARE (non-food humanitarian items). We are also supporting the International Committee of the Red Cross, who are working in priority areas of Darfur, often beyond the reach of other humanitarian agencies.

The security and political situation in Darfur currently precludes the provision of significant development assistance there.

Ethiopia

12. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what means are available to the Department to use the allocation of overseas aid to create incentives for the Ethiopian Government to improve the political situation in that country. [45086]

Hilary Benn: HMG had previously agreed to provide direct budget support to Ethiopia. The terms of that agreement included mutual commitments, including commitments to the principles of good governance and democracy. In my view, recent political events amount to a breach of trust, and so I have decided that, in the current circumstances, DFID will not provide budget support but will seek to find other means to support the poorest in Ethiopia. I have emphasised to Prime Minister Meles that the only way to resolve the current political crisis is through inclusive political dialogue and the continuation of the democratisation process which we are ready to support. Our future assistance to Ethiopia will be designed with increased monitoring and accountability so we can be sure that the aid reaches the poor people who need it.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he next expects to visit Ethiopia. [43822]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Banbury to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott), on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1740W.

Pakistan (Earthquake Zone)

13. **Mr. Khan:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how his Department is assisting the Pakistani authorities to cope with winter conditions in the earthquake zone; and if he will make a statement. [45087]

Hilary Benn: DFID is continuing to support helicopter provision throughout winter through support to the UN Humanitarian Air Service.

DFID is airlifting further urgently needed items including 176,000 blankets, 125,000 16.6 metre ropes and 125,000 plastic sheets to reinforce tents that are not winterised. DFID is also delivering an additional 3,500 winterised tents.

DFID funded Royal Engineers are providing emergency shelter building operations in remote high-altitude areas in the Bagh region.

DFID continues to channel support through UN agencies and non-governmental organisations to ensure the provision of relief assistance throughout winter, including support to camp management, shelter, health, water and sanitation.

Aid Conditionality

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what written correspondence he has had with the *(a)* World Bank, *(b)* International

Monetary Fund, *(c)* European Commission and *(d)* other G8 members on aid conditionality since March 2005. [44439]

Hilary Benn: Conditionality is an issue on which I and my officials are in ongoing discussions with a variety of partners, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the EC and other G8 countries. I wrote to the World Bank president in August 2005 regarding the UK's position on the World Bank's Review of Conditionality, this statement is available on the DFID website. DFID officials are engaging with the current evaluation and review of IMF policy conditions by the Independent Evaluation Office, and also meet regularly with the EC. During 2005 there was much written correspondence between senior DFID officials and G8 countries, including on conditionality.

Debt Relief

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much annual additional debt relief has been awarded to each of the 19 beneficiary countries as a result of the implementation by the International Monetary Fund of the decision taken at Gleneagles. [45019]

Hilary Benn: In response to the G8's proposals, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved approximately £1.78 billion worth of debt relief to 19 countries under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). The following table provides estimates of this debt relief by country on an annual basis.

An additional 20 countries will qualify for IMF debt stock cancellation when they reach Completion Point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

Mauritania, which has already reached HIPC Completion Point, could also qualify for MDRI relief after certain remedial actions are taken.

£ million

Country	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*Total*
Benin	4.3	3.7	4.7	5.2	4.4	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.1	28.4
Bolivia	27.2	49.1	44.7	17.1	4.0	1.6	—	—	—	143.7
Burkina Faso	6.1	8.9	9.6	7.9	6.7	5.2	2.5	0.8	0.2	48.1
Cambodia	3.7	6.4	9.1	9.7	8.3	6.2	3.4	0.7	—	47.5
Ethiopia	4.6	6.6	10.4	11.9	15.5	15.2	8.9	5.2	2.5	80.7
Ghana	18.0	20.9	26.9	26.4	30.7	30.5	17.5	10.9	4.3	186.1
Guyana	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.9	4.1	2.9	2.9	2.0	1.0	27.2
Honduras	15.3	18.0	18.0	14.4	8.7	6.1	3.4	3.4	2.5	89.7
Madagascar	10.6	12.6	14.4	18.1	19.6	12.4	9.5	7.6	3.8	108.7
Mali	7.5	8.0	8.3	9.5	7.6	6.5	3.4	1.8	0.1	52.8
Mozambique	12.0	13.5	14.9	13.7	8.9	4.4	2.4	1.0	0.2	71.0
Nicaragua	6.6	8.7	10.0	11.9	12.6	9.3	9.2	6.9	3.4	78.6
Niger	4.7	6.3	7.8	9.2	9.8	8.4	6.3	3.2	0.7	56.4
Rwanda	8.8	10.3	9.4	7.5	5.1	2.0	0.4	0.2	0.1	43.9
Senegal	17.5	19.8	14.8	10.9	7.6	5.2	1.9	0.8	0.2	78.9
Tajikistan	8.9	8.9	8.7	5.7	7.0	5.9	5.9	4.5	2.4	57.9
Tanzania	34.0	32.9	29.8	26.2	22.1	15.4	8.8	3.9	0.7	173.7
Uganda	19.8	16.0	11.4	8.1	4.2	2.0	1.2	1.0	0.3	64.0
Zambia	10.3	23.7	40.3	46.2	65.4	59.7	45.1	27.3	20.3	338.3
Total	223.5	277.9	296.8	263.5	252.2	201.9	134.6	82.1	43.0	1,775.5

Note

The figures in the table are in United Kingdom Pounds (£). They have been converted from International Monetary Fund data which is given in Special Drawing Rights (SDR). The exchange rates used was 0.82, the mid-market rate as at 10:00 am on 24 January 2006.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what monitoring of the use of *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral aid to the Democratic Republic of the Congo is undertaken by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [44467]

Hilary Benn: Monitoring of the use of aid to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is conducted in accordance with standard DFID procedures that apply across all of the Department's programmes. For our bilateral aid, organisations implementing projects on behalf of DFID are required to submit regular, usually quarterly, financial and narrative reports on their activities. In addition, projects over £1 million require a full review to be undertaken by at least annually with recommendations for actions to maximise impact and a final completion report, including the lessons learned to inform future programming. Regular monitoring by DFID staff, who remain closely in touch with partner organisations throughout the duration of a project, is also an important part of the monitoring process.

All multilateral agencies have their own internal monitoring and evaluation systems and DFID's work on reforming of the international system has included helping to strengthen these systems to deliver results at a country level. An example is DFID's use of the Multilateral Effectiveness Framework to assess the performance of multilateral agencies and make recommendations for improvement. The UK has a seat on the board of multilateral organisations, and so is involved in multilateral decision making including the development and review of country strategies and programmes.

DFID also works jointly with multilateral agencies on many projects. DFID in the DRC works with multilateral agencies and other bilateral donors on justice, infrastructure, humanitarian, police, governance, HIV/AIDS and social sector projects. Working together in this way enables DFID to design, monitor and evaluate these programmes jointly with other donor organisations.

One of the most important ways in which we monitor multilateral agencies' work is through daily discussion, sharing information and ideas, between DFID staff in the DRC and partners in the European Commission, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations on both the development of their overall strategies for the DRC and the implementation of individual programmes.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41197]

Hilary Benn: Since the beginning of 2004, the Department for International Development (DFID) has spent £407,781 on external consultants, who had been previously employed by the Department within the previous five years.

Illiteracy (Africa)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to tackle adult illiteracy in Africa. [44184]

Hilary Benn: The recent Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring report 'Literacy for Life' highlights the problems many people face through lack of literacy skills in sub-Saharan Africa.

DFID plans to continue supporting the work of NGOs promoting literacy, such as Action Aid and GOAL. We welcome their focus on using literacy to empower women to play a key role in community affairs in addition to the education of their children.

DFID is supporting the UN Decade for Literacy and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) new Literacy for Empowerment (LIFE) programme, through the active participation of DFID specialists and core funding to UNESCO. We have also supported pioneer work by the University of South Africa (UNISA) in training adult educators working in a variety of development sectors. In Kenya, we are supporting research by UNESCO's Institute of Statistics as part of its 'Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme'.

Many countries in Africa are going through the second wave of the poverty reduction strategy (PRS) process. DFID considers this the major vehicle for encouraging African partner governments to invest more in adult literacy programmes through inter-disciplinary programmes.

Iraq

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the Iraqi population have had access to safe drinking water for each of the past four years. [44442]

Hilary Benn: The last reliable pre-conflict figures for safe water are for 2000, when urban and rural levels of access to safe water were estimated at 92 per cent. and 46 per cent. respectively. The discriminatory policies of the former regime meant access varied significantly by region and was generally worse in the south. Access to safe water deteriorated as a result of the conflict and post-war looting in 2003. The immediate post-conflict coverage was estimated at 60 percent. for urban and 30 per cent. for rural populations. Since then, donors, including DFID, have worked hard to restore supplies, and we estimate that 1.25 million more Iraqis have access to safe drinking water than before the conflict.

The best information we have on safe water supply in Iraq comes from the "Iraq living Conditions Survey 2004" conducted by the Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and Information Technology in April/May 2004. This survey can be found at http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm

In urban areas, 99 per cent. of households have access to safe drinking water but for 33 per cent. the supply is unreliable. In rural areas, 65 per cent. of households have access to safe drinking water, but for 22 per cent. the supply is unreliable.

In most cases, the main barrier to access to safe drinking water is the condition of the pipelines, rather than the water supply itself. This is partly due to the tendency for insurgents to target water, electricity and oil pipelines, as well as the reconstruction staff working to repair them.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the rate of unemployment has been in Iraq for each of the past four years. [44443]

Hilary Benn: No official figures on the Iraqi labour force exist, so only very broad estimates of unemployment are available, and we do not have information broken down by year exactly as requested. An International Labour Organisation (ILO) mission to Iraq in April/May 2000 estimated the unemployment rate as 50 to 60 per cent. The United Nations and World Bank social and economic needs assessments (carried out after the conflict in 2003) estimated that the unemployment rate before the 2003 war had been around 30 per cent.

Current estimates for unemployment vary considerably. The "Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004", conducted by the Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and Information Technology in April/May 2004, estimates an unemployment rate of 10.5 per cent. This survey can be found at http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm The Brookings Institution (Iraq Index, January 2006) estimates the current unemployment rate to be between 28 and 40 per cent., noting varying estimates from the Iraqi Ministry for Planning (30 per cent.) and the Iraqi Ministry for Social Affairs (48 per cent.). In the same report the Brookings Institution gives the following estimates of unemployment rates in previous months:

	Percentage
June 2003	50 to 60
January 2004	30 to 45
January 2005	27 to 40
December 2005	25 to 40

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the infant mortality rate has been in Iraq in each of the past four years. [44444]

Hilary Benn: Estimates of Iraq's infant mortality rate vary. The most detailed information we have on infant mortality rates in Iraq is the "Iraq living Conditions Survey 2004" (ILCS) conducted by the Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and Information Technology in April/May 2004. This survey can be found at http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm This gives information about infant mortality for the period 1999–2003. We do not have a breakdown of the data by year as requested.

For the period 1999–2003, the survey shows the infant mortality rate as 32 deaths per 1,000 births during the first year of life. The rate for girls was 29 per 1,000 for girls and 25 per 1,000 for boys. However, other estimates have reported significantly higher infant mortality rates, and the ILCS report acknowledges that their estimate may be too low because of under-reporting of child deaths.

A 2003 report by Ali, Blacker and Jones (respectively of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and UNICEF), reported the 1998 infant mortality rate as 100.8 deaths per 1,000 births. The UN Population Database (2004 revision) estimated Iraq's infant mortality rate as 94.3 deaths per 1,000 births for the period 1995–2000. They use the same estimate of 94.3 per 1,000 for the period 2000–2005.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the economic growth rate has been in Iraq in each of the past four years. [44445]

Hilary Benn: Under Saddam Hussein's regime between 2001 and 2003, the economy shrank at an average rate of 9 per cent. per annum. After the 2003 conflict the economy recovered, with an initial economic growth rate of 46 per cent. in 2004. In 2005, the Iraqi authorities were successful in promoting macroeconomic stability despite the extremely difficult security environment, and economic growth was a modest 2.6 per cent. These are estimates which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has accepted, but it acknowledges the data quality as poor. In 2006, the IMF predicts an increase in economic growth to 10 per cent., a reduction in inflation, and an increase in net international reserves, advancing Iraq's transition towards a market economy.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the life expectancy at birth has been in Iraq in each of the past four years. [44446]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not have a four year series of figures from the same source; using a variety of sources, the life expectancy at birth in Iraq is reported as follows:

	Average life expectancy at birth (years)		
	Males	*Females*	*Source*
1997	58	59	Iraqi Central Statistical Organisation (GSO)
2001	59.2	62.3	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
2003	50	61	World Health Organisation (WHO)

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the literacy rate has been in Iraq in each of the past four years. [44447]

Hilary Benn: The best information we have on literacy in Iraq is the "Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004" conducted by the Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and Information Technology in April/May 2004. This survey can be found at http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm.

This tells us that two thirds of the adult Iraqi population; 65 per cent. claim to read and write without difficulty, and an additional 10 per cent. can read and write everyday material with some difficulty. In the younger age groups (aged 15 to 24), literacy rates are slightly higher than for the population at large: 71 per cent. claim to read and write without difficulty. There are significant differences in literacy by region and gender. This compares with adult literacy rates of 86 per cent. in Jordan, 75 per cent. in Syria and 53 per cent. in Yemen.

Accurate figures for previous years are not readily available, since the last population survey took place in 1997.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the school enrolment rates have been in Iraq in each of the past five years for *(a)* girls and *(b)* boys, broken down by (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools. [44448]

Hilary Benn: The best information we have on school enrolment rates in Iraq is the "Iraq living Conditions Survey 2004" conducted by the Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and information technology in April/May 2004. This survey can be found at:

http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/overview.htm. It gives good information for 2004, but we do not have comparable data for the other years requested.

This survey tells us that in 2004, 79 per cent. of primary school age children were enrolled in school (83 per cent. for boys, 75 per cent. for girls). The net enrolment rate in intermediate school (lower secondary, covering ages 13–16) is 41 per cent. (47 per cent. for boys and 36 per cent. for girls). In secondary school (upper secondary, covering ages 16–18) the net enrolment rate is 36 per cent. (40 per cent. for boys, 32 per cent. for girls).

The Arab human development report (2003) estimates the primary school enrolment rate was 100 per cent. for boys and 85.66 per cent. for girls in 1999–2000. The secondary school enrolment rate was estimated at 39.6 per cent. for boys and 26.04 per cent for girls in the same period.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the rate of oil production has been in Iraq in each of the last four years. [44450]

Hilary Benn: Iraq reached its highest production levels; 3.5 million barrels per day (mbd)—just before its invasion of Kuwait in July 1990, before exports were halted by an international boycott. After the first Gulf War, oil production fell to about 500,000 barrels per day, enough for domestic consumption. (Figures taken

from the US Congressional Research Service's Report to Congress on Iraq Oil, April 2005.) When the United Nations Oil for Food Programme started in December 1996, oil exports increased, although export levels were sporadic as a result of various disagreements between Iraq, its customers and the United Nations. During 1999 to 2001, production averaged 2.49 mbd and in 2002 Iraq's crude oil production rate was an estimated 2.02 mbd (source: US Energy Information Administration). Since the Second Gulf War, output has varied considerably as security problems and sabotage have disrupted the flow of crude oil to terminals in Turkey and the Persian Gulf; however, prices have remained high.

With 115 billion barrels of proven crude oil reserves, Iraq has the world's second largest oil reserves, amounting to 11 per cent. of the global total (the largest is Saudi Arabia with 260 billion barrels). Only 17 of 80 oil fields have been developed; the most significant are Kirkuk in the north and Rumayla in the south.

The following table shows rates of oil production in Iraq from 2003–05.

	Millions of barrels/day	
Time	*Crude oil production*	*Crude oil export*
Estimated Prewar Level	2.5 (prewar peak)	1.7–2.5
May 2003	0.3	0
June	0.675	0.2
July	0.925	0.322
August	1.445	0.646
September	1.7225	0.983
October	2.055	1.149
November	2.1	1.524
December	2.30	1.541
January 2004	2.44	1.537
February	2.276	1.382
March	2.435	1.825
April	2.384	1.804
May	1.887	1.380
June	2.295	1.148
July	2.2	1.406
August	2.112	1.114
September	2.514	1.703
October	2.46	1.542
November	1.95	1.320
December	2.16	1.520
January 2005	2.10	1.367
February	2.10	1.431
March	2.09	1.394
April	2.14	1.398
May	2.1	1.308
June	2.17	1.377
July	2.17	1.550
August	2.16	1.504
September	2.11	1.609
October	1.91	1.239
November	1.98	1.168
December	1.92	1.071

The following table shows actual oil revenues from these exports:

Time	*Oil revenue ($ billion)*
June 2003	0.2
July	0.36
August	0.44
September	0.73
October	0.89
November	1.21
December	1.26
Total 2003	5.09
January 2004	1.26
February	1.10
March	1.61
April	1.50
May	1.36
June	1.28
July	1.40
August	1.24
September	1.75
October	1.99
November	1.25
December	1.44
Total 2004	17.18
January 2005	1.49
February	1.34
March	1.99
April	1.83
May	1.57
June	2.03
July	2.47
August	2.63
September	2.74
October	1.89
November	1.34
December	1.36
Total 2005	22.68
Total as of 4 January 2006	44.95

Source:
Brookings Institution, Iraq Index (January 2006)

Somalia

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial assistance his Department is giving to Somalia in the financial year 2005–06; and if he will make a statement on his Department's programme for Somalia. [44133]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme for Somalia amounts to approximately £12 million for the financial year of 2005–06 and is set to increase to around £21 million by 2007–08. We also expect to provide an additional £1.2 million to Somalia from HMG's Africa conflict prevention pool this financial year. Our programme is based on our commitment to reducing poverty by supporting peace and reconciliation in Somalia, contributing to humanitarian needs, improving governance, and expanding health and education services.

DFID has contributed to the new government's relocation costs, and are providing police advice, and support in economic analysis. With other donors, we are assisting planning for recovery, reconstruction and development through the UN/World Bank-led joint needs assessment. Access to basic services remains a major challenge. DFID is funding the publication of primary school text books and our humanitarian programme supports basic health care, supplementary feeding and basic livelihoods recovery. DFID is also funding HIV/AIDS prevention which complements the global fund support.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total UK aid to Somalia granted *(a)* directly and *(b)* through multilateral sources was in each of the last five years; and what major projects have been funded. [44583]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme for Somalia amounts to approximately £12 million in the financial year of 2005–06 and is set to increase to around £21 million by 2007–08. We also expect to provide an additional £1.2 million to Somalia from HMG's Africa conflict prevention pool this financial year. Our programme is based on our commitment to reducing poverty by supporting peace and reconciliation in Somalia, contributing to humanitarian needs, improving governance, and expanding health and education services.

DFID has contributed to the new government's relocation costs, and is providing police advice, and support in economic analysis. With other donors, DFID is assisting planning for recovery, reconstruction and development through the UN/World Bank-led joint needs assessment. Access to basic services remains a major challenge. We are funding the publication of primary school text books and our humanitarian programme supports basic health care, supplementary feeding and basic livelihoods recovery. DFID is also funding HIV/AIDS prevention which complements the global fund support.

In the following table are details of the UK's aid programme to Somalia for the last five financial years up to the end of financial year 2004–05 and a breakdown of the UK's share of multilateral expenditure for the five calendar years up to 2003 (the latest periods for which figures are available).

Total DFID and gross public expenditure to Somalia: 2000–01–2004–05

	£000
2000–01	1480
2001–02	1739
2002–03	3124
2003–04	3973
2004–05	5320

Total imputed multilateral shares to Somalia

	EC	Other	UN	World Bank	£ million Grand total
1999	1.6	0.0	0.8	0.0	2.4
2000	3.5	0.0	1.0	0.0	4.5
2001	2.9	0.0	0.9	0.0	3.8
2002	1.9	0.0	0.9	0.0	2.8
2003	2.8	0.0	0.8	0.0	3.6

Source:
Statistics on International Development and SRSG database date 19 January 2006

Somaliland

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the bilateral demining project in Somaliland in 2004–05. [44134]

Hilary Benn: DFID is funding HALO Trust in Somaliland at present to undertake demining and clearance of unexploded ordnance (UXO). £244,000 was provided in 2004–05 and further support of £141,000 is committed for 2005–06. DFID is presently reviewing HALO Trust's latest report of its work.

DFID's explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and demining advisor visited Somaliland in 2003 to review mine action with the Somaliland authorities, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), HALO Trust and other relevant agencies. Although our adviser has not visited the area since then, he is in regular contact with the UNDP about mine action issues in the country.

As Somaliland is severely affected by the aftermath of conflict, we continue to take an interest in mine action and UXO clearance and keep the situation under review.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether he plans to establish an office of his Department in Somaliland; and if he will make a statement. [44135]

Hilary Benn: I do not have any plans to establish an office in Somaliland. Our programme continues to be run from DFID's offices in London and in Nairobi.

Women's Rights

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had on the promotion of women's rights in developing countries. [44212]

Mr. Thomas: Eliminating gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment are essential to the achievement of all the millennium development goals (MDGs), not just MDG3 which focuses on women. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development and I are regularly involved in discussions both internally and with external contacts on issues relevant to women's rights and empowerment. For example, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State raised issues relating to social exclusion and women's rights in a high-level panel discussion during the millennium review summit in September and subsequently discussed the issue of gender equality in education when he gave evidence to the International Development Committee at their session on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank meetings and the summit in October.

At a country level, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State had the opportunity to raise these issues during his visit to Bangladesh in December, where our strategy focuses on women and children. The Beijing high level group/education fast track initiative meeting which I attended in China on 1 December, also provided the opportunity to discuss the importance of girls' education, and to highlight the links between girls'

education and reducing HIV infection. As part of our work on HIV and AIDS, we emphasise the unequal impact on women and their greater vulnerability, and on the occasion of world AIDS day, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State launched the progressive EU statement on prevention that emphasises women's rights.

Issues of gender equality and the impact of development programmes on women are considered in preparation of DFID country assistance plans, and over the next year, we will be looking to see how we can strengthen this process given the increased emphasis in our development assistance on direct budgetary support. We recognise that no serious strategy for achieving the millennium development goals can fail to address gender inequality and women's empowerment as a central concern, and we are working to ensure that gender issues are made a priority across our work.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he last discussed with African heads of government the assistance required to promote constitutional government in Zimbabwe. [45085]

Hilary Benn: It is encouraging that the African Commission on human and peoples' rights, at its recent meeting in Banjul, The Gambia, issued a report which clearly condemned the human rights violations currently being perpetrated in Zimbabwe. This reflects the wide interest in Zimbabwe across Africa, and the growing impatience of its leaders with the poor governance under Robert Mugabe. I meet African leaders in my frequent travels to Africa (most recently to Kenya and Ethiopia), at international meetings and in the UK. Zimbabwe is frequently among the topics discussed.

PRIME MINISTER

Iran (Nuclear Programme)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on Iran's nuclear programme. [44628]

The Prime Minister: I last met the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon on 22 December 2004 during my trip to the Middle East. We discussed a wide range of issues, including Iran's nuclear programme.

Iraq

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister what reports he has received of countries which apply rules of extra-territoriality in judicial matters that they are reviewing his role in Iraq with a view to future prosecution. [43418]

The Prime Minister: I have received no such reports.

Orams Case (Cyprus)

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received from foreign governments on the involvement of his wife as counsel in the Orams case in Cyprus; whether he has discussed the matter with the Foreign Secretary; and if he will make a statement. [43425]

The Prime Minister: Mrs. Blair is acting in a private capacity.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Comptroller and Auditor General Report

Mr. Newmark: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, when the Speaker's Committee will publish the Comptroller and Auditor General's statutory value for money report on the Electoral Commission for 2003–04. [46458]

Peter Viggers: At its meeting on 13 December 2005, the Speaker's Committee agreed to publish this report, which deals with the Commission's expenditure on training electoral staff for the European Parliamentary Elections held in June 2004, as an Appendix to its Third Report 2005. This report was laid before the House on 20 December 2005 as House of Commons Paper No 783. Copies have been placed in the Library and are available in the Vote Office.

WALES

List 99

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the operation of List 99 in schools in Wales; and what the date was of the last such discussions. [45411]

Mr. Hain: The Department for Education and Skills is responsible for barring and restricting teachers in both England and Wales.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills briefed me and other Cabinet colleagues on issues arising from the operation of List 99 shortly before her statement to the House on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 966–70. I, as the rest of Government, wholeheartedly support her in the actions she described to tighten the vetting and barring system.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has made to the Home Secretary concerning the implementation of the National Offender Management Service in Wales; and when those representations were made. [45410]

Mr. Hain: I have regular discussions with my right hon. Friend about matters concerning Wales. My right hon. Friend has also discussed the implementation of the National Offender Management Service in Wales with the Assembly Government's Minister for Social Justice.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Administrative Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total administration costs for her core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39841]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows.

(a) The total (net) administration budget for the core departments of Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) as per audited Resource Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2005 was £915 million, ie:

	£ million
DCA Headquarters and Associated Offices	352
Court Service (CS)	547
Public Guardian Office (PGO)	16

(b) For the purposes of 'Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005' (PESA) published as National Statistics annually by the HM Treasury, the administration budget of DCA HQ and Associated Offices (£352 million) and PGO (£16 million), totalling £370 million were regarded as identifiable. While the CS spending on 'collective services' was regarded as non-identifiable, ie:

	£ million
Identifiable costs	370
Non-identifiable	547

The administration expenditure reflects the costs of running the Department. Net administration budget includes administrative staff salaries, accommodation charges, depreciation and associated operating income.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the administrative costs were of each agency for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39859]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows.

(a) The total (net) administration budget for each of the two Executive agencies of Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) for which she has responsibility as per audited Resource Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2005 were:

	£ million
Court Service	547
Public Guardian Office	16

(b) For the purposes of 'Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005' (PESA) published as National Statistics annually by the HM Treasury, the administration budget of the Public Guardian Office was regarded as identifiable and the Court Service spending on collective services as non-identifiable respectively.

The administration expenditure reflects the costs of running the Department. Net administration costs include administrative staff salaries, accommodation charges, depreciation and associated operating income.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40054]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows.

(a) The DCA has two NDPBs, Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the Information Commissioner's (IC). In accordance with Government Accounting guidelines, these bodies are classified as outside the administration budget regime.

(b) For the purposes of 'Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005', PES (2004) 20 (Annex D (Classification of Spending as 'Identifiable' or 'Non-identifiable')), the LSC spending and IC spending were regarded as identifiable and non-identifiable respectively.

Data-Sharing

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the documents her Department has published on data-sharing between public sector organisations since 2001. [43539]

Ms Harman: In November 2003 DCA published authoritative legal guidance on data-sharing called "Public Sector Data Sharing Guidance on the Law". A public sector toolkit on data-sharing has also been published by DCA. The public service guarantee was published in October 2004. These documents can be found at:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/foi/sharing/index.htm

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones her Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41261]

Ms Harman: Details of the number of laptops bought by my Department since 1999, and their cost, are listed in the following table. We do not hold information for the earlier years.

	Number	*Cost (£)*
1999	399	438,900
2000	383	494,623
2601	239	311,520
2002	131	183,205
2003	382	507,293
2004	190	233,598
2005	2,926	3,475,150

The Department's mobile phones are provided through the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) contracts with Vodafone and Orange. The contracts provide a package of services including a phone, SIM card and network access. The package also provides the purchaser with a £50 credit, which is designed to cover either the cost of the phone or as an airtime credit. It is therefore not possible to separately identify the cost of a phone.

Any purchases made solely for a phone, outside of these contracts, would have been placed locally, for which records are not held centrally. That information could only now be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff (Disciplinary Actions)

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in her Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43500]

Ms Harman: My Department has a conduct policy and supporting procedures which have been brought to the attention of all staff via the departmental intranet, internal publications and induction and management training. There is a range of sanctions which can be applied in cases of misconduct, up to and including dismissal. Dismissal might be justified for instances of gross misconduct for a first offence or for repeated instances of serious or minor misconduct.

Data for the number of employees against whom disciplinary action has been commenced, or in respect of whom disciplinary sanctions, short of dismissal, have been applied is only recorded on individual files. These are retained for the appropriate period before removal and destruction in compliance with the Department's obligations under the Data Protection Act. It is therefore not possible to obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs. The number of employees who have been dismissed on disciplinary grounds in the past five financial years is as follows:

	Number
2000-01	14
2001-02	13
2002-03	27
2003-04	30
2004-05	43

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much her Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41202]

Ms Harman: Although there have been instances in which former civil servants have been re-employed directly by the Department, no information is held centrally about any who may have been engaged as external consultants – either directly or via independent consulting firms and could only be obtained at disproportionate .

Fixed Penalty Notices (Postal Codes)

Joan Walley: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which postal code areas are dealt with by the Central Finance Unit at Rugeley in respect of fixed penalty notices. [45039]

Ms Harman: The Central Finance and Enforcement Unit at Rugeley serves all postal code areas within Staffordshire. The postal code areas are:-

B77, B78, B79,

DE13, DE14, DE15,

DY7,

ST1 ,ST2, ST3, ST4, ST5, ST6, ST7, ST8,

ST10, ST11, ST12, ST13, ST14, ST15, ST16, ST17, ST18,

ST19,ST20,ST21,

WS3, WS6, WS7,

WS11, WS12, WS13, WS14, WS15, WS19,

WV4, WV5, WV6, WV8, WV9, WV18.

Freedom of Information

Peter Law: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 during its first year in force; and what estimate she has made of the cost of its implementation to *(a)* central Government and its agencies and *(b)* local government. [41489]

Ms Harman: I am confident that the Freedom of Information Act is working and working well. It is estimated that in the first year of its operation, major central Government bodies alone received approximately 36,000 FOI requests. In the third quarter of 2005, for those bodies whose performance is monitored by DCA, 67 per

cent. of resolvable requests resulted in the full disclosure of information. For local government and the wider public sector, anecdotal evidence also suggests that there has been a large number of valuable releases of information on issues that matter to the public.

My Department has made no estimate to date of the cost of the implementation of FOI to either (1) central Government or its agencies, or (2) local government.

Legal Aid

Mr. Bone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the change in criminal legal aid rates has been over the last 10 years. [45426]

Bridget Prentice: There are different rates prescribed for the many separate schemes across a variety of services provided within the criminal defence service (CDS). The changes to the prescribed basic legal aid rates for work in the criminal courts are set in the following table.

Defence legal aid rates Changes to the prescribed rates: Magistrates court proceedings, Crown court and Court of Appeal (Criminal) Proceedings

1995	Solicitors' rates and counsels' Crown court standard fee rates increased by 2 percent.
1996	Solicitors' rates and junior barristers' rates increased by 1.5 percent.
1997	Nil uprating.
1998	Nil uprating.
1999	Nil uprating.
2000	Nil uprating.
2001	Magistrates court—General Criminal Contract launched with an overall effect of an overall increase of 7.25 percent., though the increase in rates varied between classes of work. Criminal higher courts—Remuneration changes in October with the introduction of a common graduated fee scheme by the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the Crown Prosecution Service for advocates in all trials lasting up to 25 days in the Crown court. The effect of those changes was to raise total remuneration for one to 10 day cases by about £3.2 million and to leave the level of remuneration for 11 to 25 day cases broadly the same. These changes also included changes in the graduated fee scheme to allow for some payment for conferences and the attendance fee for plea and directions hearings was increased from £75 to £100.
2002	Contract mileage rate under the General Criminal Contract increased to 45p Nil remuneration uprating.
2003	Nil uprating.
2004	February—telephone fixed fee implemented for police station advice and assistance. £30.25 national £31.45 London. October—Duty Solicitor. Serious offences rate introduced for police station advice and attendance at £80 per unsocial hour and £60 per hour at other times. Overall impact to introduce £3 million new money. Criminal courts—Remuneration changes in August to the Very High Cost Criminal case contract rates and Criminal Graduated Fee schemes. The effects of the changes were: to reduce bureaucracy for the Bar by taking some 50 percent., of VHCC cases into an extended graduated fee scheme, which now covers cases up to 40 days; raising the graduated fee rates for 11 to 25 day cases to the level which was expected in 2001 when the scheme was introduced and carrying those rates through to the 40 day extension; all Category 4 VHCC cases will be paid at the same "rates as Category 3 VHCC cases; substantially increasing refreshers so that the same rate is now paid for Category 2 and 3 cases as for Category 1; moving terrorism cases into Category 1; moving under five-year advocate call rates to over five-year call rates. This settlement was a package to the Bar worth approximately £17 million. £11 million came from changes to the VHCCC scheme, and a further 6 million from the changes made to the 11 to 25 day graduated fee scheme where we made good the unintended shortfall that had occurred since the scheme was extended to 25 days on October 2001.
2005	October—Cuts in rates paid in some graduated fee and Very High Cost Criminal case contracts (to both advocate's and litigator's rates). Extension of the existing graduated fee scheme for cracks and guilty pleas. Estimated savings in RAB terms from these additional measures, excluding Cracks and Guilties, are £5.1 million and £20.8 million for 2005–06, 2006–07 respectively. The extension of the Cracks and Guilties schemes is anticipated to increase savings by an estimated total of £20 million over 2005–06 and 2006–07.

National Mediation Helpline

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the National Mediation Helpline. [41746]

Ms Harman: The National Mediation Helpline is a departmentally funded scheme that has been set up to help court users and the general public settle their disputes, and where appropriate refer the caller to a low cost mediation.

Since the Helpline started at the end of November 2004 it has received over 2,600 calls, and in the past five months, records show there have been over 6,000 visits to the supporting website (www.nationalmediationhelpline.com).

At the end of 2005, the Helpline had arranged 81 mediations with a total of 71 settling on the day or within 14 days of the mediation—a settlement rate of 87 per cent.

The Helpline is being piloted for a further year, and progress will be reviewed in autumn 2006.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases the Information Commissioner has considered in relation to the Valuation Office Agency since the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act; and what the ruling of the Commissioner was in each case. [42826]

Ms Harman: The Information Commissioner's Office has considered four complaints from individuals about the Valuation Office Agency and disclosures of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In two cases the complainants were advised, in accordance with the Act, that they needed to seek an internal review of their complaint by the Valuation Office Agency before the Commissioner would consider their complaints. In a third case, as the complainant did not provide enough information to allow the Commissioner to investigate, the case was closed with no action being taken.

In the final case the Information Commissioner did investigate and issued a Decision Notice in June 2005. The Commissioner decided that the agency had not

dealt with the complainant's request in accordance with the requirements of part 1 of the Act in that it failed to comply with s1(1) or s17 within the time limit set out in s10(1). The complainant was provided with the information he requested.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Aliens (Removal)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many aliens facing removal are signing on regularly at his Department. [38499]

Mr. McNulty: We do not use such an offensive term as "aliens". For the purpose of this question, "aliens in the country who are removable" is taken to mean failed asylum seekers and other immigration offenders who have no legal basis upon which to remain in the UK. The information requested, on the number of people in the country illegally who are facing removal and are signing on regularly at this Department, is not available. This information could be obtained only by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Asylum Seekers

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received reports concerning the monitoring of returned asylum seekers to the Democratic Republic of Congo by state officials; and if he will make a statement. [44579]

Mr. McNulty: I am aware of allegations such as those raised in the BBC World Service Assignment programme on 16 November 2005 and a subsequent BBC article of one December 2005 that failed asylum seekers are subject to mistreatment on return.

Bicester Accommodation Centre

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what preparatory work his Department instructed GSL UK Ltd. to undertake on site A at Ministry of Defence Bicester as part of the project to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers. [43506]

Mr. McNulty: GSL were not instructed to carry out any preparatory work on site A. All site enabling works were carried out by contractors working for the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the contract between his Department and GSL UK Ltd. to build an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester. [43507]

Mr. McNulty: Arrangements are being made to place a copy in the Library following appropriate scrutiny and removal of sensitive matters.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department was of submitting detailed design plans for an accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester to the planning inquiry. [43514]

Mr. McNulty: None.

No planning inquiry was held to consider the reserved matters, and, thereby, the detailed designs.

Civil Service Relocation (Scotland)

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many departmental civil service jobs have been relocated to Scotland in each year since 2001. [32377]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* The existing Home Office personnel systems are designed to show moves of people not posts. The only information the Department holds is based on moves between buildings where 10 or more staff move on the same day, and all the relocations that can be identified are within the same city or area. Since 2001, there have been no such relocations of departmental civil service jobs to Scotland.

Criminal Records Bureau

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is a deadline by which police checks via the Criminal Records Bureau should be completed. [44920]

Andy Burnham: Section 119 of the Police Act, 1997, which underpins the CRB Disclosure service states that

> "where the chief officer of a police force receives a request under section 115 or 116 he shall comply with it as soon as practicable".

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed by his Department in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; and if he will make a statement. [35908]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number of staff employed in each area *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK, please see the table.

Core HO and IND

Country	*Regional*[1]	*Region*[1]
England	Croydon	6,478
	Dover	67
	East	428
	Gatwick	549
	Heathrow	1,854
	Liverpool	1,610
	London	5,478
	Midlands	484
	North East	2,033
	North West	658
	South East	1,491
	South West	40
	West	92
England total		21,262
Scotland total	Scotland	287
Wales total	Wales	101
Northern Ireland total	Northern Ireland	29
Other[2] total		391
All staff	Total	22,070

[1] Region as centrally recorded on personnel systems

[2] base location outside UK, or unrecorded, or withheld for reasons of security

HMPS

Region	*Full-time equivalent staff in post*
East Midlands	5,066
Eastern	4,224
London	5,607
North East	3,486
North West	5,875
South West	3,751
West Midlands	4,982
Yorkshire and Humberside	5,377
South East	7,777
England total	46,145
Wales	980
Scotland	0
Total	47,125

UKPA

Region	*Total staff*
Belfast	148
Glasgow	306
Scotland total	454
Durham	698
HQ	301
Liverpool	473
London	349
Newport	400
Peterborough	515
England total	2,736
Scotland total	3,251
Total	3,190

Entry Clearance

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many nationals of each country from which a visa is required applied for entry clearance to come to the United Kingdom in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004 for temporary purposes, including visitor and student applications; how many visas were issued for temporary purposes; how many recipients of these visas returned to their country of nationality before the visas expired; and how many applied (i) to remain permanently in the United Kingdom and (ii) for political asylum. [31381]

Mr. McNulty: Entry clearance data are available by visa post of application, which is not necessarily the country of the applicant's nationality. Financial year data on applications and issues are published annually. Copies of the publication are available from the UK Visas website at http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1006977150151 Statistics on grants of settlement (indefinite leave to enter and remain) by main nationality are published annually in the Command Paper 'Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom'. Information on asylum applications, initial decisions, appeals and removals are published quarterly and annually.

Information for 2003 and 2004 is published in the annual bulletin 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2004', and the aforementioned mentioned Command Paper. Copies of these publications are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1254W, on equality and diversity, what definition of inappropriate behaviour was used; what testing was undertaken; and what conclusions were drawn in relation to the Home Office 2005 senior management promotion exercises. [28315]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Inappropriate behaviour was considered in terms of two skills from the Home Office Core Competency Framework—Promotes Equal Opportunity and Develops Good Working Relationships. Though these are defined positively in terms of treating people fairly and developing effective working relationships with others, both may be demonstrated in a range of inappropriate ways.

A range of exercises was designed to enable candidates to present evidence of their understanding of appropriate and inappropriate ways of handling different kinds of diversity-related situations. Candidates were tested through:

Written In-tray exercise

This is a management problem solving scenario which includes the assessment of Develops Good Working Relationships.

Interview

Candidates were presented with two short realistic diversity-related situations followed by questions on how they would deal with the situation (and why), assessing the skill Promotes Equal Opportunity.

Video Incident Exercise

Candidates were presented with two short video clips of diversity related situations to assess Promotes Equal Opportunity and Develops Good Working Relationships.

As with the Interview, candidates were asked questions to test their insight into the scenario and appropriateness of their responses. The 2005 Grade 7 Assessment Centre has not yet finished and no conclusions have yet been drawn.

Home Detention Curfews

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2031W, on home detention curfews, how many of those offenders on home detention curfews that were recalled to custody were recalled for committing a criminal offence in each year since 1999. [42188]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Immigration Act

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those detained under Immigration Act powers have been in detention for *(a)* less than one month, *(b)* over one month but less than three months and *(c)* over three months. [39521]

Mr. McNulty: Quarterly snapshots are published showing the number of people detained under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter and these can be broken down by length of detention. Information on the number of persons

detained, as at 24 September 2005, broken down by length of detention, are published in the Quarterly Asylum Bulletin, on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at:
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Parliamentary Questions

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to questions *(a)* 20379, *(b)* 20380 and *(c)* 20381 tabled by the hon. Member for Thurrock on 18 October. [39874]

Hazel Blears: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 345W.

Prisons

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prisoners entering adult prisons and *(b)* under 21-year-olds entering young offenders institutions on their first custodial sentence could not read or write to a sufficiently high standard to apply for a job via a job centre (i) at the beginning and (ii) at the end of their sentence in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [43579]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

We do not collate the information requested centrally, however Home Office statistics show that 37 per cent. of prisoners have reading skills below level 1. (Prison Statistics for England and Wales 2002).

As a result of learning and skills provision in prisons, the number of basic skills awards achieved by offenders in custody exceeded 63,000 in 2004–05 and the National Probation Directorate exceeded its annual target for basic skills awards with nearly 9,500 awards achieved by offenders in the community.

The Green Paper, "Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment" (Cm 6702) launched by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on 15 December, set out the Government's strategy to improve the skills and job prospects of all offenders, so that more offenders secure employment in order to reduce re-offending.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to improve the quality of management and leadership in the Prison Service; and if he will make a statement. [44359]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service is about to start developing a new qualifications framework which will provide pre-promotion development for managers at all levels. It is anticipated that implementation will start in 2007.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were assessed as having a serious drug problem in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44371]

Fiona Mactaggart: In 2004–05, 59,025 initial assessments were completed by prison CARATs (counselling, assessment, referral, advice and through-care services) teams. Research showed that on average 74 per cent. of those assessed by CARATs took two or more different drugs in the month before custody, with 39 per cent. taking both heroine and crack cocaine in this period.

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation hostels there are; and what the capacity is of each. [44300]

Fiona Mactaggart: The number of bed spaces in the 101 Approved Premises in England and Wales, as of 30 April 2005, are in the table. In addition, three Prospects projects have now opened providing an additional 32 beds, 24 of these are in the South West Region and eight in the North West. These are pilot projects providing specialist services for residents with a history of offending linked to drug misuse. These bring the current number of Approved Premises in England and Wales to 104.

Region	*Number of male bed spaces*	*Number of female bed spaces*	*Total*
East Midlands	147	14	161
East of England	146	12	158
Yorkshire and Humberside	314	29	343
North West	342	40	382
London	278	18	296
West Midlands	230	26	256
South West	171	9	180
South East	203	28	231
North East	125	6	131
Wales	88	9	97
Total	2,044	191	2,235

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect on the work of the Probation Service of transfers of prisoners between establishments; and if he will make a statement. [44336]

Fiona Mactaggart: An initial evaluation of the Offender Management Pathfinder project in the North West of England, published last summer, identified the transfer of prisoners as one of the challenges to implementing effective offender management. The report is available on the Home Office website as Home Office Online Report 32/05. The Prison Service aims to keep the transfer of prisoners to a minimum subject to operational priorities and circumstances.

Respect Action Plan

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was of the production of the 'Respect Action Plan' document; and how many copies have been printed. [42649]

Hazel Blears: The total costs for publishing the Respect Action Plan including editing proof reading, Type setting and Translating into Welsh was £101,000. In total 105,000 copies were printed.

Sexual Assault

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to enable sexual assault referral centres to develop the use of forensic nurses to undertake examinations of service users reporting rape or sexual assault. [43091]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office funded an independent evaluation of the forensic nurse examiner role at St. Mary's SARC in Manchester, published in 2004. We have since supported the development of a national training course for sexual assault forensic nurse examiners, the start-up costs for which have been funded by the Department of Health. This year the Home Office has also made a grant to the SAFE Centre, Lancashire, to fund a forensic nurse examiner post.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females aged (i) 17 to 24, (ii) 25 to 30, (iii) 31 to 35, (iv) 36 to 40 and (v) over 40 years were (A) charged with and (B) convicted of (1) failing to comply with a road sign, (2) offences under sections (x) 14(3), *(y)* 15(2) and *(z)* 15(4) of the Road Traffic Act 1988, (3) failing to provide a breath specimen for analysis, (4) failing to stop for a police constable and (5) disobeying a police constable stopping traffic in (aa) Essex police area and (bb) Southend police area in 2004; [39658]

(2) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females committed offences in England and Wales under sections (i) 14(3), (ii) 15(2) and (iii) 15(4) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in 2004. [39659]

Paul Goggins: Statistics on persons charged with a crime are not centrally collected. Available data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for Essex police force area, South East Essex petty sessional area and England and Wales, 2004 is contained in the tables. It is not possible to identify Southend police area as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Paul Goggins: Statistics on persons charged with a crime are not centrally collected. Available data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for Essex police force area, South East Essex petty sessional area and England and Wales, 2004 is contained in the following tables. It is not possible to identify Southend police area as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Number of offenders found guilty of certain motoring offences in South East Essex petty sessional area and Essex police force area, 2004[1]

			Male				
	Offence description	*Principal statute*	*17 to 24 years*	*25 to 30 years*	*31 to 35 years*	*36 to 40 years*	*over 40 years*
	South East Essex petty sessional area						
818/01&11	Fail to comply with traffic light signals/ sign	Road Traffic Ac 1988 S.36(1); Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1 994 S.2(10)	5	4	7	2	5
818/02	Driving on prohibited road	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 SS.5(i), 16 and 20	—	—	—	—	—
818/90	Other offences of neglect of traffic directions	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.35(1)&(2), 36(1), 163(3); Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.28(3); Traffic Management Act 2004 S.6	48	43	28	25	93
825/02	Driving riding in motor vehicle not wearing seat belt; Driving motor vehicle with child not wearing seat belt	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.14(3), 15(2)&(4)	1	4	1		1
803/03	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	11	10	7	5	12
803/06	In charge of a motor vehicle and failing to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	—	—	1	1	2
803/07	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for preliminary test	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.6(4)	1	—	—	—	1

			Female				
	Offence description	*Principal statute*	*17 to 24 years*	*25 to 30 years*	*31 to 35 years*	*36 to 40 years*	*over 40 years*
	South East Essex petty sessional area						
818/01&11	Fail to comply with traffic light signals/ sign	Road Traffic Ac 1988 S.36(1); Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1 994 S.2(10)	—	1	—	2	2
818/02	Driving on prohibited road	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 SS.5(i), 16 and 20	—	—	—	—	—
818/90	Other offences of neglect of traffic directions	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.35(1)&(2), 36(1), 163(3); Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.28(3); Traffic Management Act 2004 S.6	12	19	9	11	40
825/02	Driving riding in motor vehicle not wearing seat belt; Driving motor vehicle with child not wearing seat belt	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.14(3), 15(2)&(4)	1	1	—	—	1

	Offence description	Principal statute	Female 17 to 24 years	25 to 30 years	31 to 35 years	36 to 40 years	over 40 years
803/03	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	1	2	–	1	
803/06	In charge of a motor vehicle and failing to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	–	–	–	1	
803/07	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for preliminary test	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.6(4)					

	Offence description	Principal statute	Male 17 to 24 years	25 to 30 years	31 to 35 years	36 to 40 years	over 40 years
	Essex police force area						
818/01&11	Fail to comply with traffic light signals/ sign	Road Traffic Ac 1988 S.36(1); Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1 994 S.2(10)	11	18	15	12	32
818/02	Driving on prohibited road	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 SS.5(i), 16 and 20	1				
818/90	Other offences of neglect of traffic directions	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.35(1)&(2), 36(1), 163(3); Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.28(3); Traffic Management Act 2004 S.6	145	149	106	105	386
825/02	Driving/riding in motor vehicle not wearing seat belt; Driving motor vehicle with child not wearing seat belt	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.14(3), 15(2)&(4)	6	7	2	3	8
803/03	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	44	57	38	35	59
803/06	In charge of a motor vehicle and failing to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)			1	1	2
803/07	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for preliminary test	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.6(4)	1	3	1		4

	Offence description	Principal statute	Female 17 to 24 years	25 to 30 years	31 to 35 years	36 to 40 years	over 40 years
	Essex police force area						
818/01&11	Fail to comply with traffic light signals/ sign	Road Traffic Ac 1988 S.36(1); Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1 994 S.2(10)	3	4	2	6	11
818/02	Driving on prohibited road	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 SS.5(i), 16 and 20					
818/90	Other offences of neglect of traffic directions	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.35(1)&(2), 36(1), 163(3); Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.28(3); Traffic Management Act 2004 S.6	53	55	54	47	179
825/02	Driving/riding in motor vehicle not wearing seat belt; Driving motor vehicle with child not wearing seat belt	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.14(3), 15(2)&(4)	1	1		4	4
803/03	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)	6	7	7	6	15
803/06	In charge of a motor vehicle and failing to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath if at the relevant time driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7(6)				1	
803/07	Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for preliminary test	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.6(4)					

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Visas

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications made in the United Kingdom for a spouse visa submitted prior to the introduction of the no switching rule remain to be dealt with; and when he expects that all such applicants will have heard the result of their applications. [43335]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The no switching rule for leave to remain as a spouse came into force on 1 April 2003. This date precedes accurate data from the current casework database, and statistics are therefore not entirely reliable. Provisional management information suggests that about 70 spouse applications in General Group have been outstanding from before 1 April 2003. It is not known how many of these cases might be switching applications.

Workers' Registration Scheme

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from the new accession states registered on the Worker Registration Scheme are resident in Birmingham. [42845]

Mr. McNulty: The Accession Monitoring Report, published on a quarterly basis, provides detailed statistical data on Accession state nationals who have registered on the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS).

However, apart from London, the report does not contain data relating to individual towns or cities. For reference, the latest version of the report is available on the Home Office website via:http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/0/reports/accession_monitoring.html. The following figures have therefore been obtained from local management information using the WRS database.

They have not been provided under National Statistics protocols and are therefore provisional and subject to change. The information covers the period one May 2004 to 30 September 2005, which corresponds with the period covered by the latest Accession Monitoring Report. The Birmingham postal area covers a large part of the West Midlands. Therefore the figures have been broken down into two parts (i) City of Birmingham covered by the area postcodes B1—B5 inclusive; (ii) Birmingham area postcodes (codes starting with "B") within the West Midlands (excluding those in Hereford and Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire). The number of accession state nationals who registered with the scheme and gave an address in these respective areas during the period one May 2004—30 September 2005 is as follows: (i) Birmingham (city)—1,225 (ii) Birmingham (area)—1,335 (excluding those in the Birmingham city area).

This gives a total of 2,560 within the geographical area referred to. The figures show those applicants who have registered on the Scheme since one May 2004. The figures are not current; an individual who has registered to work and who leaves employment is not required to de-register, so some of those counted will have left the employment for which they have registered and some are likely to have left the UK. Thus the number currently residing in Birmingham or the West Midlands is unknown.

Young Offenders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the population of each young offender institution was in each of the last eight years. [42051]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is provided in the following table. Information for prison establishments is as recorded on the Prison Service IT system.

Populations of Young Offender and Juvenile Institutions at 30 June, 1998 to 2005

Young Offender Institution	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Ashfield[1]	—	359	177	292	291	266	310	310
Aylesbury	300	250	349	355	351	346	360	425
Brinsford[1]	296	7	270	291	277	273	250	283
Brockhill[1]	—	68	12	16	26	16	3	8
Bullwood Hall[1]	79	208	71	102	146	129	125	114
Castington[1]	319	—	138	233	196	160	253	246
Chelmsford[1]	—	—	—	81	73	77	32	27
Cookham Wood[1]	—	—	—	—	—	28	17	6
Deerbolt	420	436	464	382	478	426	466	434
Dover	316	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Drake Hall[1]	17	265	310	186	41	32	29	15
East Sutton Park[1]	6	12	15	30	5	3	4	2
Eastwood Park[1]	—	1	5	5	35	28	25	7
Elmley[1]	—	—	37	29	7	7	14	4
Feltham[1]	478	421	333	378	479	474	373	360
Forest Bank[1]	—	—	121	118	127	145	—	—
Glen Parva[1]	478	509	481	538	557	574	514	563
Guys Marsh[1]	126	135	133	134	135	131	138	69
Hatfield[1]	152	113	115	116	111	—	—	—
Highdown[1]	—	—	—	—	4	8	2	8
Hindley[1]	—	—	—	486	516	527	476	403
Hollesley Bay[1]	217	209	194	231	237	22	16	19
Holloway[1]	—	38	40	14	33	14	27	52
Huntercombe	359	297	339	315	346	265	346	340
Lancaster Farms[1]	300	71	304	363	370	327	386	444
Moorland Open[1]	—	—	—	—	—	113	59	61
Moorland[1]	378	396	390	390	392	398	361	355
New Hall[1]	76	110	94	109	96	84	87	77

Populations of Young Offender and Juvenile Institutions at 30 June, 1998 to 2005

Young Offender Institution	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Northallerton	—	5	54	50	194	209	222	196
Norwich[1]	—	77	109	127	119	119	119	127
Onley[1]	602	582	488	591	504	543	222	170
Parc[1]	114	15	1	1	16	225	197	182
Portland[1]	568	559	523	509	450	433	462	392
Reading[1]	17	14	19	19	20	16	15	17
Rochester	—	—	—	—	169	164	304	391
Stoke Heath[1]	591	607	511	531	652	611	648	624
Styal[1]	42	68	77	64	78	27	14	30
Swinfen Hall[1]	302	277	301	307	306	312	357	343
Thorn Cross[1]	237	241	235	221	200	182	252	234
Usk/Prescoed[1]	23	16	17	17	9	10	0	—
Warren Hill[1]	—	—	—	—	—	190	215	211
Werrington	159	96	100	132	130	113	138	134
Wetherby[1]	305	349	4	345	333	329	286	342
All young offenders[2]	11,550	11,257	11,231	11,054	11,610	11,042	10,788	10,800

[1] Establishments with more than one unit
[2] Includes young offenders held within other prison establishments
Establishments listed above in this table are :
Male Young Offender Institutions, closed;
Male YOIs, open;
Female YOIs, closed;
Female YOIs, open;
Male Juvenile Institutions;
Female Juvenile Institutions

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of children and young people convicted of an offence have been subject to *(a)* an antisocial behaviour order, *(b)* a parenting order and *(c)* a parenting contract in each of the past two years. [42151]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data are not collected in the form requested.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which part or agency of his Department is responsible for supervising young offenders under the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme; and how much the programme has cost in each year since it was introduced for each local authority area. [43119]

Fiona Mactaggart: Through individual schemes attached to youth offending teams, the Youth Justice Board is responsible for funding the supervision of young offenders under the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme. The cost of each scheme is only available from April 2003 onwards and is shown in the following table.

ISSP scheme	*2003-04*
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey	400,000
Bath, North East Somerset, North Somerset and Somerset	350,000
Bedfordshire, Luton	39,000
Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton	600,000
Birmingham	904,335
Blackpool, Blackburn, Darwen, Lancashire	943,396
Bournemouth and Poole, Dorset	89,700
Bracknell Forest, Reading and Wokingham, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead	350,000
Bradford	494,065
Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow	800,000
Brighton and Hove, East Sussex	84,500
Bristol	411,473
Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes	235,000
Calderdale and Kirklees	468,824
Cambridge	359,487
Camden, Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets	538,645
Carmarthenshire, Mid Wales , Pembrokeshire	92,605
Cheshire, Halton and Warrington	175,500
City of Stoke on Trent	285,258
Conwy/Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon	99,125
Cornwall	65,000
County Durham	300,000
Coventry and Solihull	288,194
Cumbria	130,000
Darlington, Hartlepool, South Tees and Stockton-on-Tees	1,188,293
Derby City, Derbyshire	206,700
Devon, Plymouth, Torbay	153,140
Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton	600,000
East Riding of Yorkshire	39,000
Essex	178,750
Flintshire	70,233
Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland	150,000
Gloucestershire	105,300
Greater Manchester	2,098,080
Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark	459,986
Gwent Area	532,032
Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea	398,470
Hertfordshire	113,750
Kent	506,469
Kent and Medway	150,000
Kingston-upon-Hull	161,409
Knowsley, Sefton and St Helen's	426,557
Lambeth and Wandsworth	683,418
Leeds	629,126
Leicester and Leicestershire	297,700
Lincolnshire	120,900
Liverpool	585,791
Luton	412,893
Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside	493,553
Newham	600,000
Norfolk	100,750
North East Wales	210,698
North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire	101,400
North of the Tyne	100,000
Northamptonshire	133,250
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	743,370
Oxfordshire	286,890
Peterborough	300,000
Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Brigend, Merthyr Tydfil and Neath Port Talbot	1,204,668
Rotherham Sheffield Doncaster Barnsley	900,000
Solihull	55,000
South East London	150,000
South Gloucestershire	50,000
South Gloucestershire/Bristol	25,000
South Yorkshire	150,000

ISSP scheme	2003-04
Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock	126,750
Staffordshire	579,032
Suffolk	300,000
Sunderland Gateshead South Tynesade	600,000
Surrey	126,750
Swindon, Wiltshire	68,510
Thames	150,000
Wakefield	312,157
Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering	700,000
Warwickshire	74,750
Wessex	659,143
West Sussex	88,725
Wirral	337,630
Worcestershire Herefordshire Shropshire Telford	197,000
York and North Yorkshire	583,881
Total	29,481,009

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Civil Nuclear Energy

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to bring forward proposals regarding the future of civil nuclear energy. [42564]

Malcolm Wicks: The Energy Review is examining a wide range of options, including civil nuclear energy. After an assessment of the options, the Review will bring forward proposals this year on energy policy to help us deliver our medium and long term objectives.

A consultation document was published on 23 January 2006, and is available at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/review.

Company Annual Returns

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what factors led Companies House to increase its charges for making an annual return; and if he will reduce this charge for not-for-profit companies. [44024]

Barry Gardiner: Companies House has not increased the annual document registration fee payable with the annual return filed electronically. In November 2004 Parliament approved the increase of the fee payable with the paper annual return to £30. There were two main reasons for the increase. First, Companies House is required to review its fees on a regular basis. The last full pricing review was completed in 2004 and confirmed that costs and prices were out of line in some areas and needed to be rebalanced. The fees are linked, as required by European Law and HM Treasury guidance, to the forecast cost of providing each service. Companies House is required to prevent the fees from one service subsidising the costs of another service. Secondly, the annual registration costs associated with filing in paper format has risen because handling paper is labour intensive compared to electronic filing. The fees Companies House charges to all companies, including not-for-profit companies, must reflect these differences in cost.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to publish the final version of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. [45008]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The final draft of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 is scheduled to be published in the first quarter of this year. Subject to the regulations being approved by Parliament, I aim to make them before Easter.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what account he took of the time available to employers to consider the final form of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 when deciding on the timetable for implementation. [45458]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We took into account the need for those with responsibilities under the legislation to have a reasonable time to complete their preparations. We have consulted widely and have been engaging with businesses and employers' groups for a number of years. The timetable envisages that they will have some six months with the final regulations.

Employment Rights

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what changes there are to an individual's employment rights if their employer moves from registering staff in the UK to registration *(a)* offshore within the EU, *(b)* offshore outside the EU and *(c)* in Guernsey; and if he will make a statement. [8552]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 30 June 2005]:* On the assumption that the workers in question are recruited in Great Britain and based in Great Britain for an unlimited period, the location and nationality of the employer is irrelevant to their enjoyment of the full range of applicable employment rights.

I apologise for the delay in responding caused by a computer glitch.

Energy (Security of Supply)

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group's report was due to be published; on what date he expects the report to be published; and if he will make a statement. [43356]

Malcolm Wicks: DTI officials, in conjunction with Ofgem, are currently drafting the sixth JESS report which I expect to be published in the next few weeks—about six months after my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's first report to Parliament on security of gas and electricity supply in Great Britain was published.

Equal Opportunities Commission

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total budget was of the Equal Opportunities Commission in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [42785]

Meg Munn: The total budget granted to the Equal Opportunities Commission for the period 2004–05 was £8.970 million.

The total budget granted to the Equal Opportunities Commission for the period 2005–06 is £9.755 million.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding the Equal Opportunities Commission *(a)* received in 2005–06 and *(b)* will receive in 2006–07 in relation to the forthcoming duty on public bodies (i) to end unlawful discrimination and harassment and (ii) to promote equality between women and men. [42786]

Meg Munn: In 2005–06 the Equal Opportunities Commission received £500,000 in relation to the duty on public bodies to end unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality between women and men. The Department of Trade and Industry is currently reviewing the budgetary allocations of all it's non departmental public bodies.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the level of funding of *(a)* the Equal Opportunities Commission in relation to the forthcoming duty on public bodies to end unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality between women and men, *(b)* the Commission for Racial Equality for its work with public bodies in relation to the duty on public bodies to promote race equality and *(c)* the Disability Rights Commission for its work with public bodies in relation to the duty to promote equality for disabled people. [42800]

Meg Munn: It is my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's assessment that the following bodies were awarded the following funds to promote the Equality public duties mentioned

(a) Equal Opportunities Commission—500,000 in 2005–06 specifically for public duty.

(b) Commission for Racial Equality—approx £3 million (this covers a 3-year period 2001–02 to 2003–04 and was not ring fenced).

(c) Disability Rights Commission—has been allocated some £0.9 million in 2004–05 and £4.7 million in 2005–06 for work deriving from the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 including the Disability Equality Duty.

Export Licences (Defence)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many appeals against refusal of export licences by his Department for the defence procurement industry have been lodged in each of the last five years; and how many of them were *(a)* refused and *(b)* successful. [44519]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government publish information on all appeals against a decision to refuse an application, including the number that were refused and the number that were upheld, in their annual reports on strategic export controls, available from the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many applications for export licences for the defence procurement industry were made in 2004–05; and how many of them were dealt with within 20 days of receipt. [44520]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government publish information on the number of export licence applications they have processed and their performance against target in doing so, in its annual reports on strategic export controls, available from the Libraries of the House. The 20 working day target relates to processing Standard Individual Export Licence applications. The Government also publish quarterly licensing and performance information on the Export Control Organisation website,

www.dti.gov.uk/export.control.

Housing (Aylesbury Vale)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with the Deputy Prime Minister on *(a)* the scale and *(b)* the cost of electricity requirements arising from planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [45341]

Malcolm Wicks: None. This is a commercial matter.

Interconnector

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on progress with negotiations for new interconnector with third countries to increase levels of energy supplies to the UK. [44053]

Malcolm Wicks: There are a number of projects planned which will increase the supply of gas into the country. The Langeled pipeline will enable us to increase imports from the Norwegian sector of the North Sea significantly—potentially meeting about the quarter of GB demand—when it is commissioned next year. The BBL pipeline being built between The Netherlands and Bacton will reinforce our connection to the European gas market when it commissions next year, with the potential to supply about 10 per cent. of our daily average winter gas demand.

In addition three new liquefied natural gas terminals have been authorised—one on the Isle of Grain in the Thames estuary and two in Milford Haven. Imports to the Isle of Grain have already begun, with the other two terminals expected to commission in 2007–08. Together these LNG projects could in due course meet up to 30 per cent. of UK daily average winter gas demand.

Inter-ministerial Meetings (Scottish Executive)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many inter-ministerial meetings his Department has held with the Scottish Executive since May 1999; and what the *(a)* Scottish Executive department concerned, *(b)* subject and *(c)* date was in each case. [39778]

Alan Johnson: My predecessor met the First Minister and Deputy First Minister on 12 July and 6 December 2004. I met the Deputy First Minister on 17 May 2005.

These meetings were to discuss departmental business as it affected Scotland.

My ministerial colleagues met as follows:

Nigel Griffiths	3 November 2003	Met Jim Wallace to discuss small businesses and construction
Nigel Griffiths	2 March 2004	Met Lewis MacDonald to discuss construction issues
Stephen Timms	13 October 1999 20 November 2000 19 July 2001 25 October 2001	Met Wendy Alexander to discuss ICT issues
Stephen Timms	12 December 2001	Met Jack McConnell (subject not available)
Mike O'Brien	6 December 2004	Met Jim Wallace to discuss Energy issues
Malcolm Wicks	26 January 2005	Met Alan Wilson to discuss Energy issues
Meg Munn	25 October 2005	Video-conference meeting with Malcolm Chisholm to discuss equality issues
Ian Pearson	12 October 2005	Met Jim Wallace as part of UK-wide ministerial forum attended by Devolved Administrations
Lord Sainsbury	18 December 2002	Met Iain Gray to discuss implementation of 2002 Spending Review settlement and science strategy
Lord Sainsbury	3 November 2003	Met Jim Wallace to discuss research funding

Maternity Rights

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations the Department has received in the last 12 months from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* groups regarding the situation of women who return to work immediately after giving birth and receive neither full-time salary nor full time maternity pay; and if he will make a statement. [44312]

Meg Munn: The Department is not aware of any representations of the kind described in the question.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many visits abroad Ministers in his Department have made in relation to policy on maternity and paternity pay and arrangements since 2001; and if he will list those visits. [45213]

Mr. Sutcliffe: No visits have been made by Ministers.

National Debtline

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many calls received by the National Debtline in each quarter of the last two years *(a)* received an engaged tone, *(b)* were answered by an adviser, *(c)* were abandoned by the caller and *(d)* were abandoned by the system; [45497]

(2) how many staff are employed to staff the National Debtline; and how many were so employed 12 months ago. [45499]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Calls received by National Debtline (NDL) over the past two years:

	Calls answered by adviser (b)	*Calls abandoned by caller (c)*	*Calls abandoned by system (timed out) (d)*
Q4/05	22,740	15,840	8,562
Q3/05	15,800	27,434	20,950
Q2/05	13,817	29,737	23,173
Q1/05	12,393	28,951	26,308
Q4/04	9,351	21,760	17,387
Q3/04	10,477	18,675	12,226
Q2/04	10,245	21,223	10,208
Q1/04	n/a	n/a	n/a

The number of calls that received an engaged tone is not recorded by NDL. Data before Q1/04 has been deleted from the computer system due to age.

Because not all calls are answered first time, clients do redial i.e. NDL answered 5,763 calls out of 11,648 calls received last month (50 per cent.), but an analysis of unique caller phone numbers showed that NDL eventually helped 76 per cent. of those who tried to get through to the helpline.

Staff employed by NDL, full-time equivalents:

January 2006: 67 (of which 45.2 are advisers);

January 2005: 48.9 (of which 32.1 are advisers).

Nuclear Power (Wales)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Government have spent on decommissioning Welsh nuclear power plants in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [43327]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005. There are two Magnox nuclear power stations in Wales for which the NDA have responsibility. They are Trawsfynydd in Gwynedd, and Wylfa in Anglesey. Trawsfynydd ceased electricity generation in 1991 whilst Wylfa is still operational-in its draft Strategy the NDA have proposed that Wylfa ceases generation in 2010. The total decommissioning costs in respect of Trawsfynydd are given in the draft Strategy as £1.1 billion until final site clearance in 2096. The draft Strategy is available through the NDA website at: nda.gov.uk.

Nuclear Waste

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much and what proportion of spent nuclear fuel which has been imported into the UK is stored in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement. [45283]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* I am advised by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that with regard to overseas fuel stored in the UK, there is currently no inventory in Wales, less than one tonne in Scotland and around 760 tonnes in England, mostly stored at Sellafield.

Since 1976, all contracts for reprocessing of overseas spent fuel in the UK contain a clause stating that the materials, including waste, resulting from the reprocessing will be returned to the country of origin.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much spent nuclear fuel is stored in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement. [45284]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: I am advised by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that of the spent nuclear fuel stored in the UK there are currently around 400 tonnes in Wales, around 225 tonnes in Scotland and around 5500 tonnes in England. These figures cover spent fuel stored following discharge from reactors and consists of fuel from Magnox and AGR reactors and overseas fuel received into the UK for storage pending reprocessing.

Since 1976, all contracts for reprocessing of overseas spent fuel in the UK contain a clause stating that the materials, including waste, resulting from the reprocessing will be returned to the country of origin.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Government have spent on storing spent nuclear fuel in Wales produced from nuclear power plants located in the United Kingdom but not in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [43328]

Malcolm Wicks: I am advised that no spent fuel from the rest of the United Kingdom is stored in Wales.

Salt Cavern Gas Storage

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when he expects the first planned offshore salt cavern gas storage facilities to be operational; [45291]

(2) when assessment he has made of the likely impact of offshore salt cavern storage on gas supplies for winter in 2006–07. [45292]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government propose to provide a clear legal framework for activities associated with offshore gas storage in salt caverns. When, subject to Parliament, legislation is in place, companies will be able to use new technology to create salt caverns offshore and store gas over the next decade. It will not be possible for any projects to be proposed, consented, constructed and commissioned as early as winter 2006–07.

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the economic viability of the use of offshore salt caverns for gas storage. [45293]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a commercial matter, and I am aware of commercial interest in pursuing such projects.

THORP

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he has asked the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority for the costings of the options of *(a)* re-opening the thermal oxide reprocessing plant (THORP) at Sellafield and *(b)* the final closure of reprocessing activities at THORP. [43913]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is currently undertaking detailed work to understand the full implications of the re-opening and final closure of THORP, which will include costings. The NDA will advise the DTI of its conclusions when this work is complete.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations the Government has received from the EU on the review of the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive announced in December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41923]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 18 January 2006]*: We have not received any representations from the EU regarding the review announced in December 2005. Officials will be keeping the Commission informed of progress towards implementation.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what mandatory targets the UK implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive will put in place regarding *(a)* the reduction and *(b)* the recycling of electronic and electrical waste. [41860]

Malcolm Wicks: The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive contains targets for reduction and recycling, which the UK is obliged to meet. The implementing UK regulations will be the means by which those targets are delivered; but no targets will be included in the text.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of electronic and electrical waste came from domestic users in 2004–05; which sector produced the largest amount of electronic and electrical waste in 2004–05; what measures are in place to deal with this waste; and what further measures the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive will put in place. [41863]

Malcolm Wicks: There are no official data on the amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in the UK. The Industry Council for Electronic Recycling (ICER) published in 2005 estimates for the volume and number of items of WEEE arising in the UK for the year 2003. This suggested that there are some 93 million units representing around 1 million tonnes of WEEE from domestic users arising in the UK annually.

The white goods sector is responsible for the largest proportion of this WEEE in terms of weight, but the ICT and consumer electronics sectors produce more units.

WEEE is currently dealt with via existing UK waste legislation. A significant volume of WEEE by weight is currently recycled or re-used in the UK. The remaining WEEE is disposed of in a similar manner to other forms of domestic waste.

The WEEE Directive requires the UK to promote the separate collection of WEEE from other forms of domestic waste to facilitate increased recycling and re-use of WEEE as a way of promoting sustainable development in Europe. The WEEE Directive also requires the pre- treatment of WEEE prior to recycling to prevent the dispersion of hazardous substances into the environment.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the incremental costs that will be borne by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* the recycling industry as a result of the postponement of the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive announced by his Department on 15 December 2005. [42181]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have agreed to meet all new burdens that result from the delay to implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. The exact sum has yet to be determined, but it will be based on the costs that local authorities will incur.

There should be no incremental costs to the recycling industry as a result of delayed implementation of the WEEE Directive.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Stay at Home Mothers

Mr. Bone: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what the Government's policy is on mothers who wish to stay at home and bring up their children full-time; and what measures are in place to support those that do so. [43901]

Meg Munn: Parents are the best people to make decisions about the interests of their children. The Government's role is to support families and to ensure they have meaningful choices about how they live their lives. The core aim of the Work and Families Bill is about helping to give children the best start in life and how to enable all families to have genuine choices about how they balance their work and family caring responsibilities.

The Government offer practical support for families through changes in the tax and benefit system which further help parents make decisions whether to engage in paid work or stay at home.

As a result of the Government's reforms to the tax and benefit system since 1997, by October 2005, in real terms, families with children are, on average, £1,400 a year better off, while those in the poorest fifth are, on average, £3,200 per year better off.

The 2005 budget improved this situation still further by announcing a commitment to increase the child element of child tax credit at least in line with average earnings up to and including 2007-08. It is currently worth up to £1,690 a year per child, benefiting 7 million children in 3.6 million families.

HEALTH

Cancer Treatments

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are taken to monitor access to cancer treatments for patients in *(a)* the North East and *(b)* Gateshead East and Washington West; and what steps are taken to ensure access meets the targets the Department has set. [41625]

Mr. Byrne: The Department, in the NHS Cancer Plan, has set out new goals to reduce waiting times for diagnosis and treatment. There is a maximum two-month wait from urgent general practitioner referral for suspected cancer to start of treatment for all cancers by the end of 2005. For those patients who are routinely referred but subsequently diagnosed with cancer there is a maximum one month wait from diagnosis to treatment by the end of 2005.

The monitoring of access to cancer treatments in the North East and Gateshead East is a local matter. However, most recent figures for Northumberland Tyne and Wear strategic health authority show 99.4 per cent. of urgent referrals are seen within two weeks. At Gateshead Health National Health Service Foundation Trust 98.2 per cent. of urgent referrals are seen within two weeks.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the House of Lords Select Committee report on Complementary and Alternative Medicines. [44618]

Caroline Flint: The Government's response to the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology's report on Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CM 5124) was published in March 2001. A number of commitments made in response to the recommendations have been, or are being, implemented. This includes work to improve the regulation of herbal medicines and most recently proposals to prepare the ground for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners.

Drug-related Admissions

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many drug-related admissions to *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* accident and emergency departments there were in North Somerset in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [45248]

Caroline Flint: The table shows counts of finished admission episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected drug cases for residents in North Somerset Primary Care Trust area.

Figures for accident and emergency (A&E) admissions have been omitted. Due to reasons of confidentiality figures between one and five have been withheld.

Counts of finished admission episodes where there was a primary diagnosis code for selected drug[1] cases in North Somerset Primary Care Trust, 2002–03 to 2004–05

	A&E admissions[2]	Total admissions
2002–03	[1]—	28
2003–04	6	20
2004–05	[1]—	30

[1] Low numbers

Due to reasons of confidentiality, figures between one and five have been suppressed.

[2] A&E admissions defined as:

Emergency via A&E services, including the casualty department of the provider.

Emergency, other means, including patients who arrive via A&E department of another healthcare provider.

Notes:

1. Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. Ungrossed data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is, the data is ungrossed.

3. Drug related cases defined as the following ICD-10 codes recorded in the primary diagnosis field:

F11 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of opioids.

F12 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids.

F13 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of sedatives or hypnotics.

F14 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cocaine.

F15 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of other stimulants, including caffeine.

F16 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of hallucinogens.

F19 Mental and behavioural disorders due to multiple drug use and use of other psychoactive substances.

Genetically Modified Foods

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research has been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated since 1997 into the effects of genetically modified foods on public health. [43954]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has commissioned research in a number of areas relevant to the safety assessment of genetically modified (GM) foods. This research is undertaken by independent research scientists and the work is peer reviewed before the reports of the research are made publicly available through the FSA's library. Details of the research are published in the annual reports of the FSA's research and surveys programmes and also available on FSA's website at: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/researchinfo/foodcomponentresearch/novelfoodresearch/g01programme/ and at: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/researchinfo/foodcomponentresearch/novelfoodresearch/g02programme/.

GM foods are thoroughly assessed for safety on a case by case basis before they can be authorised in the European Union and this involves scrutiny of the scientific evidence concerning potential risks to human health. In addition, the FSA seeks advice from the advisory committee on novel food and processes on any new information that has implications for the safety of GM foods. Details of the advisory committee's evaluations of GM food safety research are available on its website and in its annual reports. The assessments of new GM food products are conducted at EU level by the European Food Safety Authority, which also publishes reports and opinions on the scientific data that it has evaluated.

Genito-urinary Medicine Clinics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to improve the collection of data in respect of sexual health interventions in *(a)* primary care and *(b)* genito-urinary medicine clinics. [43515]

Caroline Flint: There is a variety of sexual health related surveillance data currently produced and routinely distributed to service providers and commissioners. These include data on sexually transmitted infections and waiting times for genitor-urinary medicine (GUM) appointments, which are collected and published by the Health Protection Agency and the Office of National Statistics published data on conceptions.

We recognise, however, that further improvements to the collection and availability of data are needed in order to meet the challenges of improving sexual health. To this end, the Department is currently funding a project to develop a common data set for sexual health with the aim of it being approved as a national health service information standard later this year. The standard is being assured by the Information Standards Board to ensure interoperability with other standards, fitness for purpose and implementability.

The common data set will apply to all settings providing sexual health services, including primary care, and will provide, among other improvements, much better residence based information at local level. It is anticipated that the common data set will ultimately be collected through the systems being put in place by the national programme for information technology in the NHS (Connecting for Health) and that data will be made available for surveillance, performance monitoring and other purposes.

A proposed common dataset is currently being piloted across GUM clinics, contraception services and general practitioners.

Influenza

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to Question 15379, on influenza, what mechanisms she has put in place to monitor international research into the causes of influenza. [41095]

Caroline Flint: The national expert panel on new and emerging infections, set up in 2003 on the recommendation of the Chief Medical Officer, advises the Department on both national and international threats from infection to public health and on research. The panel's terms of reference and other details are available on the Department's website at:

www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/nationalexpertpanel/20031125summary.htm.

The Medical Research Council (MRC), an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology, has a long-established and central role in influenza research. The World Health Organisation's international influenza centre, part of the MRC's National Institute for Medical Research, works with a network of collaborating laboratories to detect and characterise new influenza viruses wherever in the world they emerge, and contributes to international research.

Processed Food

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the proportion of processed food in the United Kingdom which contains *(a)* added sugar, *(b)* Aspartame and *(c)* neither. [44228]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency does not hold information on all processed products on sale in the United Kingdom, and their ingredients. No estimate has been made of the proportion of these foods that contain added sugar, aspartame or neither of these substances.

Legislation defines that aspartame is only permitted to be used in certain categories of foodstuffs, in particular energy-reduced or no-added-sugar varieties. Intake estimates have been conducted that assume aspartame is used at the maximum permitted level in all foods permitted to contain the sweetener. These have shown that consumers, including young children, are unlikely to exceed the acceptable daily intake for this sweetener.

Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the oral statement of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for public health in Standing Committee E of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 70, what exemptions must be made to a ban on smoking in workplaces and public places to satisfy compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights; [42073]

(2) if she will place in the Library a copy of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State's reply to the Joint Committee on Human Rights letter on the subject of her proposals for a smoking ban being incompatible with Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights. [42968]

Caroline Flint: The European Convention on Human Rights requires a fair balance to be struck between the rights of those who seek smoke-free areas and the rights of those who smoke. That balance may be different in different states and it may change from time to time. However, the Convention does not make requirements in relation to particular categories of premises.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights' report, "Legislation Scrutiny: Third Progress Report", published on 19 December 2005, includes a letter from the Chairman asking a number of questions about what will be needed for the Health Bill to satisfy compatibility requirements. The Secretary of State will be responding to that letter in due course and a copy of the reply will be placed in the Library. A copy of the report is available in the Library.

Child Protection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* NHS services, *(b)* social service departments and *(c)* children's services departments are legally obliged to check their employees against her Department's list of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. [44481]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

Section 7(1) of the Protection of Children Act requires an organisation which is concerned with the provision of accommodation, social services or health care services to children or the supervision of children and whose activities are regulated, to check both the PoCA List and List 99 in every instance where they propose to offer an individual a child care position.

Therefore all NHS services, social service departments and children's services departments who employ staff in child care positions are legally obliged to check the PoCA List and List 99 before employing a person in such a position.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Buncefield Oil Depot

Peter Law: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made in respect of the explosion at the fuel depot at Buncefield of *(a)* the possibility of terrorist sabotage causing the conflagration, *(b)* the contribution to United Kingdom carbon emissions of the fires created by the explosion and *(c)* the cost of cleaning up the land contaminated at and around the site. [41487]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The cause of the explosion at the fuel depot at Buncefield has yet to be established and is the subject of an ongoing investigation by the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency.

It is estimated that, in round terms, the fires at Buncefield will have contributed between 0.025 per cent. and 0.05 per cent. of UK carbon dioxide emissions in 2005.

The Environment Agency is working with, and advising, the oil companies' scientific advisers to establish a strategy to quantify the extent and scope of contamination both on and off site, including both land and water resources. Gathering such evidence should enable overall remediation costs to be quantified.

Cabinet Committees (Policy Clearance)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the occasions on which he has sought policy clearance for *(a)* legislation and *(b)* amendments to Government Bills from the Cabinet Committee on (i) Domestic Affairs and (ii) Economic Affairs during the current session. [41022]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees is generally not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Council Tax

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average cost of collecting council tax was in each of the last five years. [44650]

Mr. Woolas *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The average cost of collecting council tax in England in each of the last five years is tabled as follows.

Average cost of collecting council tax per chargeable dwelling

	£ actual
2000–01	14.65
2001–02	14.55
2002–03	14.92
2003–04	15.87
2004–05	15.92

Notes:

The average is calculated by dividing the total net council tax collection costs in England by the total number of chargeable dwellings for council tax purposes.

Total net council tax collection costs are defined as local authority gross expenditure net of any income relating to the collection of council tax. Gross expenditure on council tax collection includes the cost of sending out bills and pursuing late payers.

The related income is mainly made up of recovered court costs.

Source:

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Revenue Outturn (RO) returns—RO6 data.

ODPM Council Tax Base (CTB1) returns.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of spending by Hammersmith and Fulham council he expects to be financed from council tax in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08. [45261]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not yet available. Local authorities as yet have not set council taxes or budgets for 2006–07 or 2007–08.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of spending by Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council was financed from council tax in each financial year since 1996–97. [45275]

Mr. Woolas: The percentage of revenue expenditure by Hammersmith and Fulham borough council that has been financed from council tax in each financial year since 1996–97 is tabled as follows.

	Percentage
1996–97	24.3
1997–98	26.6
1998–99	24.9
1999–2000	23.8
2000–01	23.9
2001–02	22.8
2002–03	23.2
2003–04	22.1
2004–05	22.9
2005–06	22.9

The data are as reported by local authorities and are taken from Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Revenue Summary (RS) returns for 1996–97 to 2004–05, and ODPM Revenue Account (RA) Budget returns for 2005–06.

The definition of council expenditure used here is that expenditure funded from Aggregate External Finance (AEF), council tax and authorities' reserves.

Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changes in responsibilities and the method of reporting the information. In particular, the outturn data for 1996–97 to 2002–03 and the budget data for 2005–06 have been calculated on a non-FRS (Financial Reporting Standard) 17 basis while the outturn data for 2003–04 to 2004–05 have been calculated on an FRS 17 basis. Hence, figures for different years may not be directly comparable.

Councillors (Pensions/Income)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1964–5W, on councillors (pensions/incomes), what estimate the Government have made of the cost resulting from the changes to rules relating to allowances and pensions. [42661]

Mr. Woolas: The Government hold no information on the cost resulting from changes to rules relating to allowances and pensions. Decisions about the levels of allowances paid in any case are for the local authority concerned.

Departmental Computer Services

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many working hours have been lost in his Department due to the loss of computer services in each of the last three years. [40678]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created in May 2002. Since that date there have been no instances when the loss of computer services resulted in lost working hours.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40106]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Expenditure on buildings and insurance of buildings managed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its Agencies, all of which are situated in England, is as follows:

ODPM

Region	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	£ 2005–06
Maintenance and refurbishment				
London	2,902,212	3,461,057	1,947,698	6,472,895
Eastern	6,741	7,152	29,481	27,300
North West	0	0	0	0
South West	6,588	30,990	17,806	91,281
West Midlands	11,047	45,290	43,311	30,737
Insurance				
London	0	0	0	0

ODPM

£

Region	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Eastern	4,527	5,186	5,038	5,168
North West	0	918	731	717
South West	0	0	0	0
West Midlands	910	1,013	1,568	0

Mr. Francois: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41577]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. Salaries paid to civil servants within ODPM were as follows:

	Salaries to civil servants £000	Departmental expenditure limit—(outturn figures) £ billion	Salaries as percentage of departmental expenditure limit
2002-03	170,304	42.95	0.4
2003-04	191,692	49.68	0.4
2004-05	184,069	52.56	0.4

Figures include costs for ODPM (Central), Government Offices for the Regions, the Planning Inspectorate, the Rent Service (for 2002–03 and 2003–04 only), Advisory bodies and Tribunals. The Rent Service transferred to the Department of Works and Pensions with effect from 1 April 2004.

For the Departmental Expenditure Limit, the figures include both ODPM Main Programmes DEL and Local Government Programmes DEL.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42813]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had no staff living in Castle Point (as at 23 January 2006).

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy for all the income from council tenants' rents to be ring-fenced in the national housing revenue account. [40848]

Yvette Cooper: There are no plans to ring-fence rental income within the national housing revenue account.

Planning Appeals

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many times the Planning Inspectorate has upheld on appeal an application for a residential development in *(a)* England, *(b)* the South East and *(c)* Waverley borough Council where over-development was recorded as an issue by the local authority in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [45029]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Stakeholder Perceptions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department has spent on commissioning reports from MORI on his Department's Stakeholder Perceptions. [42617]

Jim Fitzpatrick: MORI were commissioned to undertake two Stakeholder perception Surveys for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003 and 2005 at an approximate total cost of £135,000.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what data the Valuation Office Agency has provided to Ordnance Survey in the last five years. [42618]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has recently supplied samples of the non-domestic Rating List and addresses drawn from the Valuation List, followed by compilations of similar data covering the whole of England and Wales.

Wind Turbine Projects

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account is taken of the viability of wind turbine projects in planning decisions. [42320]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Statement 22 "Renewable Energy" makes it clear that the viability of a wind turbine project is an issue for the developer of the project. Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should not make assumptions about the technical and commercial feasibility of renewable energy projects.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoption

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many same sex couples have adopted children in each of the last three years. [44766]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not available. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 reformed adoption law so that married couples, civil partners, heterosexual couples and same sex couples may apply to adopt. The Act came fully into force on 30 December 2005.

Apprenticeships

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the *(a)* apprenticeships and *(b)* advanced apprenticeships supported by each Learning and Skills Council in each year since 2002, broken down by sector; and how many people on each course were (i) of each sex and (ii) in each age group. [43126]

Phil Hope: We do not hold the data in the form requested. However, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) publishes full information on the number of starts on each apprenticeship framework by programme type, gender, age and LSC local area on the internet via:

http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/partners/frameworks/apprenticeshipsdata/.

The following tables provides information including apprentice data by area of learning, gender and age.

This shows that, in England in 2004/05 for example, 176,334 female and 234,904 male apprentices were in learning, of which 207,295 were aged below 19 and 203,943 over 19.

Table 1: Learners on WBL LSC funded provision by highest qualification level and age group

	2002/03	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
Below 19			
Level 2	139,337	147,498	156,504
Level 3	59,717	52,247	50,791
19 plus			
Level 2	86,648	102,517	106,920
Level 3	103,333	100,413	97,023
Total	389,035	402,675	411,238

Table 2: Learners on council-funded WBL provision by area of learning and gender

	2002/03			*2003/04*		
	Female	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
LAD-Area of learning:						
Science and Mathematics	117	228	345	84	188	272
Land based provision	3,168	4,957	8,125	3,401	5,219	8,620
Construction	363	49,719	50,082	379	48,922	49,301
Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing	2,128	77,692	79,820	2,482	88,612	91,094
Business administration, Management and Professional	38,657	13,051	51,708	36,871	12,522	49,393
Information and Communication Technology	1,879	10,626	12,505	1,797	9,624	11,421
Retailing, Customer Service and Transportation	38,920	25,984	64,904	37,858	25,658	63,516
Hospitality, Sports, Leisure and Travel	25,003	23,620	48,623	25,956	24,486	50,442
Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy	27,785	1,883	29,668	29,561	2,393	31,954
Health, Social Care and Public Services	37,697	3,740	41,437	40,827	4,154	44,981
Visual and Performing Arts and Media	101	1,110	1,211	133	1,009	1,142
Humanities	5	—	5	3	—	3
English, Languages and Communication	6	15	21	—	—	—
Foundation programmes	—	9	9	—	—	—
Not known	139	432	571	294	240	534
Total	175,968	213,067	389,035	179,647	223,028	402,675

	2004/05		
	Female	*Male*	*Total*
LAD-Area of learning:			
Science and Mathematics	101	184	285
Land based provision	3,682	5,355	9,037
Construction	485	53,668	54,153
Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing	2,590	93,266	95,856
Business administration, Management and Professional	34,386	12,314	46,700
Information and Communication Technology	1,682	8,380	10,062
Retailing, Customer Service and Transportation	33,003	23,277	56,280
Hospitality, Sports, Leisure and Travel	22,028	22,698	44,726
Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy	31,749	2,814	34,563
Health, Social Care and Public Services	42,202	4,534	46,736
Visual and Performing Arts and Media	85	871	956
Humanities	1	—	1
English, Languages and Communication	12	41	53
Foundation programmes	—	—	—
Not known	4,328	7,502	11,830
Total	176,334	234,904	411,238

Table 3: Learners on council-funded WBL provision by age and gender

	2002/03			*2003/04*			*2004/05*		
	Female	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
Below 19	86,797	112,257	199,054	86,515	113,230	199,745	87,275	120,020	207,295
19-24	88,871	100,491	189,362	91,970	108,399	200,369	85,962	111,758	197,720
25-29	300	319	619	1,162	1,399	2,561	2,885	3,060	5,945
30-34	—	—	—	—	—	—	38	24	62

Table 3: Learners on council-funded WBL provision by age and gender

	2002/03			2003/04			2004/05		
	Female	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
35–39	—	—	—	—	—	—	44	14	58
40–44	—	—	—	—	—	—	55	16	71
45–49	—	—	—	—	—	—	43	4	47
50–54	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	6	28
55–59	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	2	10
60 +	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Total	175,968	213,067	389,035	179,647	223,028	402,675	176,334	234,904	411,238

Bournemouth LEA

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time teachers and *(b)* teaching assistants were employed in Bournemouth local education authority in each year since 1997. [44846]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the number of full-time regular teachers and the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants employed in Bournemouth local authority in each January since 1998. Teaching assistant data can only be provided on a FTE basis. The FTE of regular teachers has been provided for consistency.

Bournemouth local authority was created on 1 April 1997. As figures are collected in January of each year figures are not available for 1997.

Full-time regular teachers and full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants in Bournemouth local authority

	Teachers[1]		
	Full-time	*FTE*	*Teaching assistants FTE*[2]
1998	950	1,040	130
1999	970	1,070	170
2000	980	1,090	210
2001	1,000	1,110	240
2002	1,040	1,140	380
2003	1,010	1,130	380
2004	1,010	1,130	410
2005	1,020	1,130	400

[1] Source: DfES annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies, 618g.
[2] Source: Annual School Census.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual budget of *(a)* Bournemouth local education authority and *(b)* Middlesbrough local education authority was in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [44847]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested are set out in the following table. We do not hold comparable figures prior to 1999–2000.

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations
Total budgeted education revenue expenditure by Bournemouth and Middlesbrough local authorities since 1999–2000
Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 23 January 2006

	Budgeted education revenue expenditure (£)	
	Bournemouth	*Middlesbrough*
1999–2000	56,548,000	67,420,000
2000–01	63,138,000	72,112,000
2001–02	67,582,000	80,978,000
2002–03	71,647,000	85,643,000
2003–04	76,987,000	86,853,000

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations
Total budgeted education revenue expenditure by Bournemouth and Middlesbrough local authorities since 1999–2000
Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 23 January 2006

	Budgeted education revenue expenditure (£)	
	Bournemouth	*Middlesbrough*
2004–05	82,032,000	88,898,000
2005–06	86,880,000	94,898,000

1. Budgeted education revenue expenditure is drawn from local authorities' Section 52 Budget Statements submitted to the DfES. This is calculated as the gross elements of any grants lines plus the net elements of the remainder of the education revenue budget.
2. Cash figures are rounded to the nearest £1,000.

The figures for Middlesbrough are affected by some pupils in the area attending academies rather than maintained schools.

Care Leavers

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for increasing the proportion of care leavers aged 19 years who are in employment, education or training. [44857]

Maria Eagle: The DfES collects information from each local authority on the percentage of care leavers aged 19, who were looked after in their 17th year, who are participating in education, training or employment. However, currently there is no national target concerned with the proportion that is in employment, education and training.

Class Setting

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of lessons inspected by Ofsted were recorded as setted in science in years *(a)* seven, *(b)* eight, *(c)* nine, *(d)* 10, *(e)* 11 and *(f)* all years in (i) England and (ii) West Sussex local education authority in each year since 1995. [42492]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 13 January 2006:

Your recent parliamentary question has been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for reply.

You asked what proportion of lessons inspected by Ofsted were recorded as setted in science in years *(a)* seven, *(b)* eight, *(c)* nine,

(d) ten, *(e)* eleven and *(f)* all years in (i) England and (ii) West Sussex local education authority in each year since 1995.

The tables attached show the percentage of lessons which were setted by ability, seen by inspectors during the academic years 1996/97 to 2002/03. Prior to 1996/97 inspectors were not required to record information about grouping and from 2002/03 records do not distinguish between setting and streaming (banded).

The data at individual subject level and for the individual LEA, West Sussex, should be interpreted with caution as the small numbers of records are unlikely to be fully representative of the grouping arrangements as a whole in the LEA.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the Library of both Houses.

Science

	1996/97		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000	
Year group	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*
England								
Year 7	2,629	20	1,476	27	2,160	27	1,692	28
Year 8	2,655	46	1,522	49	2,090	52	1,625	54
Year 9	2,796	65	1,667	68	2,459	69	1,926	69
Year 10	3,059	77	2,069	76	2,948	76	2,268	77
Year 11	4,664	69	2,058	76	3,111	76	2,336	77
Total 7–11	15,803	58	8,792	62	12,768	62	9,847	63
West Sussex								
Year 7	22	0	4	100	32	38	22	32
Year 8	32	34	3	100	26	42	15	80
Year 9	27	74	4	0	9	22	22	73
Year 10	21	86	3	0	25	32	25	76
Year 11	57	86	4	0	39	33	18	61
Total 7–11	159	62	18	39	131	35	102	64

	2000/01		2001/02		2002/03	
Year group	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*	*Total number of lessons*	*Percentage of setted lessons*
West Sussex						
Year 7	1,325	32	1,206	34	1,121	40
Year 8	1,311	64	1,104	62	1,013	62
Year 9	1,723	76	1,467	77	1,345	74
Year 10	1,857	85	1,539	85	1,359	80
Year 11	1,945	82	1,672	86	1,528	83
Total 7–11	8,161	71	6,988	71	6,366	70
Year 7	9	44	6	33	16	44
Year 8	21	71	8	25	17	41
Year 9	38	84	12	75	20	70
Year 10	36	92	13	77	23	83
Year 11	31	90	8	63	20	85
Total 7–11	135	83	47	60	96	67

Notes:
Framework changes occurred in January 2000 and September 2003. Changes in the way groupings in lessons are recorded may mean that data are not directly comparable from one framework to another.
From January 2000 to July 2003, the inspection arrangements included full and short inspections. The majority of lessons observed will have been in full inspections. The most effective schools had short inspections.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Class Sizes (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size is in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in West Lancashire. [45010]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: average size of classes taught by one teacher[2]—as at January 2005—West Lancashire parliamentary constituency

	Average class size
Key Stage 1[3]	23.5
Key Stage 2	26.1
Primary	24.6
Secondary	21.9

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[3] Includes reception classes.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by her Department in the past 12 months. [43432]

Maria Eagle: The following table details items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from Department of Education and Skills buildings in the past 12 months to date.

Item	*Number*
Laptop computers	35
Conference telephone	1

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent by her Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41244]

Maria Eagle: The following table details how much was spent by the Department on refreshments from 1999 to date. It is not possible to provide information from 1997 without incurring disproportionate costs.

	Amount (£)
1999-2000	408,026.82
2000-01	535,188.21
2001-02	464,715.26
2002-03	596,326.13
2003-04	631,962.89
2004-05	538,172.89
2005-06 to date	313,375.56

Disabled Parents

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to local authorities regarding supporting disabled parents in getting their children to school. [44620]

Beverley Hughes *[holding answer 23 January 2006]*: The Department has not issued any guidance to local authorities specifically in relation to supporting disabled parents with their responsibility to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school.

We would expect, however, that where the attendance of individual pupils gives cause for concern, the local authority's education welfare service would work closely with the family to resolve any problems.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to provide a right to free school transport for pupils who are caring for disabled adults. [44621]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 23 January 2006]*: Free home to school transport is a service that local authorities provide to parents of school pupils where they consider it 'necessary' to secure a child's attendance at school. Local authorities must consider transport necessary for all pupils of compulsory school age (including those with disabled parents), and who attend their nearest suitable school, provided that the school is beyond the statutory walking distance.

From December 2006, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a duty on the public sector to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and to eliminate discrimination. This duty is anticipatory, meaning that public authorities will have to review all their policies, practices, procedures and services to make sure they do not discriminate against disabled people and ensure that all their services are planned with disabled people's needs fully considered in advance.

In the Department's view, this means that local authorities will be under a duty to amend their home to school transport policy if, for example, that policy relied on disabled parents accompanying their children along a walking route for it to be considered safe, and where the parents' disability prevented them from doing so. In such circumstances, a reasonable adjustment would be for the local authority to provide free home to school transport. The Department will publish guidance to this effect in advance of the duty coming into force.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of the education maintenance allowance in encouraging 16 to 18-year-olds to stay in education. [44129]

Maria Eagle: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1014-015W.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to increase education maintenance allowance payments in 2006. [44131]

Maria Eagle: There are currently no plans to increase the amount of education maintenance allowance payments.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for increasing the number of primary schools meeting key stage 2 targets. [45400]

Jacqui Smith: The Department's Spending Review 2004 Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets are set out in the 2005 Departmental Report (cm 6522), a copy of which is in the House Library. The current PSA target at key stage 2 is to raise standards in English and mathematics so that:

> By 2006, 85 per cent. of 11-year-olds achieve level 4 or above, with this level of performance sustained to 2008; and
>
> By 2008, the proportion of schools in which fewer than 65 per cent. of pupils achieve level 4 or above is reduced by 40 per cent.

Good progress has been maintained towards delivery of this target. A record 79 per cent. of pupils achieved level 4 or above in English and 75 per cent. achieved level 4 or above in mathematics last year. Compared to 1997, the proportion achieving level 4 or above has increased by 16 percentage points in English and by 13 percentage points in mathematics.

Significant reductions have been made in the number of schools where fewer than 65 per cent. of pupils achieve level 4 or above. In 2003 (baseline), 2,849 schools in English and 3,570 schools in mathematics were achieving below the target. In 2005, these figures dropped to 1,871 schools in English and 2,800 schools in mathematics. Compared with 2003 this means an overall reduction of 34 per cent. (978 schools) in English and 21 per cent. (770 schools) in mathematics towards the floor target of 40 per cent. reduction by 2008.

Subsequent PSA targets will be agreed as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for the percentage of pupils achieving five GCSE A*-C grades by 2009. [45523]

Jacqui Smith: The Department's public service agreement (PSA) targets are set out in the 2005 departmental report (Cm 6522), a copy of which is in the House Library.

The current PSA targets at Key Stage 4 are: *(a)* by 2008, 60 per cent. of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C; and *(b)* in all maintained secondary schools at least 25 per cent. of 16-year-olds achieve five or more A*-C grades by 2006 and 30 per cent. by 2008.

Good progress has been made towards achievement of these targets. In 2005, 56.3 per cent. of 15-year-olds achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent—a 2.6 percentage point increase on 2004 results and an increase of 11.2 percentage points compared with 1997.Over 67,000 more pupils are now achieving at this level than did so in 1997.

There has been a further significant drop in the number of schools below floor targets.

2005 results show:

112 schools are below the 25 per cent. floor target, down from 186 schools in 2004 and 616 in 1997;

232 schools are below the 30 per cent. floor target, down from 343 schools in 2004, and down from 896 schools in 1997.

Subsequent targets will be agreed as part of the 2007 comprehensive spending review.

Smoking

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her policy is on smoking in publicly funded educational establishments. [43071]

Jacqui Smith: Educational establishments which are publicly funded are covered by the provisions of the Health Bill currently before Parliament. The Bill, when passed, will prohibit smoking in enclosed public places including early years education settings, Sure Start children's centres, schools, colleges of further education and institutions of higher education, with some exemptions for residential accommodation for students and staff. Young people living in residential schools homes who are over the legal minimum age at which smoking is permitted, currently 16, would have the same right to smoke as other young people of the same age in their own rooms.

Currently, nurseries and pre-schools are required, under national standards, to have a no smoking policy. We already encourage schools to be smoke-free environments. All schools should aim to become healthy schools and should be smoke free or be working towards being smoke free by September 2007 to gain healthy school accreditation. The national minimum standards for residential special schools encourage smoke-free policies. Higher education institutions must comply with all smoking legislation for their premises: it is for individual institutions to decide their own smoking policies in line with current legislation.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance her Department has given to executive agencies that fall under the remit of her Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if she will make a statement. [41642]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Education and Skills is not responsible for any executive agencies.

Language Tuition

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many comprehensive schools offered non-European languages as an option in the last year for which figures are available. [44842]

Jacqui Smith: This Department does not collect this information or hold it centrally.

Music

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the music service of Staffordshire education authority. [45047]

Jacqui Smith: Music Services are not subject to statutory inspections but instead undertake regular self-reviews to ensure they are providing a high quality service to schools and young people. My Department does not hold copies of the results of these self reviews.

Nationally, my Department conducts a three-yearly survey of Music Service provision, looking at issues of access, quality and breadth. The 2005 report was published in December and copies are available in the House of Commons Library. Data on individual music services are anonymised in the report, however, and for internal use only.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has paid to Staffordshire education authority for the provision of music services in each year since 1998. [45050]

Jacqui Smith: We do not hold figures for music service allocations prior to 1999. Since 1999, every local authority has received a grant through the music standards fund (MSF). Since the MSF was established, Staffordshire music service has received the following funding:

	£
1999-00	826,000
2000-01	826,000
2001-02	940,000
2002-03	1,054,000
2003-04	1,064,000
2004-05	1,054,000
2005-06	1,064,000

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the pilots her Department established to trial new ways of teaching and learning music. [45048]

Jacqui Smith: My Department has established two sets of pilots in the last four years to trial new ways of teaching and learning in music. One set of pilots focused on instrumental and vocal learning at KS2 and one on teaching and learning at KS3.

In 2004, twelve of the thirteen instrumental and vocal pilots were evaluated by Ofsted. 'Consistently high quality of work' was observed in seven of the programmes; in the other five, Ofsted reported 'good, sometimes very good features in all of them, but not consistently so'. In 2005, Ofsted reported that 'the best provision' observed in primary schools was from these programmes, with 67 percent. of lessons good or outstanding. This compared with 43 percent. of conventional KS2 sessions.

The KS3 music pilots took place in 40 schools across five local authorities and came to an end in December 2005. My Department is currently considering evaluation data collected from the pupils, teachers and trainers involved in this pilot.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress her Department has made towards achieving the target for every child to be given the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. [45049]

Jacqui Smith: Since 2002, the percentage of KS2 pupils learning a musical instrument has risen from 7 percent. to 13 percent. We have achieved this by:

Piloting models of delivery in thirteen authorities;

Sending an Ofsted evaluation and a DVD of exemplar materials based on the pilots to all schools and local authorities in England;

Commissioning QCA guidance materials based on the pilots and sending them to all schools and local authorities in England;

Funding a series of national and regional training events for teachers, local authorities and music services;

providing local authority music services with an additional £3 million over the last three years to develop their own models of delivery.

We expect to make significant further progress over the next two years by:

Providing music services with a further £1.5 million for this work in 2006–07;

Investing £1 million per annum in a national musical instrument fund;

Investing £1 million per annum in a national strategy for workforce training and development;

Allocating £26 million to primary and special schools to buy in the specialist support they need to deliver this programme in schools.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional funding she plans to provide for the improvement of *(a)* teaching and *(b)* learning music in the next five years; and how much of this money will go to Staffordshire. [45051]

Jacqui Smith: In the next two years, my Department will be providing the following additional support for the improvement of teaching and learning in music:

£129 million for music service provision (Staffordshire: £2,108,000)

£1.5 million for music service provision at KS2 (Staffordshire: £20,000)

£26 million to primary schools for instrumental and vocal tuition at KS2 (Staffordshire: £422,094)

£2 million to music services for musical instruments (Staffordshire: figures not available)

£2 million to fund a national strategy of training and development for musicians and classroom teachers (Staffordshire: figures not available)

£2 million for Music Manifesto Pathfinders at the Halle, the Roundhouse and The Sage, Gateshead (Staffordshire: not applicable).

Figures are yet to be finalised for additional Music Manifesto projects, including the Festival of Practice 2006, and the possible roll out of a KS3 music pilot.

It is not possible to give any indication at this stage about funding for music post-2008.

This will be considered as part of the wider Comprehensive Spending Review.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the potential effect of paying the money for improving the teaching and learning of music directly to individual schools on the music services provided by local education authorities. [45052]

Jacqui Smith: There has been no reduction in the amount of money paid to local authority music services for improving the teaching and learning of music; this will remain at just under £60 million per annum until at least 2008. In addition, all music services will receive an additional £10,000 in 2006–07 to support further instrumental and vocal tuition at Key Stage 2. Over the next two years, they will receive a share of £2 million for musical instruments and support for continuing professional development at a cost nationally of a further £2 million. I would expect these increases to have a significant positive impact on music services' ability to support teaching and learning at Key Stage 2.

The further £26 million allocated to primary schools may be used to buy in specialist support from a range of providers—I believe it is right to allow schools this degree of choice. Given music services' track record at KS2, and their positive relationship with schools (96 per cent. say they are satisfied with the service they receive), it is likely that a great deal of this specialist support will continue to be bought in from local music services.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) her Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05. [40071]

Maria Eagle: My Department does not collect the information requested from NDPBs and public bodies. The information given in the following table is for my core Department only.

Category	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
Personal computers	7,216	6,692
Laptops	1,949	1,548
Servers	732	748

Category	2003/04	2004/05
Printers	2,266	2,142
Scanners	278	288
Photocopiers	0	0
Fax machines	310	286

Physical Education (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average number of hours per week of physical education undertaken in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in West Lancashire was in 2004-05. [45011]

Jacqui Smith: Data from the annual PE, School Sport and Club Links survey are not collected in the format requested. The 2004/05 survey found that overall, 69 per cent. of 5 to 16-year-olds in partnership schools were spending at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum. This figure is 64 per cent. for primary schools and 75 per cent. for secondary schools. The survey collects data from schools within school sport partnerships. By September 2006, all maintained schools will be within a partnership.

The results from school sport partnerships in Lancashire established at the time of the survey are as follows:

Partnership name	Percentage of pupils who participated in at least two hours of high quality PE and out of hours school sport in a typical week
Tulketh	57
Brownedge St. Mary's	47
Fearns Community	53
Heysham	70
Our Lady's Lancashire	58
Worden	51

The overall average for Lancashire was 56 per cent.

Literacy/Numeracy

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of primary school pupils left primary school without attaining the target levels of *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in each year since 1996-97, broken down by local education authority; and if she will make a statement. [41451]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Standards of literacy and numeracy in our primary schools, as measured by the national curriculum tests, have never been higher. In 2005 79 per cent. of 11-year-olds achieved the target level 4 of the national curriculum in English and 75 per cent. did so in mathematics. In 1997 over a third of 11-year-olds left primary school without attaining the target level 4. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies introduced by the Government in 1998 and 1999 have contributed significantly to this dramatic rise in standards.

The Government are committed to improving primary teaching further and we are implementing the findings from the 2005 Rose Review of Reading and renewing both the literacy and numeracy teaching strategies over the next year to support this.

Our recent White Paper—Higher Standards, Better Schools for All—set out our determination to ensure every child masters the basics of literacy and numeracy. There will be an extra investment of £565 million by 2007/08 to support personalisation in primary and secondary schools, focusing particularly on helping children who have fallen behind in English and mathematics. A further £60 million will be available in each of the next two years to provide effective one-to-one and small group tuition for the lowest attaining pupils.

Protection of Children Act

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many individuals are on the Protection of Children Act list. [44896]

Ruth Kelly: There are currently 1,285 people on the Protection of Children Act List. This includes the names of individuals who were transferred from the Consultancy Service Index, which was maintained by the Department of Health prior to the introduction of the Protection of Children Act.

Pupil Exclusions

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupil exclusions there have been in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Westmorland and Lonsdale since 1997. [43378]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools: number of permanent exclusions 1996/97 to 2003/04, Westmorland and Lonsdale parliamentary constituency

	Primary		Secondary	
	Number	Percentage[1]	Number	Percentage[1]
1996/97	0	0.00	18	0.35
1997/98	0	0.00	17	0.32
1998/99	[2]—	[2]—	9	0.17
1999/2000	0	0.00	7	0.13
2000/01[3]	0	0.00	[2]—	[2]—
2001/02[3]	0	0.00	5	0.09
2002/03[3]	[2]—	[2]—	3	0.05
2003/04[3]	0	0.00	4	0.07

[1] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils on the school roll in January of the same school year. Excludes dually registered pupils.

[2] 1 or 2 exclusions, or a rate based on 1 or 2 exclusions.

[3] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these

years. Figures shown here are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupil exclusions there have been in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Milton Keynes in each year since 1997. [45429]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number of permanent exclusions 1997/98 to 2003/04 Milton Keynes local authority area

	Permanent exclusions			
	Primary		Secondary	
	Number	Percentage[2]	Number	Percentage[2]
1997/98	4	0.02	39	0.34
1998/99	12	0.05	14	0.12
1999/2000	19	0.09	15	0.13
2000/01[3]	9	0.04	10	0.08
2001/02[3]	20	0.09	25	0.20
2002/03[3]	17	0.08	26	0.21
2003/04[3]	17	0.07	20	0.16

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.

[3] Figures are as confirmed by local authorities via the data checking exercise.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

School Buildings (Hereford)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been awarded to Herefordshire council to provide for new school buildings at each school in Hereford constituency since 1997; and what the sum awarded was in each case. [44615]

Jacqui Smith: Capital funding is allocated by the Department to local authorities and direct to schools. Funding allocated to each authority, together with other local resources that may be available, is prioritised to each school in accordance with local authorities' asset management plans, and the Department does not keep central records of this expenditure. Funding allocated by the Department to Herefordshire local authority and schools in its area since 1996–97 is set out in the following table.

	£ million Funding allocated to Herefordshire local authority
1996–97	6.0
1997–98	6.6
1998–99	4.1
1999–2000	5.4
2000–01	8.5
2001–02	5.9
2002–03	8.4
2003–04	27.6
2004–05	8.4
2005–06	8.7

The allocation of £27.6 million in 2003–04 includes a PFI amount of £19.5 million.

School Funding (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of whether the funding increase for schools in Hammersmith and Fulham will ensure that all the schools will be able to fulfil the planning, preparation and assessment initiative. [45255]

Jacqui Smith: All 55 schools in Hammersmith and Fulham have successfully implemented planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for teachers, and all have been validated by the Local Authority/ National Remodelling Team.

In terms of funding, Hammersmith and Fulham will receive an increase of 6.9 per cent. per pupil in its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for 2006–07, slightly above the national average. Within that figure there is an indicative allocation of £187,000 for implementing the final stage of PPA: the local authority should decide, after consultation with its Schools Forum how much additional funding it should allocate in 2006–07 for PPA.

School Playing Fields

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school playing fields in *(a)* Dacorum, *(b)* Hertfordshire and *(c)* England have been sold off since May 1997. [43421]

Jacqui Smith: Since 1997 there has not been any applications involving the loss of a school playing field in Dacorum.

Five applications involving the loss of an area of school playing field capable of forming at least a small sports pitch have been approved at schools in Hertfordshire since 1997.

The number of approved applications to dispose of an area of school playing field capable of forming at least a small sports pitch at schools in England in each year since 1997 is as follows:

	Number
1997/98	2
1998/99	35
1999/2000	29
2000/01	28
2001/02	29
2002/03	19
2003/04	13
2004/05	11
2005/06	1
Total	167

Prior to October 1998, there was no regulation of the sale of school playing fields at local authority controlled schools. If a local authority wanted to sell a school playing field there was nothing to stop it and it could spend the proceeds as it wished.

Schools Admissions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have received places at *(a)* community schools, *(b)* foundation schools, *(c)* voluntary aided schools, *(d)* voluntary controlled schools, *(e)* community special schools and *(f)* foundation special schools at the insistence of their local authority in each of the last five years. [42772]

Jacqui Smith: We do not collect this information.

Local authorities have certain powers to secure the admission of children to schools in their area. For community and voluntary controlled schools, they are the admission authority and so they decide who is admitted. For foundation and voluntary aided schools, they have the power to direct the admission of a child. For special schools (and for the admission of children with statements of special educational need to mainstream schools), they have the power to 'name' the school in the child's statement.

School Staff

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* classroom assistants and *(b)* teachers were employed in (i) the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood and (ii) each London borough in each year since 1997. [43883]

Jacqui Smith: The following tables provide the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants and teachers employed in Ruislip-Norwood constituency and each local authority in London for each year from 1997.

Full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants and teachers in maintained sector schools[1] in Ruislip-Norwood constituency

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Teaching assistants	120	140	140	150	170	180	210	210	260
Teachers	620	630	630	650	650	640	650	680	700

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Source:
Annual School Census.

Full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants in maintained sector schools[1] in local authorities in London

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10
Camden	200	240	250	300	360	440	470	550	580
Greenwich	360	400	430	510	650	650	730	750	820
Hackney	210	250	290	380	420	490	530	610	680
Hammersmith and Fulham	190	200	210	250	240	260	300	360	380
Islington	250	250	270	350	360	350	480	520	560
Kensington and Chelsea	130	140	140	170	210	220	260	270	300
Lambeth	300	350	390	500	560	580	640	720	770
Lewisham	280	290	320	410	570	470	560	620	670
Southwark	350	420	430	650	810	750	710	900	1,030
Tower Hamlets	370	400	450	510	800	970	950	1,070	1,150
Wandsworth	330	370	370	460	470	380	530	590	730
Westminster	150	170	160	190	190	310	280	330	420
Barking and Dagenham	300	290	310	320	400	500	510	560	540
Barnet	290	340	400	480	550	740	720	850	980
Bexley	200	230	280	310	380	320	560	550	600
Brent	260	300	360	390	440	450	470	560	640
Bromley	220	240	250	290	370	440	520	540	560
Croydon	400	410	510	530	660	630	870	950	1,010
Ealing	340	360	370	400	510	450	530	630	690
Enfield	250	290	290	500	590	810	880	970	1,050
Haringey	350	360	380	420	490	650	680	810	900
Harrow	270	270	290	300	300	330	430	480	540
Havering	170	170	200	260	300	310	520	590	680
Hillingdon	330	370	410	450	540	560	640	670	790
Hounslow	280	280	290	330	380	400	400	550	580
Kingston upon Thames	130	130	150	170	220	220	250	310	360
Merton	190	200	220	240	290	250	300	370	530
Newham	280	280	390	500	960	720	1,070	1,190	1,300
Redbridge	200	230	270	370	450	580	620	730	820
Richmond upon Thames	100	110	110	130	160	210	220	250	330
Sutton	160	170	210	230	260	340	330	370	440
Waltham Forest	380	400	410	470	490	610	640	670	780
London	8,200	8,900	9,800	11,800	14,400	15,400	17,600	19,900	22,200

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Source:
Annual School Census.

Full-time equivalent number of regular teachers in maintained sector schools in local authorities in London

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
City of London	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Camden	1,500	1,480	1,440	1,340	1,430	1,570	1,450	1,420	1,480
Greenwich	2,070	2,010	2,030	2,040	2,030	2,080	2,140	2,190	2,260
Hackney	1,450	1,490	1,520	1,510	1,480	1,470	1,600	1,550	1,630
Hammersmith and Fulham	930	920	930	1,000	1,000	1,010	1,060	1,120	1,140
Islington	1,420	1,410	1,330	1,350	1,300	1,460	1,380	1,440	1,440
Kensington and Chelsea	680	670	680	650	660	670	720	690	690
Lambeth	1,710	1,700	1,660	1,620	1,580	1,670	1,620	1,670	1,770
Lewisham	1,870	1,870	1,810	1,890	1,980	2,070	2,040	2,010	1,990
Southwark	1,750	1,800	1,850	1,840	1,960	2,060	2,090	2,030	2,030
Tower Hamlets	2,270	2,170	2,310	2,250	2,180	2,220	2,310	2,280	2,310
Wandsworth	1,690	1,680	1,700	1,680	1,730	1,770	1,750	1,780	1,840
Westminster	1,140	1,160	1,160	1,190	1,250	1,300	1,320	1,290	1,340
Barking and Dagenham	1,450	1,420	1,450	1,470	1,480	1,510	1,570	1,680	1,650
Barnet	2,770	2,730	2,720	2,710	2,740	2,820	2,850	2,800	2,790
Bexley	1,860	1,870	1,940	1,920	2,030	2,160	2,090	2,110	2,050
Brent	2,160	2,190	2,160	2,100	2,110	2,160	2,380	2,350	2,490
Bromley	2,270	2,330	2,340	2,340	2,540	2,640	2,590	2,620	2,690
Croydon	2,620	2,640	2,590	2,880	2,820	2,860	2,880	2,890	3,000
Ealing	2,230	2,220	2,250	2,240	2,220	2,320	2,310	2,300	2,330
Enfield	2,550	2,610	2,650	2,740	2,670	2,670	2,820	2,880	2,950
Haringey	1,870	1,830	1,860	1,850	1,850	1,890	1,910	1,910	1,970
Harrow	1,580	1,500	1,490	1,380	1,490	1,500	1,550	1,560	1,590
Havering	1,870	1,870	1,900	1,890	1,950	2,040	2,060	2,090	2,050
Hillingdon[1]	2,000	2,030	2,030	2,130	2,180	2,230	2,230	2,350	2,400
Hounslow	2,000	1,940	1,980	1,950	2,020	2,010	2,010	2,120	2,160
Kingston upon Thames	1,060	1,050	1,040	1,060	1,070	1,070	1,170	1,150	1,190
Merton	1,210	1,170	1,190	1,150	1,210	1,210	1,240	1,180	1,260
Newham	2,190	2,200	2,290	2,350	2,420	2,520	2,570	2,790	2,820
Redbridge	2,100	2,130	2,180	2,200	2,370	2,380	2,470	2,510	2,470
Richmond upon Thames	1,070	1,070	1,060	1,030	1,040	1,090	1,100	1,050	1,060
Sutton	1,390	1,420	1,450	1,480	1,530	1,590	1,710	1,700	1,750
Waltham Forest	2,010	2,080	2,090	2,060	1,940	2,020	1,940	2,080	2,120
London	56,800	56,700	57,100	57,300	58,300	60,100	60,900	61,600	62,700

Note:
Figures are for the maintained sector. Teachers in academies (including those that were previously maintained schools) are not included.
Source:
Annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies, 618g.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received from the General Teaching Council Wales about ensuring that foreign nationals working as teachers have undergone appropriate background checks. [44731]

Ruth Kelly: I have not received representations from the General Teaching Council for Wales about ensuring that foreign nationals working as teachers have undergone background checks.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance the Department has issued to supply teacher agencies on *(a)* required and *(b)* recommended background checks on persons applying for work as supply teachers in the last two years. [43847]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* Updated advice about checks on teachers, including supply teachers, was published on my Department's Teachernet website in September 2004. In addition my Department's guidance entitled "Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings" published in June 2005 was addressed to employment agencies and businesses that provide staff to schools as well as Head Teachers, Governing Bodies of schools, Local Education authorities, proprietors of independent schools, and Further Education institutions. That guidance included advice about the information that should be obtained from applicants and their referees and about interviewing candidates, as well as guidance on CRB, List 99 and other pre-appointment checks.

In the future we will require mandatory CRB checks on anyone selected for appointment who is or has been resident in the UK. For those who have never lived in this country, we already advise employers to take extra care in checks on overseas candidates and to seek information about the person's criminal history from their country of origin wherever possible. The CRB provides advice to employers about countries from which it is possible to obtain such information and how to obtain it.

Sex and Relationships Education

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what training staff at *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools have to undertake in order to teach sex and relationships education; [45110]

(2) what requirements there are in the *(a)* statutory and *(b)* non-statutory element of the sex and relationships education syllabus on issues of sexuality; [45111]

(3) what her latest estimate is of the proportion of parents who withdraw their child from the non-statutory elements of sex and relationships education in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in England; [45112]

(4) how much authority a school has to determine its own sex and relationships education policy. [45115]

Jacqui Smith: All teachers of sex and relationship education are encouraged to undertake the Government funded teachers' certificate in personal social and health education (PSHE). The certificate supports standards in the delivery of PSHE teaching including sex and relationship education and is available to both primary and secondary school teachers. Almost 5,000 teachers have undertaken the certificate since 2002. A PSHE certificate programme is also available to school and community nurses who support sex education in schools. Over 600 nurses have undertaken the certificate.

The statutory requirements for sex education are outlined in national curriculum science. In addition, secondary schools must teach about HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Other discretionary elements of sex and relationship education are included in the non-statutory PSHE framework. Schools are able to develop their own sex education programmes beyond the statutory minimum taking into account the views of parents and the needs of pupils. Schools are free to determine their own sex education policy taking account of the requirements of the national curriculum and guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

We do not collect data centrally on the numbers of parents withdrawing pupils from the non-statutory elements of sex education. Ofsted ("Sex and Relationships, 2002") estimates 0.04 per cent. of parents exercise this right.

Sex Offenders Register

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people who *(a)* are working for and *(b)* have worked for her Department in Coventry in the last 10 years (i) are on and (ii) have been on the Sex Offenders Register. [44630]

Ruth Kelly: My statement and the accompanying report explain the work under way to establish how many people on the list of registered sex offenders are currently employed in schools in England and Wales.

It is not the Government's policy to reveal publicly information that may lead to the identification and whereabouts of any individual on the Sex Offenders Register. Identifying individuals in this way does not enhance child protection.

Special Measures

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools were under special measures in 2005. [44656]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the number of schools in special measures at the end of each month during 2005.

	Number of schools in special measures
2005	
January	303
February	297
March	288
April	281
May	262
June	248
July	248
August	242
September	238
October	247
November	222
December	224

Teachers' Pensions

Lorely Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will assess the cost-effectiveness of unifying teachers' pension benefits for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. [45440]

Jacqui Smith: There are no plans to assess the cost-effectiveness of unifying teachers' pension benefits for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In practice there is a great deal of commonality across the UK pension schemes for teachers but, as part of the Devolution arrangements, it is important that Ministers in each country's Education Department have the freedom to adapt teachers' remuneration packages, of which pensions form a part, to meet differing recruitment and retention needs.

Truancy

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many pupils were recorded as having at least one incidence of truancy in 2005; [41041]

(2) how many pupils were recorded as having at least one incidence of truancy in 2004–05. [41667]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on unauthorised absence 2005 is shown in the table:

Unauthorised absence[1]

	Number of day pupils of compulsory school age	*Number of pupils absent*[2]
Primary	3,565,048	583,859
Secondary	3,037,013	774,347

[1] Unauthorised absence includes other forms of absence such as lateness, holidays during term time not authorised by the school, absence where reason is not yet established and truancy. Truancy forms only one part of the unauthorised absence figures.

[2] Number of pupils that missed at least one session due to unauthorised absence

Information on unauthorised absence in England 2004/05 can be found in table 6 of SFR 56/2005, Pupil Absence in Schools in England 2004/05 (Revised). This can be found at the following website: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000626/index.shtml.

University Degrees

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost is of educating a university student through a degree course in the 30 most popular subjects. [39916]

Bill Rammell: DfES provides funding for HE institutions through annual grants to the Higher Education funding council (HEFCE). In allocating grant to institutions, HEFCE reflect the fact that

different levels of resource per student are required for different subject groups. The table shows the unit of resource per full-time equivalent student per year. Figures relate to grant for teaching plus assumed tuition fee income only.

Subject group	*Assumed unit of resource per FTE student per year (2005–06) (£)*
The clinical stages of medicine and dentistry and veterinary science	14,432
Laboratory based subjects (science, pre-clinical stages of medicine and dentistry, engineering and technology)	6,134
Subjects with a studio, laboratory or fieldwork element	4,690
All other subjects	3,608

William Gibson

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement about the future employment of William Gibson. [44854]

Ruth Kelly: My statement to the House on 18 January made it clear that it would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people are in receipt of child benefit allowance in the Crosby constituency; and what percentage they constitute of the total population of the constituency. [44966]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

8,300 families in the Crosby constituency were receiving child benefit at August 2004 (for further details, see

www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_benefit/cb_geog_aug04_aug05.pdf).

This represents 15 percent. of the 56,374 electors in the Crosby constituency at 1 December 2004 (for further details, see

www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D8887.xls)

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer by how much the *(a)* family element and *(b)* child element of child tax credit has increased in each year since they were introduced. [43762]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the rates for the family element and child element of the Child Tax Credit in the years since it was introduced.

£ per year

	2003–04 rates	*Change*	*2004–05 rates*	*Change*	*2005–06 rates*
Child Tax Credit					
Family element	545	(+0)	545	(+0)	545
Child element	1,445	(+180)	1,625	(+65)	1,690

Rates and thresholds for tax credits for 2005–06 and 2006–07 can be found on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrcgov.uk/rates

Child Trust Funds

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate his Department has made of the cost of the Child Trust Fund scheme in the next five years, including administration costs; [45449]

(2) what the cost of the Child Trust Fund scheme has been, including administration costs, in each year since the scheme was introduced. [45451]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne) on 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 701W.

Other Child Trust Fund costs including administration are set out in the table.

	£ million
2004–05	52
2005–06	37
2006–07	25
2007–08	15
2008–09	15
2009–10	15

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of additional payments made into child trust funds in 2004–05. [45178]

John Healey: No additional payments were made into child trust fund accounts in the financial year 2004–05. The child trust fund became fully operational on 6 April 2005.

Conference Attendance (Costs)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff *(a)* from the Valuation Office Agency, *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(c)* his Department attended (i) the International Property Tax Institute International Conference in Prague in August 2005, (ii) the Southern African Tax Institute Workshop on the Valuation and Rating of Public Service Infrastructure in June 2005 in Pretoria, South Africa and (iii) the Eighth International Conference of the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation in Alicante, Spain in February 2005; and

what the total estimated cost to the public purse was of attendance at each of the events. [42840]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is as follows:

Event	Number of staff attending VOA	HMRC	HMT	Cost (£)
IPTI Conference Prague August 2005	1	0	0	600
SATI Conference Pretoria June 2005	1	0	0	Nil
IRRV Conference Alicante February 2005	3	0	0	950

Correspondence

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the correspondence dated 29 November 2005 about Mrs Pauline Duff, a constituent of the hon. Member for Edinburgh West. [44697]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs have replied to the hon. Member.

Council Tax (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Castle Point residents received council tax benefit in each of the last five years. [42831]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

The information is in the table.

Council tax benefit recipients in Castle Point borough council area.

May 2001	5,100
May 2002	5,100
May 2003	5,200
May 2004	5,400
May 2005	5,900

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. The data refer to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
3. Council tax benefit totals exclude any second adult rebate cases.

Source:
Housing benefit and council tax benefit management information system quarterly 100 percent. caseload stock-counts taken between May 2001 and May 2005.

Death Statistics

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average death rates were, allowing for age and sex standardisation, from *(a)* all causes, *(b)* coronary heart disease, *(c)* stroke and *(d)* cancer in each ward in (i) Crosby constituency and (ii) the city of Liverpool in the last year for which figures are available. [45200]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the reasonability of the national statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 25 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average death rates were allowing for age and sex standardisation from *(a)* all causes, *(b)* coronary heart disease, *(c)* stroke and *(d)* cancer, for each ward in (i) Crosby constituency and (ii) the City of Liverpool in the last year for which figures are available.

Due to small numbers of deaths in many wards, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) does not produce mortality rates for specific causes at the geographic level requested. Numbers of deaths in wards in England and Wales for selected causes, including coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer, are available for 2004, as part of the Vital Statistics (VS) series of outputs.

Standardised Mortality Ratios for all causes of death for wards in England and Wales, based on deaths in the period 1999–2003, will be published by ONS in Spring 2006.

The North West Public Health Observatory publication *Where Wealth means Heath: Illustrating Inequality in the North West*[1] *includes a map of Standardised Mortality Ratios for Lower-layer Super Output Areas in the North West.* This publication is available on the North West Public Health Observatory website at: http://www.nwpho.org.uk

Mortality rates for all causes, cancer and circulatory diseases are also available to download from this website for Middle-layer Super output Areas in the North West.

[1] Wood J, Hennell T, Jones A, Hooper J, Tocque K, Bellis M. Where Wealth means Health: Illustrating Inequality in the North West. Liverpool, 2006.

EU Budget (UK Contributions)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what methodology was used to calculate the *(a)* Treasury estimate of the UK net contribution to the EU budget and *(b)* the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates of the net contribution to EU institutions; what items are included in each; and if he will recalculate the UK net contributions for each year from 2006–07 to 2012–13 using the ONS methodology and taking account of the recent budget changes. [45339]

John Healey: Figures published by the Treasury for the United Kingdom's net contribution to the EC Budget consist of the United Kingdom's gross contribution less the UK abatement and less public sector receipts. An explanation of the reasons for any differences between this and the Office for National Statistics' presentation of "UK official transactions with Institutions of the EU" (Table 9.9 (page 151) of the 2005 Pink Book is given on page 183 of the Pink Book. The Office for National Statistics figures are published on a calendar year basis and are historic. Financial year forecasts are not produced on the basis of the Office for National Statistics presentation. Revised forecasts of UK net contributions to the EC Budget, on the usual HM Treasury method, will be included in the Financial Statement and Budget Report.

External Consultants

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies and other services placed with (i) Deloitte and Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG, (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers and (v) all other consultants in 2004–05 by his Department and its agencies. [42069]

John Healey: The information in respect of contracts placed with the four named accountancy firms in 2004–05 is set out in the following table Equivalent information in relation to all other consultants could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	£000
Core Treasury	
Deloitte and Touche	
Various secondments	220
Ernst & Young	
Consultancy on business continuity management planning	14
Consultancy on government banking arrangements	12
Internal audit services	[1]70
Subtotal Ernst & Young	96
PricewaterhouseCoopers	
Services as joint receivers and liquidators of Barlow Clowes	46
Various secondments	253
Subtotal PricewaterhouseCoopers	299
KPMG	
Consultancy on risk management	178
Consulting on government banking arrangements	68
Various secondments	98
Subtotal KPMG	244
Debt Management Office	
Deloitte and Touche	
Consultancy on the Debt Management Account annual report and accounts	4
Ernst & Young, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers	0
Office of Government Commerce	
Deloitte and Touche	
Financial advice on key suppliers	95
Consultancy on e-commerce	22
Subtotal Deloitte and Touche	117
KPMG	
Consultancy on Human Resource issues	48
Consultancy on model charging mechanisms	33
Consultancy on productive time workstream	284
Various secondments	10
Subtotal KPMG	375
PricewaterhouseCoopers	
Consultancy support to Kelly Programme	57
Various secondments	150
Subtotal PricewaterhouseCoopers	207
Ernst & Young	0
OGCbuying solutions	
Deloitte and Touche	
Cash flow consultancy	36
Due diligence consultancy	12
Subtotal Deloitte and Touche	48
KPMG	
Internal audit	63
Supplier audit	14
Subtotal KPMG	77
Ernst & Young and PricewaterhouseCoopers	0

[1] The contract with Ernst & Young for support to the in house internal audit team does not specify a total value, which will depend on the nature of the assignments, to be agreed by the Audit Committee each year, and the extent of the extra resources needed by the in house team. The value given is the total cost of Ernst & Young's internal audit services in 2004–05.

[2] This contract was entered jointly with the DTI Shareholder Executive and ECGD. HM Treasury's share is £26,000.

Franked Investment Income

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take into account group litigation orders in the European Court of Justice on franked investment income tax rules in his next budget report. [44992]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government are confident that the current Franked Investment Income (FII) legislation is fully conformant with both its domestic and international legal obligations.

Fuel Duty/RPI

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the annual percentage change in *(a)* fuel duty and *(b)* the retail price index was in each of the last 10 years. [43050]

John Healey: Historical fuel duty rates can be found in Hydrocarbon Oils Bulletin published by HM Revenue and Customs and available on UK Trade Info website: www.uktradeinfo.com/index.cfm?task = statindex. Historical retail prices index can be found in Pocket Data Bank published by HM Treasury and available on HMT website: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/economic_data_and_tools/data_index.cfm.

Incomes/Savings

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the change in the differential in the *(a)* income and *(b)* savings of the rich and poor since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [44785]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 25 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the change in the differential in the income and savings of the rich and poor since 1997. (44785)

Estimates of differential income are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) analyses 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income'. The latest analysis for 2003–04 was published on the National Statistics website on 7th July 2005 edition of 'Economic Trends'. The analysis includes measures of income inequality for households in the United Kingdom based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering approximately 7,000 households in the UK. The analysis for 2004–05 is due to be published on the National Statistics website in April 2006.

Disposable household income is a commonly used indicator of living standards. Table 26 in Appendix 1 shows the percentage share of total disposable income for each quintile group. The quintile groups are based on a ranking of households by disposable income, with the bottom quintile containing the bottom fifth of households, the 2nd quintile containing those households between the 20th and 40th percentile and so on. Figures are available from 1981 to 2003–04. In 1997–98 the bottom quintile received 8% of total disposable income and the top quintile received 42%. In 2003–04 the bottom quintile still received 8% of total disposable income and the top quintile 42%.

Comparable figures for household savings are not available. ONS is currently developing the Household Assets Survey to improve the availability of information on savings and wealth.

Insurance Companies (Additional Fees)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on the tax liability of additional fees charged by insurance companies; [44978]

(2) what fees charged by insurance companies are liable to tax; and how much revenue was raised by taxes on these charges since 1997. [44993]

John Healey: Insurance companies do not generally charge fees. They charge premiums, on which insurance premium tax (IPT) may be due either at the standard rate of 5 per cent. or the higher rate of 17.5 per cent., depending on the type of insurance. IPT receipts since 1997 are published by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and can be found at:

www.uktradeinfo.com.

Any other services supplied by insurance companies which are not exempt from VAT under Group 2 Schedule 9 of the Value Added Tax Act 1994 will be liable to VAT at the standard rate of 17.5 per cent. HMRC does not collect data on VAT for individual goods and services.

Maternity Services

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many births there were to women resident in West Lancashire at *(a)* individual maternity hospitals, *(b)* midwife-led units, *(c)* home and *(d)* other locations in each year since 2000. [45126]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 25 January 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your request for the number of births to women resident in West Lancashire at *(a)* individual maternity hospitals, *(b)* midwife-led units, *(c)* home and *(d)* other locations in each year since 2000. (45126)

The table below gives place of occurrence for live births or stillbirths occurring in England and Wales to women usually resident in the West Lancashire Local Authority area at the time of the birth. Information is not available centrally on which institutions are midwife-led units, so figures are presented for categories *(a)* and *(b)* combined, *(c)* and *(d)*.

Live births and stillbirths by place of occurrence for women resident in West Lancashire local authority area, 2000 to 2004

		Year of occurrence				
	Place of occurrence	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
(a) and *(b)*	Maternity hospital/unit					
	District General Hospital, Ormskirk	783	830	822	949	1,029
	Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital, Southport	104	112	105	42	11
	Billinge Hospital, Wigan	92	91	59	74	28
	Liverpool Womens Hospital	42	35	36	39	61
	Sharoe Green Hospital, Fulwood, Preston	9	21	25	12	9
	University Hospital Aintree	21	12	8	8	[2]
	Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	20
	Other Hospitals	6	7	4	10	16
(c)	At Home	16	13	9	15	10
(d)	Elsewhere[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
	Total	1,074	1,123	1,071	1,150	1,184

[1] Hospital not providing maternity services during the year.
[2] Annual counts of less than five. There were seven births, all live, during the period 2000–04.

Stakeholder Pensions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to revise stakeholder pension tax relief levels in 2006. [43956]

Mr. Des Browne: From 6 April 2006 stakeholder pensions will, like all other registered pension schemes, enjoy the tax reliefs and advantages set out in Part 4 of the Finance Act 2004. This new regime, which has been widely welcomed, will help introduce greater choice, flexibility, transparency, clarity and cost-efficiency.

The Chancellor keeps all tax matters under review as part of the normal Budget process.

Private/Public Sector Employment (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector jobs in (i) manufacturing and (ii) the service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in Coventry South in each year since 1997. [44632]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 25 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about private and public sector employment. I am replying her absence. (44632)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorisation of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the number of persons in private sector employment, by the specified splits and for the public sector, for people resident in the Coventry South constituency as shown by the annual local LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1998 to February 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Yours sincerely,

Persons in employment resident in the Coventry South constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousand

12 months ending February	*Private Sector* *Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	34
1999	7	18	2	7	33
2000	7	19	2	7	35
2001	7	22	2	12	43
2002	10	23	4	10	47
2003	10	22	3	10	45
2004	10	18	3	10	41

n/a = Not available.

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey—generally overestimate public sector employment.

[2] Other industries are Agriculture, Fishing, Energy and Water and Construction.

Note:

Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Source:

Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit fraud cases have been prosecuted to date; and how many fraudulent claims are involved. [44970]

Dawn Primarolo: For the income tax year 2005–06 (to end December) we have prosecuted 180 cases. As regards the number of fraudulent claims, it is not possible to provide the information in the format requested.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many prosecuted cases of tax credit fraud relate to *(a)* individuals and *(b)* criminal gangs. [44971]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table provides the breakdown of prosecuted cases for tax credit fraud.

Number

	Individuals	*Organised crime (Gangs)*
2000–01	2	—
2001–02	28	—
2002–03	35	—
2003–04	59	—
2004–05	211	—
2005–06[1]	190	3

[1] To end of December

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the proportion of households who are eligible for tax credits who are not claiming them. [45107]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) on 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1700W.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many claimants have made incorrect claims for *(a)* working tax credits and *(b)* child tax credits in West Lancashire constituency area since these tax credits were introduced. [45124]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Kettering (Mr. Hollobone) on 31 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 735W.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of forged tax credits resulting in prosecution have been reported to Jobcentre Plus in Hammersmith and Fulham in the last 12 months. [45270]

Dawn Primarolo: None.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of forged tax credits there were in Hammersmith and Fulham in each of the five years before the Jobcentre Plus scheme was launched; and how many there were in the last year for which figures are available. [45271]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria an individual from another EU country residing in the UK must meet to be entitled to *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit. [45327]

Dawn Primarolo: Nationals of other EEA member states who reside in the UK and claim child and working tax credits must meet the same criteria as other residents of the UK.

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria he will use to measure the effectiveness of the HM Revenue and Customs recent tax credit advertising campaign. [42400]

Dawn Primarolo: Regular surveys are carried out to assess the effectiveness of tax credits communications, with particular regard to major advertising campaigns, as well as the overall awareness of tax credits and comprehension of key messages.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many claimants have reported leaving the United Kingdom in relation to a tax credit claim in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43650]

(2) how many claimants have had their tax credit payments altered as a result of reporting leaving the United Kingdom in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region. [43652]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints were received by HM Revenue and Customs in relation to the recovery of tax credit overpayments in each year for which figures are available broken down by *(a)* tax credit and *(b)* region. [43661]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on complaints about the recovery of tax credits received in HM Revenue and Customs is not available.

For information about the number of disputed tax credit overpayments received in HM Revenue and Customs, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my right hon. friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) and the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1791–92W. The number of disputed tax credit overpayments received in the month of November was around 32,500.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much has been paid in additional payments to tax credit claimants on account of hardship after reporting excess in-year payments in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43696]

(2) how many tax credit claimants who reported excess in-year payments *(a)* received additional payments on account of hardship and *(b)* had their tax credits withdrawn in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) type of tax credit and (ii) region . [43697]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Bishop Auckland (Helen Goodman) on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1455–56W. The number of claims for which payments had been adjusted in 2005–06, up to 31 December 2005, is around 3,200. All of the information cannot be broken down in the format requested.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tax credit claimants have reported a fall in their child care costs of more than £10 a week in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43701]

(2) how many claimants have had their tax credit payments *(a)* increased and *(b)* decreased as a result of reporting a fall in their child care costs of more than £10 a week in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) type of tax credit and (ii) region. [43710]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much in tax credits has been found to have been overpaid as a result of annual tax credit reviews in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43730]

(2) how many claimants have been discovered during their annual tax credit review to have had tax credits overpaid to them in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; and in how many of these cases payments were (i) withdrawn and (ii) reduced. [43732]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards. 2003–04 Geographical Analysis." This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families by constituency with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm. Estimates of numbers and values of overpayments or underpayments for 2004–05 awards at 5 April 2005 will not be available until after family circumstances and incomes for 2004–05 have been finalised. Information concerning withdrawn and reduced payments is not available.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) by how much on average claimants have had their tax credits reduced as a result of it having been discovered in connection with their annual tax credit review that they had tax credits overpaid to them in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43731]

(2) how much in total has been withdrawn from claimants who have had their tax credits withdrawn entirely as a result of it having been discovered in connection with their annual tax credit review that they had tax credits overpaid to them in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region. [43734]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many claimants appealed *(a)* successfully and *(b)* unsuccessfully through the HM Revenue and Customs complaints procedure against a decision to change the amount of tax credits paid to them in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) type of tax credit and (ii) region. [43754]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the requested format.

For details of the number of appeals about tax credits received in HM Revenue and Customs from June 2005 until 31 October 2005, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) and the right hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) on 12 December 2005, columns 1791–92W.

In November 2005 HMRC received around 1,195 tax credits appeals. The figures for December 2005 are not yet available.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the maximum household income was below which *(a)* families and *(b)* individuals were eligible for each tax credit in each year for which figures are available. [43759]

Dawn Primarolo: Most families with children are entitled to tax credits with incomes of up to £58,000, or up to £66,000 if at least one child is under the age of one. This could be higher if there are a large number of eligible children or the family has two or more children and maximum eligible childcare costs.

For families without children, receiving the basic and 30-hour element of WTC only, the maximum income at which they could receive tax credits, since the introduction of working tax credit is given in the following table:

£

	Singles	*Couples*
2003–04	10,700	14,800
2004–05	10,900	15,100
2005–06	11,300	15,600

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of eligible *(a)* lone parent households and *(b)* non-lone parent households (i) received and (ii) claimed tax credits for each year for which figures are available. [43765]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates relating to working families' tax credit are available on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/wftc/takeup_rates.htm. Analysis relating to 2003–04 is ongoing and we expect this work to be completed towards the end of 2005–06.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total cost was of the digital mapping software and hardware purchased by the Valuation Office Agency from the company Tenet. [42839]

Dawn Primarolo: Since Tenet were awarded the contract in May 1999 to provide Digital Mapping Application Software to the Valuation Office Agency the total paid to Tenet for the software and user licences is £706,668 excluding VAT. Tenet has not provided any hardware to the agency to date. This tool is used across the agency's business.

VAT Fraud

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to the Government in 2004–05 of Missing Trader Intra Community (Carousel) VAT fraud; and what estimate he has made of the cost in 2005–06. [45244]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC's latest estimates of MTIC fraud were published as part of the PBR 2005 documentation. http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2005/mitl 2005.pdf. These cover all forms of MTIC fraud, not just the carousel variant. Because of the difficulty of obtaining accurate estimates of the scale of fraud, the figures are presented as a range.

HMRC do not produce forecasts of MTIC fraud, so an estimate for 2005–06 is not available.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the number of Child Support Agency cases *(a)* received and *(b)* cleared for each month from January 2004 to October 2005; and if he will make a statement. [21582]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 25 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the number of Child Support Agency cases *(a)* received and *(b)* cleared for each month from January 2004 to October 2005; and if he will make a statement.

Such information as is available is presented in the table below:

Potential new-scheme applications received and cleared

2005	*Received*	*Cleared*
January	22,000	16,000
February	25,000	19,000
March	25,000	24,000
April	25,000	24,000
May	25,000	27,000
June	25,000	26,000
July	25,000	25,000
August	23,000	22,000
September	24,000	28,000

Notes to the table:

1. Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. A potential application is defined as cleared if the case is closed, a maintenance calculation has been carried out and a payment arrangement between the parent with care (PWC) and the non-resident parent is in place, the PWC is identified as claiming Good Cause, the PWC is subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision or the application is identified as being a change of circumstances on an existing case as opposed to a new application.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been made to the Child Support Agency in each month since January 2003; and if he will make a statement. [21961]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 25 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been made to the Child Support Agency in each month since January 2003.

The volumes of complaints received direct from clients, their representatives and MPs to the Child Support Agency or to our Ministers over the requested period are in the attached table.

During 2003–04 a three-tier complaints process was introduced. Stage 1 complaints are dealt with by the complaints resolution team located within each of the Agency's six business units. Stage 2 complaints are an escalation to the relevant Area Director when the client is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1; and stage 3 is an escalation to the Chief Executive if the client remains dissatisfied. At each level of the complaints process, clients are advised as to how they can escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the reply they receive.

In a letter sent to you by Mike Isaac in July 2005, the number of complaints received by the Agency incorrectly included those which had been escalated through stages 2 and 3 as a separate component of the total number of complaints received by the Agency, when in actual fact they are escalations of stage 1 complaints, of which they are a subset. This error has been rectified in this response. I apologise for any inconvenience this might have caused. We will, in the future, not include these figures as intake.

As you can see, the volume of complaints received by the Agency has broadly stabilised. In the twelve months up to November 2005, the Agency received a total of 54,000 complaints, this compares to 55,000 for the 12 months up to May 2005 (the earliest period for which comparable data for total numbers of complaints received is available).

To put the attached figures into context, the 54,000 complaints received by the Agency in the 12 months to November 2005 represents less than 4% of the 1.4 million cases currently dealt with by the CSA.

I hope you find this helpful.

Number of complaints received by the child support agency in each month since January 2003

	January 2003	*February 2003*	*March 2003*	*April 2003*	*May 2003*
Stage 1 written complaints	1,172	1,340	1,446	1,384	1,425
Stage 1 telephone complaints	144	175	208	220	310
To chief executive	574	649	764	[1]	[1]
Treat official	108	144	115	73	93
MP letter to business unit	341	353	381	362	391

	June 2003	*July 2003*	*August 2003*	*September 2003*	*October 2003*
Stage 1 written complaints	1,666	2,017	1,725	2,086	2,724
Stage 1 telephone complaints	508	667	595	772	780
To chief executive	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Treat official	96	132	107	107	178
MP letter to business unit	403	420	382	443	519

	November 2003	*December 2003*	*January 2004*	*February 2004*	*March 2004*
Stage 1 written complaints	2,553	1,697	2,360	2,358	2,814
Stage 1 telephone complaints	625	525	749	778	929
To chief executive	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Treat official	124	110	139	204	158
MP letter to business unit	446	403	428	351	569

	April 2004	*May 2004*	*June 2004*	*July 2004*	*August 2004*
Stage 1 written complaints	2,422	2,748	2,611	2,457	2,505
Stage 1 telephone complaints	818	897	907	958	807
To chief executive	[2]	[2]	462	481	447
Treat official	123	114	111	89	86
MP letter to business unit	566	499	592	723	755

	September 2004	*October 2004*	*November 2004*	*December 2004*	*January 2005*
Stage 1 written complaints	2,746	2,483	2,633	1,494	2,229
Stage 1 telephone complaints	876	834	927	937	807
To chief executive	404	367	446	485	289
Treat official	82	58	75	93	70
MP letter to business unit	722	755	891	705	714

	February 2005	*March 2005*	*April 2005*	*May 2005*	*June 2005*
Stage 1 written complaints	2,454	2,431	2,561	2,187	2,209
Stage 1 telephone complaints	874	928	934	572	909
To chief executive	460	511	665	228	482
Treat official	89	118	127	83	105
MP letter to business unit	962	987	793	719	789

	July 2005	*August 2005*	*September 2005*	*October 2005*	*November 2005*
Stage 1 written complaints	2,030	2,213	2,291	2,158	2,438
Stage 1 telephone complaints	779	786	863	892	1,003
To chief executive	478	524	480	493	507
Treat official	53	66	93	128	162
MP letter to business unit	814	754	798	820	1,001

[1] During 2003–04 complaints sent directly to the chief executive were not recorded separately from those complaints, which were escalated to him as part of the three-stage process. Therefore, although 7,183 complaints in total were received during 2003–04, it is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the chief executive directly (as opposed to those escalated via the complaints process), thus preventing meaningful comparison with data for other years.

[2] Complaints to chief executive include complaints direct from customers and MP's. In April and May of 2004, the chief executive received a total of 1,435 complaints directly however they were not recorded separately from those received as part of the three stage process.

Notes:

1. Treat-official letters are those received by a Minister from a member of the public, and referred to the CSA on behalf of the Minister.
2. These figures do not include complaints received by the Independent Case Examiner as these were not made to the Child Support Agency, (your PQ9328 refers).

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints the Child Support Agency has received from members of the public in relation to the computer systems used by the Agency since their introduction. [30034]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 25 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints the Child Support Agency has received from members of the public in relation to the computer systems used by the Agency since their introduction.

It is difficult to absolutely categorise every complaint as there is often a mix of elements that cause problems and delays. A complaint may cover a number of different issues.

I can report that between August 2004 and September 2005 approximately 11,000 complaints were received in relation to cases affected by issues relating to the Agency's computer systems.

I regret that equivalent information was not recorded prior to August 2004. I must point out that the figures I have quoted include all complaints received and not just those that are received directly from clients. A complaint may be received on behalf of a client or by a representative, for example an MP, and the figures relating to the types of complaint for such cases cannot be broken down separately.

The numbers presented in this response are rounded to the nearest thousand.

I hope you find this information useful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2249W, on the Child Support Agency, for what reasons the Child Support Agency does not send a Deduction of Earnings Order to employers in all cases where an employed non-resident parent is not making regular payments. [37943]

Mr. Plaskitt: Deduction from Earnings Orders (DEOs) are a discretionary decision which means the Agency considers each case on merit and seeks to apply them if a non-resident parent (NRP) is employed but not compliant with maintenance payments. A DEO may not be appropriate for a limited number of reasons including, where the NRP's jobs are likely to be short term or if an NRP is employed outside of the UK.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of calls to the Child Support Agency helpline were *(a)* answered, *(b)* received, *(c)* engaged and *(d)* hung up on in each month from June to November; and if he will make a statement. [38207]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 25 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of calls to the Child Support Agency helpline have been *(a)* answered *(b)* received *(c)* engaged and *(d)* hung up on in each month from June to November; and if he will make a statement.

The information requested is contained in the attached table.

With regard to the first part of the question, the proportion of calls answered has been presented in two ways. Some calls are either ineffective (due to a network failure, for example) or are abandoned or lost during the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) part of the process before they have joined a queue to be answered by staff (for example if a client does not have their National Insurance number to hand and hangs up to go and find it before calling back). Therefore this figure has also been presented as a proportion of the total calls that are available for Agency staff to answer.

I hope you find this helpful.

	2005					
	June	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*
Attempted customer calls to both CS2 and CSCS numbers	463,000	418,000	440,000	500,000	480,000	454,000
Calls for which outcome not recorded	7,000	5,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	2,000
Calls for which outcome recorded	456,000	413,000	436,000	496,000	476,000	452,000
Of which:						
Percentage calls that received an engaged/busy tone	1	—	—	1	5	—
Percentage calls otherwise ineffective	3	2	2	3	3	2
Percentage calls abandoned/lost during the IVR process	4	5	5	5	6	7
Percentage calls abandoned in the queue (post IVR)	10	8	9	11	8	6
Percentage calls answered	82	86	83	79	77	85
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Percentage calls answered that were available to staff to answer (post IVR)	89	92	90	88	90	93

Notes:
1. Data is presented for calls made regarding cases on the new system (CS2) and the old system (CSCS) combined.
2. "—" indicates a figure less than 0.5 per cent.
3. Total calls attempted exclude calls attempted outside working hours.
4. 'Calls for which outcome not recorded' are those which were received but for which, due to problems with the MI system, the eventual outcome was not recorded. Some of these calls would have been answered, and others would have been abandoned. The volume of such calls has decreased significantly in the last 3 years as management information systems have improved.
5. 'Calls for which outcome recorded' are those which were received and for which there is management information to track the eventual outcome.
6. Other ineffective calls are those that resulted in a ring tone but no reply, fail due to network technical problems, or are answered by a BT message but do not connect to the CSA system.
7. IVR denotes the automated touch tone part of the process where customers enter their details via the telephone key pad. Once callers have cleared this part of the process, they enter a queue to be answered by a member of CSA staff. There is no IVR process on the old system.
8. The percentage of calls abandoned in the queue refers to the percentage of total calls received, for which the outcome is recorded, that were abandoned once in a queue to be answered by staff.
9. The percentage of calls answered that were available to staff to answer refers to calls answered as a proportion of those that were connected to the queue for an agent (post IVR where appropriate).
10. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand, and percentages to the nearest 1 per cent. Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time taken by the Child Support Agency is to update maintenance payments by absent parents where the income of the absent parent has changed. [41895]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available.

Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's position on the Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS); what *(a)* gender mainstream programmes, *(b)* diversity packages and *(c)* social inclusion projects are planned under the programme; what publicity work will accompany the programme; and if he will make a statement. [23012]

Mr. Plaskitt: The UK, along with other member states, supports the need for this successor EU-level spending programme for the period 2007–13, which will provide financial support for the implementation of the Community's objectives for employment and social affairs and the achievement of the Lisbon goals. It will replace existing programmes to promote measures to combat direct or indirect discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation; promote gender equality; support analysis, research and cooperation between member states in employment and labour market matters; and encourage cooperation between member states to combat social exclusion. The new programme does not propose a range of specific projects, but rather provides a framework to support EU-level actions under the areas covered, such as developing statistical tools, sharing of best practice, awareness-raising campaigns and support for organisations operating in the relevant fields. This includes action in the three areas the hon. Member mentions where, for example, we would expect support to continue for the common legislative framework on gender equality, which provides a level playing field for the single European market in goods and services. But legislation is only part of the story—practice has to change and PROGRESS will enable good practice to be developed and shared between member states. Similarly, PROGRESS is likely to maintain support for a range of intermediary groups from across the UK to increase knowledge and understanding by employers and individuals of new anti-discrimination law. It should also support a range of research projects, such as those looking at the provision of services for ethnic minority elders; the particular barriers faced by the most deprived children and families in gaining access to welfare provisions; and ways of improving links between local and central government in the field of social exclusion. Once agreed, the new unified programme will be publicised via the usual Commission and other European institute and news routes, including web and press, and through the existing management structures for those working under the current programmes.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what studies his Department has carried out into the possibility of transferring child maintenance responsibilities to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs; and if he will make a statement. [21439]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department's policies and how they are delivered, including those of the Child Support Agency, are always kept under review.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham are in receipt of jobseeker's allowance. [45264]

Mr. Plaskitt: As at December 2005, there were 3,840 people in receipt of jobseeker's allowance in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Pensions (Deemed Buy-back)

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what total *(a)* gross and *(b)* net amounts his Department has budgeted for in each of the next three years in respect of Deemed Buy-Backs of pensions. [43899]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply

The information requested is not available. This is because a person may find himself or herself in a pension scheme that winds up in an underfunded position at any

time during their working life. If they opt for Deemed Buy-Back they will only benefit from any State Additional Pension rights secured when they become entitled to their State Retirement Pension. This could be many years into the future. No funds are, nor can be, set aside arising from Deemed Buy-Back.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 26 January 2006

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the proportion of the gross national product of Afghanistan which was generated by the production of drugs in each of the last four years. [46085]

Dr. Howells: We have made no such assessment.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), however, has estimated the value of opium production at farm-gate level as follows:

	Production (metric tonnes)	*Farm-gate value (US$ billion)*
2002	3,400	1.2
2003	3,600	1.02
2004	4,200	0.6
2005	4,100	0.56

Since 2003, UNODC have assessed the value of opiate exports from Afghanistan as a percentage of licit gross domestic product as follows:

	Total export value of opiates (US$ billion)	*Percentage of licit GDP*
2003	2.3	50
2004	2.8	61
2005	2.7	52

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to ensure a reduction in production of opium and its derivatives in Afghanistan. [44141]

Ian Pearson: As G8 lead nation on counter narcotics in Afghanistan, the UK and the international community are supporting the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) to deliver their National Drug Control Strategy and to bring about a sustainable reduction in the cultivation, production and trafficking of opium. To that end, the UK spent £24,442,350 on counter narcotics activity in Afghanistan in 2004–05. This included the running of seven training courses on intelligence and investigation techniques for the Afghan Counter Narcotics Police, support for interdiction operations, resulting in major seizures of opiates, the provision of a mobile forensic laboratory and help to establish regional law enforcement offices in seven provincial centres outside Kabul.

Over the next three financial years, the UK is providing more than £270 million. This is a funding increase, agreed by the Domestic and Overseas Policy Cabinet Committee on 21 July 2005, of £115 million. £130 million of the funding will be provided by the Department for International Development, with the rest coming from other Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office. In this three year period, we will focus on the following three key priorities, which we judge will make the greatest impact: targeting the trafficker and the top end of the drugs trade; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihood opportunities; and developing strong and effective counter narcotics institutions.

In November 2005, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) confirmed the poppy cultivation figures for 2004–05 from their annual survey. UNODC reported a 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 (production of 4,200 metric tonnes) to 104,000 ha in 2004–05 (4,100 metric tonnes). Good weather and an absence of crop disease were responsible for the increased yield. While there remains a risk that cultivation may increase again this year, our goal is to ensure that the downward trend in cultivation is maintained in the long term. We are working hard with the GoA and other international partners to ensure that it is able to deliver on this goal.

Bosnia

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has had discussions with his Bosnian counterpart in relation to the 7 July bombings. [45349]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the 7 July bombings in general terms with Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency Member Tihic at the Srebenica commemoration on 11 July 2005. UK authorities are in regular contact with their Bosnian counterparts on counter-terrorism matters.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. [45737]

Ian Pearson: None. No one from the international community has had access to Aung San Suu Kyi since 2004, including representatives of the UN and the International Red Cross who have sought to see her.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many political prisoners were detained in Burma as of 1 January. [45738]

Ian Pearson: There are no definitive numbers, and the situation changes daily with releases and arrests as well as some tragic recent deaths in jail. We believe that the current estimate of 1,131 made by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) is broadly accurate.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people are held in administrative detention in Burma under the 1975 State Protection Act. [45792]

Ian Pearson: We estimate that at least five prisoners are held under administrative detention under the 1975 State Protection Act, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

and U Tin Oo of the National league for Democracy (NLD), and Shan politician U Shwe Ohn, who has been detained since 7 February 2005.

We are also particularly concerned that this law has been used repeatedly to extend the detention of NLD MPs Dr. Than Nyein and Dr. May Win Myint, who are in very poor health. We have raised these cases with the Burmese regime and called for their immediate release.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many members of the Burmese parliament-elect are in prison in Burma. [45800]

Ian Pearson: Fourteen.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political and human rights situation in Burma. [45801]

Ian Pearson: We remain deeply concerned about the situation in Burma. Serious abuses of human rights continue, particularly in areas of armed conflict. We regularly raise our concerns with the Burmese authorities. We believe if Burma is to attain the State Peace and Development Council's (SPDC) stated goal of becoming a

'modern, developed and democratic nation',

and promote successful national reconciliation, this will require a more open and inclusive political process than is currently being pursued by the SPDC.

We are particularly concerned that there is an increasing risk of a breakdown of relations between the SPDC and a number of ethnic ceasefire groups, including the Shan, Kachin, and Mon. We believe that the SPDC should take steps to restore confidence with these groups, inter alia through the immediate release of the Shan leaders who received heavy sentences in 2005, and an independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the killing by SPDC troops of five Kachin Independence Organisation members and a civilian on 2 January.

China

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of China about the persecution of Christians. [45553]

Ian Pearson: We regularly raise concerns about freedom of religious belief in China, including the persecution of Christians, with the Chinese Government. We did so at the last UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in June 2005. Freedom of religion was a focus of the last EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place under the UK presidency in October 2005. The UK led an EU demarche on the Chinese Government on freedom of religion in Beijing on 29 December 2005. Individual cases of concern, including Christians, were raised at this meeting and at the Dialogues. We will continue to raise our concerns about religious freedom with the Chinese authorities.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will answer the letter dated 28 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs B. Cush, forwarded from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. [45408]

Ian Pearson: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 23 January 2006.

Cuba

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the meetings held by his Department with officials from the US to discuss relations with and policy towards Cuba since 1997. [44590]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office regularly holds meetings with US officials that include discussions about relations with and policy towards Cuba. To collate the information would incur disproportionate costs.

We continue to differ with the US in our policy towards Cuba. While the US favours sanctions and isolation, we prefer constructive engagement with the Cuban authorities. We frequently reiterate our differing approach to US officials in meetings with them. On 8 November 2005, we again voted to adopt the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the US against Cuba.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of prison conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what visits to penal establishments have been made by embassy staff. [44580]

Ian Pearson: Prison conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remain poor, with frequent cases of overcrowding, malnutrition, ill treatment and disease. Years of conflict, exacerbated by the collapse of the state and chronic poverty, have resulted in abuses of humanitarian standards and insufficient government funds to maintain prisons. We have repeatedly called on the DRC authorities to respect international humanitarian law and Human Rights Conventions. We continue to register our concerns over human rights with the DRC Government in bilateral and multilateral political discussions.

Staff from the embassy and the Department for International Development in Kinshasa have made regular visits to prisons in different cities across the DRC over the last 12 months. They liaise regularly with UN staff monitoring human rights and the rule of law, who have regular access to the majority of the country's prisons.

EU Council Meetings

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* formal and *(b)* informal EU Council Ministers meetings he has attended since 1 July 2005; and if he will list the dates and subjects of the meetings. [44963]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Since 1 July 2005, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has attended the following seven formal Council of Ministers meetings:

18–19 July General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), Brussels (first day only);

3 October GAERC, Luxembourg;

18 October GAERC, Luxembourg;

7 November GAERC, Brussels;

21–22 November GAERC, Brussels (first day only);

7 December GAERC, Brussels; and

12–13 December GAERC, Brussels.

In addition, he attended the 15–16 December meeting of Heads of State or Government—the European Council—in Brussels.

He has also attended one informal Council meeting since 1 July: the Foreign Affairs Informal (or 'Gymnich') in Newport on 1–2 September.

Full details of all the above meetings can be found on the UK presidency website available at, www.eu2005.gov.uk.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the forthcoming business in the Council of the European Union for January; and if he will list the major European Union events for the next six months. [45189]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The forthcoming business in the Council of the European Union for January is as follows:

Council of Ministers meetings:

30–31 January: General Affairs and External Relations Council

Informal Ministerial meetings:

29 January: Informal meeting of Trade Ministers

During the first six months of 2006, the European Union, under the Austrian presidency, will hold meetings of EU Heads of State or Government ('European Councils') on 23–24 March and 15–16 June, 32 Council of Ministers meetings and 14 informal ministerial meetings. Full details of these and other major European Union events for the next six months can be found on the website of the Austrian presidency, available at www.eu2006.au.

Fiji

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the security situation in Fiji. [45352]

Ian Pearson: Although tensions between the Government and the armed forces have re-surfaced in recent weeks, the situation in Fiji is now calm following talks between the Acting President, the Prime Minister and the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice for Fiji was amended on 13 January. British nationals are advised to exercise caution, to avoid demonstrations and to keep up-to-date with local developments.

Holocaust Memorial Day

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. [45550]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, an independent charity supported by the Home Office, is responsible for Holocaust Memorial Day and organises the annual commemorative event. This year's event will be held in Cardiff on 26 January under the theme "One person can make a difference", hosted by my right hon. Friend for Cardiff West, Rhodri Morgan, AM. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will be represented by officials.

The FCO leads the UK delegation to the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, in which a number of UK community groups participate.

The UK supported the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1 November 2005 designating 27 January as the annual Holocaust Memorial Day.

Illegal Drugs

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Government spent in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 on the reducing availability strand of its policy to prevent the supply of illegal drugs. [44120]

Dr. Howells: The Government's planned expenditure on reducing the supply of drugs in 2002–03 and 2003–04 is given in its publication "Updated Drugs Strategy 2002". The amounts are £376 million and £380 million respectively.

Iraq

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK has sought clarification from the US as to whether it will retain military bases in Iraq after the withdrawal of troops. [45041]

Ian Pearson: The issue of future US military bases in Iraq is a matter for the US Government and the Government of Iraq. The UK remains in close touch with the US Government about a range of issues in Iraq, including military planning and basing issues.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what volume of gas at Iraqi oil production facilities is being lost per day as a result of flaring at the point of production; [45363]

(2) what the dollar average revenue received is by the Iraqi Government per barrel of oil produced. [45364]

Ian Pearson: Iraq sells its oil on the world market and the revenue gained is subject to fluctuations according to the world market price. The dollar average revenue per barrel of oil for 2005 was US$ 46.89. In 2005, Iraqi revenue from oil sales was US$ 23.5 billion. The latest estimate from the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office in Baghdad for the amount of gas flared is 700 million standard cubic feet per day for the south of Iraq and 20 million standard cubic feet per day for the north.

Israel

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reasons European Union Foreign Ministers decided not to publish the report by the British Consulate in Jerusalem on Israel's activities in the Occupied Territories; and if he will make a statement. [44763]

Dr. Howells: The EU remains concerned about the situation in East Jerusalem. EU Foreign Ministers discussed this at their meetings on 21 November and on 12 December 2005.

The EU analysis on East Jerusalem was submitted to Ministers by heads of mission in the region as well as by various committees in Brussels. A draft version of the report was leaked to the press.

At their meeting on 12 December 2005 EU Ministers decided, in response to changed circumstances in Israel and the Occupied Territories, including the imminence of elections on both sides, that publishing the report would be counter-productive. East Jerusalem issues remain a high priority for the UK and EU when lobbying the Israeli Government at all levels.

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made representations to the Israeli authorities on the operation of a blacklist of persons not allowed to enter the occupied territories. [44907]

Dr. Howells: Where appropriate, we raise individual cases on behalf of British Nationals who are on the Israeli Authorities Government's blacklist.

Ivory Coast

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the situation in the Ivory Coast; and what status the UN mission there has. [45042]

Ian Pearson: The Government remain concerned at the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. We support the mediation efforts of the Africa Union (AU), UN and Economic Community Of West African States. An International Working Group (IWG) has been established by the UN and AU to oversee the peace process and the UK is represented at its monthly meetings.

The outbreak of unrest in Abidjan and elsewhere last week, however, was worrying. Violent demonstrations by supporters of President Gbagbo followed the recommendation by the IWG that the mandate of the National Assembly should not be renewed. This recommendation was in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1633 inviting the IWG to ensure that Ivorian institutions function normally until the holding of elections. We urge all Ivorians to unite in support of efforts to bring a lasting peace to the country.

The mandate of the UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire remains unchanged: inter alia, to monitor the cessation of hostilities and to support the peace process leading to the organisation of free, fair, open and transparent elections in Cote d'Ivoire.

Myanmar

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the United Nations' special rapporteur on Myanmar. [45741]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no recent meetings with the United Nations special rapporteur, Professor Pinheiro, but Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met him most recently in Geneva in December 2005.

Russia

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the treatment of the Hindu community in Russia and *(b)* the effect on the community of the loss of the Hindu Temple in Moscow. [45227]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Hindu community, like a number of other religious communities, have faced difficulties freely practising their faith in Russia. These include the inability to establish a permanent place of worship in Moscow since the demolition of the Hindu Temple there in 2004. We raise the issue of religious freedom during regular EU and bilateral contact with the Russian Government. We will continue to monitor this and other religious freedom issues in Russia and raise them as appropriate in the course of our ongoing dialogue.

Rwanda

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has received in the past 12 months concerning the safety of *(a)* genocide survivors and *(b)* prisoners released under the gacaca system in Rwanda. [44319]

Ian Pearson: We have received no representations in the past 12 months on genocide survivors. Ibuka, the genocide survivors' umbrella organisation, makes regular representations to the Government of Rwanda. The Rwanda National police is tasked with investigating all allegations of crimes against genocide survivors and witnesses involved in genocide related gacaca trials. We have received no representations in the past 12 months on behalf of prisoners released into the community as part of the gacaca process. Fears among the population about the punishments believed to be meted out by gacaca courts led to around 15,000 Rwandans fleeing to neighbouring countries in the past six months. Most of them have now returned.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the gacaca prisoner-release system in Rwanda; and if he will make a statement. [44320]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) today (UIN 44815).

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the system of justice in Rwanda; how many

perpetrators of the genocide have been brought to justice; and what assessment he has made of the protection available to witnesses. [44815]

Ian Pearson: The Rwandan authorities are pursuing the traditional justice system, gacaca, in order to tackle the enormous number of people, estimated at 750,000, accused of genocide and related crimes. A new gacaca bill, which replaces the current gacaca law, has been forwarded to the Rwandan Parliament for approval. We have not yet seen this. With European partners we are urging the Rwandan Government to ensure that the new gacaca courts do not issue the death penalty, and that international concerns over the variable punishments and the lack of defence counsel are addressed.

So far, over 4,000 people have been judged and sentenced by gacaca courts. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has tried 26 people. The ICTR has, with the assistance of the Rwandan Government, placed 20 individuals in witness protection in Rwanda. Others have been relocated in third countries.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what help the Government have given towards the reconciliation process in Rwanda. [44816]

Ian Pearson: The UK played a significant role in designing and supporting the implementation of Rwanda's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), in which reconciliation is a key theme. We contributed technical assistance to help with policy development, institutional development and capacity building. As the major bilateral donor to Rwanda, the UK is providing development assistance worth some £46 million in 2005–06, which is targeted towards delivery of Rwanda's PRSP. In recent years, we have supported specific activities to promote understanding and reconciliation, including an allocation of over £0.9 million for peace education activities, linked to the 10th anniversary of the genocide in 2004.

Terrorist Suspects (Renditions)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1653W to the right hon. Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell), on terrorist suspects (renditions), if he will list the records which were checked by officials in order to provide the answer. [42528]

Dr. Howells: In the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, records were searched under "rendition" and "extradition". In the Home Office, searches were made under "rendition", "extradition" and "IND casework". In the Ministry of Defence, officials looked for relevant information in records relating to US flights using UK military airfields.

Theresa McDermott

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will investigate the case of Theresa McDermott, who was detained by the Israeli authorities on her arrival in Israel on 25 December 2005 and thereafter deported. [44895]

Dr. Howells: Our embassy in Tel Aviv investigated the detention of Theresa McDermott on 25 December 2005. Ms McDermott arrived in Israel for a conference on Celebrating Non Violent Resistance in Bethlehem and was refused entry to Israel because she has been on the "black list" since June 2004 due to her participation in a demonstration at Bidu and her alleged connection to the International Solidarity Movement. Ms McDermott appealed the decision but, as the appeal was held after the date of the conference, the appeal therefore became obsolete. She was deported on 2 January 2006.

Ms McDermott has previously tried to enter the Occupied Territories in May 2005 and was refused for the same reasons. In June 2005, Our Deputy Head of Mission wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Ms McDermott's behalf, asking for her to be allowed to enter Israel.

Torture

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to what treaties relating to the use of torture *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* the United States is a signatory. [45301]

Ian Pearson: The principal human rights treaties which prohibit torture to which both the United Kingdom and the United States are parties are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The UK is party to the European Convention on Human Rights. The UK has also ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture and signed the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, both procedural treaties that establish visiting bodies which monitor states' compliance with their treaty obligations.

UK Citizens (Overseas Detention)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the names of all United Kingdom citizens who are being held without charge abroad and have been so held for a period of 12 months or more. [45388]

Dr. Howells: We are aware of three British nationals who have been held without charge abroad for a period of 12 months or more. For confidentiality reasons, we are unable to give the names of any British nationals held abroad without their permission.

United States

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his most recent estimate is of the number of individuals who have been subject to international rendition by the United States involving UK territory in each of the last 10 years. [45374]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's written ministerial statement of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 37–38WS.

Western Sahara

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the legality of the EU-Morocco Fishing Agreement in respect of the waters off the coast of the Western Sahara; and if he will make a statement. [44576]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The negotiation of such EC agreements falls within the responsibility of the European Commission. The Government will of course consider its position on the draft agreement as part of the approval process, and in order to do so is currently awaiting further information from the Commission.

TREASURY

North West Region

11. **Jim Dobbin:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the relationship between the level of skills in the work force and economic growth in the north west region; and if he will make a statement. [45623]

John Healey: Increases in the economy's trend rate of growth are supported by how many people are in work, and how productive they are.

Skills are one of the drivers of productivity and jobs, which is why as a Government, we have more than doubled overall investment in education and skills since 1997.

The NW development agency has led the preparation of the regional economic strategy, which sets out the contribution of skills to regional and local growth in the North West. And this week I met the chair and chief executive of the Skills for Business network, and I know that they and the local Learning and Skills Council are working out with the Rochdale development agency how the skills needs of the new Kingsway Business Park, which is set to bring around 7,000 jobs to my hon. Friend's area, can best be met.

Immunisation

13. **Mrs. Dean:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress he expects to make towards an international finance facility for immunisation at the forthcoming G8 meeting of international Finance Ministers in Russia; and if he will make a statement. [45625]

John Healey: The IFF for Immunisation (IFFIM) was launched in September 2005 with contributions from the UK, France, Italy, Spain and Sweden. Since then, Norway has also announced its participation and we are continuing to urge other countries—including those in the G8—to join.

The IFFIM will provide $4 billion over 10 years to support vaccinations in the world's poorest countries. It is estimated that the frontloaded IFFIM resources will save a total of 10 million lives.

Futurebuilders Fund

14. **Tim Loughton:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been paid out from the Futurebuilders Fund; and to how many recipients. [45626]

John Healey: The Futurebuilders Fund has committed more than £26 million through 130 grants and investments.

A further 22 offers are currently being negotiated.

Capital Transfer Tax

15. **Mr. Roger Williams:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with interested parties on capital transfer tax. [45627]

Dawn Primarolo: No Treasury Ministers have had any recent discussions with interested parties on Capital Transfer Tax, which was abolished in 1986.

Women's Finances

16. **Barbara Follett:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the need to encourage women to plan their finances for all of their lives. [45628]

Dawn Primarolo: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) has commissioned a comprehensive baseline survey which will show the level of financial capability within the UK population. The results will be reported in March 2006.

This will enable the FSA to monitor changes in financial capability and assess the effectiveness of measures under the National Strategy for Financial Capability.

Tax Credits

17. **Mr. Dunne:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of changing the tax credits income increase disregard from £2,500 to £25,000. [45629]

Dawn Primarolo: The increase in the disregard from £2,500 to £25,000 from April 2006 is part of a package of measures announced in the 2005 pre-Budget report that is expected to have the following Exchequer effect: -£100 million in 2006–07, +£200 million in 2007–08, +£50 million in 2008–09, -£50 million in 2009–10 and -£150 million in 2010–11.

It is not possible to produce robust estimates of the impact of individual elements of the package of measures, as there are significant interactions between the different components.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) which telephone numbers are being given to tax credit claimants who wish to make a complaint; what the average length of time taken is before a caller speaks to an adviser; and how many calls have been *(a)* answered, *(b)* unanswered and *(c)* handled by an adviser in each month since April 2003; [18639]

(2) how many calls were *(a)* made to and *(b)* answered by the tax credits helpline in each month from January to September. [20441]

Dawn Primarolo: A new code of practice which replaces the Inland Revenue code of practice 1 'Putting things right" and Customs and Excise Notice 1000 is

planned and is being formulated. The current code of practice 1 quotes a telephone number 0151 966 1151 for callers to use if they wish to complain about tax credits. This number is no longer in operation and callers who wish to make a complaint are advised, by recorded message, to ring the tax credits helpline.

A table setting out details of average length of time taken before a caller speaks to an adviser; and how may calls have been answered, abandoned and handled by an adviser in each month since July 2005 is shown in the table. For figures relating to April 2004 to June 2005 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 721W.

Tax credits calls	*Average waiting time (minutes: seconds)*	*Calls received (thousands)*	*Calls abandoned (thousands)*	*Calls handled (thousands)*
July	0:54	1,989	94	1,896
August	1:18	2,474	184	2,290
September	1:39	2,921	272	2,649
October	0:48	1,668	67	1,601

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit renewals were not received by the deadline this year; how many termination notices were issued; and how many awards have been terminated; [23571]

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many people who failed to renew their tax credit applications by the annual deadline in 2005 have ceased receiving payments; [41717]

(2) how many people did not renew their tax credit applications by the annual deadline in 2005. [42123]

Dawn Primarolo: At 30 September 2005 around 700,000 tax credits claimants had not renewed their award.

Around 208,000 awards were terminated and not subsequently reinstated.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* letters and *(b)* contacts through the MPs' hotline his Department has received from each hon. Member on the issue of tax credits, listed in descending order according to the total number of such representations received. [39302]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of letters about tax credits and calls to the MP hotline for all hon. Members is available only at disproportionate cost. However, between the resumption of Parliament on 10 October 2005 and 30 November 2005: an estimate indicates:

(a) 20 right hon. and hon. Members have sent 10 or more letters to HM Treasury or HM Revenue and Customs about tax credits. Of those, one hon. Member has written 20 or more letters and one has written more than 30 letters about tax credits.

(b) 26 right hon. and hon. Members have called tax credit office's MP hotline on 10 or more occasions. Of those, nine have called 20 or more times and one hon. Member has called 30 or more times.

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit overpayments have been written off *(a)* in part and *(b)* in full in respect of Castle Point residents since tax credits were introduced. [42832]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available at constituency level and in the format requested.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families were in receipt of *(a)* less than £1,000, *(b)* between £1,000 and £2,500, *(c)* between £2,500 and £5,000, *(d)* between £5,000 and £10,000, *(e)* between £10,000 and £20,000 and *(f)* above £20,000 of working tax credit and child tax credit in (i) the UK and (ii) Gravesham constituency in each of the last three years. [43268]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the average number of in-work families in the UK during 2003–04 by level of annualised finalised tax credit entitlement.

2003–04 Entitlement[1]

	Thousands Number of awards
Under £1,000[2]	2,092
Between £1,000 and £2,500	579
Between £2,500 and £5,000	676
Between £5,000 and £10,000	931
Between £10,000 and £20,000	58
£20,000 and over[3]	
All	4,336

[1] Annualised 2003–04 entitlement based on circumstances throughout the year and finalised 2003–04 incomes.
[2] Excluding families with awards tapered to zero.
[3] Sample size too small to provide a reliable estimate.

The following table shows the average number of in-work families in the Gravesham constituency in 2003–04 by level of annualised finalised tax credit entitlement.

2003–04 Entitlement[1]

	Thousands Number of awards
Under £1,000[2]	4.0
Between £1,000 and £2,500	0.8
Between £2,500 and £5,000	0.8
Between £5,000 and £10,000	1.2
Between £10,000 and £20,000[3]	
20,000 and over[3]	
All	7.0

[1] Annualised 2003–04 entitlement based on circumstances throughout the year and finalised 2003–04 incomes.
[2] Excluding families with awards tapered to zero.
[3] Sample size too small to provide a reliable estimate.

Figures for later years are not yet available.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many claimants have reported a change in the number of people in their household in relation to a tax credit claim in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43648]

(2) how many claimants have had their tax credit payments *(a)* increased and *(b)* decreased as a result of reporting a change in the number of people in their household in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) type of tax credit, (ii) region and (iii) average amount. [43649]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1578W.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tax credit claimants have reported changes in their income *(a)* within and *(b)* after three months of those changes taking effect other than changes caused by (i) a change in the number of adults in the household, (ii) leaving the UK and (iii) a fall in the claimant's childcare costs by more than £10 a week in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (A) type of tax credit and (B) region; how many of these claimants have had their tax credit payment (1) increased and (2) decreased; and by how much in each case; [43698]

(2) how many tax credit claimants have *(a)* reported and *(b)* reported after three months of the changes taking place changes in their income caused by (i) a change in their number of adults in the household within which the claimant lives, (ii) the claimant leaving the UK and (iii) a fall in the claimant's child care costs by more than £10 a week after three months of those changes taking effect in each year for which figures are available; and whether he will break these figures down by type of tax credit and by region. [43699]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested in the first question and part *(b)* of the second question is not available. Only annual income is required for tax credit purposes. When income change is notified within the year, records are updated with new income levels and entitlement is reassessed if necessary.

In answer to the second question, for parts *(a)* and *(b)*, where (i) and (ii) occur, the award would cease but this would not prompt a change in income. In the case of (iii) where there is a fall in child care costs, income would not be affected.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much has been waived in relation to overpayments of tax credit claimants as a consequence of official error having been admitted in each year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* type of tax credit and *(b)* region; [43714]

(2) in how many cases of tax credit overpayment *(a)* identified and *(b)* not identified at an annual review as a consequence of official error being admitted was overpayment (i) partially recovered and (ii) not recovered in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (A) type of tax credit and (B) region; [43718]

(3) in how many tax credit cases where it has been found *(a)* in connection with an annual review and *(b)* not in connection with an annual review that tax credits had been overpaid official error has been admitted in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) type of tax credit and (ii) region. [43729]

Dawn Primarolo: For the total amount of overpayments written off as a result of official error I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1214W.

The amounts written off in October 2005 and November 2005 are around £11,000,000 and £4,000,000 respectively.

It is not possible to break these amounts down between child tax credit and working tax credit or between regions.

There is no information available about the number of overpayments partially written off. However, HMRC wrote off around 10,300 disputed overpayments in 2004–05 and around 153,000 between 4 April 2005 and 30 November 2005.

HMRC's Code of Practice 26 'What happens if we have paid you too much Tax Credit?' explains how HMRC deals with overpayments made as a result of their error.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many telephone calls have been *(a)* made and *(b)* answered in relation to tax credit claims in each region in each year for which figures are available. [43735]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Cardiff, Central (Jenny Willott) on 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1209W

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money he estimates has been lost due to *(a)* fraud and *(b)* error in each tax credit (i) in total and (ii) through online claims in each year for which figures are available. [43760]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC are currently undertaking a programme of work on finalised 2003–04 awards—the first year of working tax credit and child tax credit—to provide more information on the level of claimant error and fraud. This is due to be completed in spring 2006.

HMRC use a number of sophisticated tools to help detect fraudulent claims made for tax credits. Whenever possible this is aimed at stopping fraudulent claims from being paid but they also monitor payments to detect known traits of organised fraud. I refer the hon. Member to the statements I made to the House about organised fraud on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1357–8W and 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 41WS.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the online system for claiming tax credits has been suspended in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [44585]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made to the House on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 55WS.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been overpaid to tax credit recipients in West Lancashire constituency; and how many tax credit recipients received overpayments in each year since tax credits were introduced. [45121]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Dorries) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff within HM Revenue and Customs have been tasked with investigating *(a)* tax credit fraud and *(b)* other criminal activity by organised gangs in each of the last three years, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement. [45223]

Dawn Primarolo: To disclose details of the location and numbers of staff engaged in tackling serious and organised criminality would prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many claims for working tax credit have been made by workers from the accession countries since May 2004; how many of these claims have been discovered to be fraudulent; what estimate he has made of the cost of such fraudulent claims; and if he will make a statement; [45325]

(2) how much has been paid to workers from the accession countries in *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit since May 2004; [45326]

(3) how many incidents of alleged fraudulent claims by individuals from other EU member states for *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit have been reported to HM Revenue and Customs in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland; and how many of these reports have resulted in the payment of tax credits being stopped; [45329]

(4) what estimate he has made of *(a)* the number of fraudulent tax credit claims being made by individuals from other EU member states and *(b)* the cost of such claims. [45331]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

All claims for tax credits are checked thoroughly and any allegations of fraud investigated fully. When we find fraud we act quickly to shut it down and we can and do prosecute.

Public Finances (Forecasts)

19. **Mr. Hunt:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures he is taking to improve the reliability of public finances forecasts. [45631]

21. **Mr. Walker:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the reliability of public finances forecasts. [45633]

Mr. Des Browne: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer I gave on the Floor of the House earlier today to the hon. Member for Rochford and Southend, East (James Duddridge), *Official Report*, column 1508.

House Prices

20. **Dr. Palmer:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on trends in house prices and their impact on the economy. [45632]

John Healey: House prices have been stable for the past year, with prices over 2005 rising by around 3 per cent. The outlook for the near future is for further subdued growth. Stable house prices contribute to a less volatile economy, which has in turn enabled the UK economy to take full advantage of robust global economic growth, with steady domestic growth, low unemployment and low inflation.

Pension Contributions (Tax Relief)

22. **Rob Marris:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax was foregone in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 in relation to tax relief on pension contributions. [45634]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax relief on contributions to approved pensions schemes is estimated at £16.3 billion in 2003–04, and £18.0 billion in 2004–05.

Manufacturing Industry

23. **Mr. Kidney:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the prospects for the performance of UK manufacturing in 2006. [45635]

John Healey: The Government's latest assessment of prospects for the manufacturing sector was set out in the 2005 pre-Budget report. As set out in table A9 of this report, manufacturing output is forecast to pick up to between 1 and 1.25 per cent. in 2006.

Development Aid

24. **Mrs. Cryer:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the prospects for progress on development aid under Russia's presidency of the G8; and if he will make a statement. [45636]

John Healey: In 2005 the G8 made commitments on aid, debt relief and the promise of treatment for all AIDS sufferers by 2010. The UK's priority for 2006 is to ensure the international community delivers on these promises, including making progress on agreed targets for international aid.

EU Budget (Rebate)

25. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the future value of the UK rebate within the EU budget. [45637]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the Prime Minister's statement to the House on 19 December and to the reply given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to my right hon. Friend the Member for West Dunbartonshire (Mr. McFall) on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2796W.

Children's Trust Funds

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the take-up of children's trust funds has been among low-income families. [45961]

Dawn Primarolo: Child trust fund statistics are produced quarterly. The latest set were published on 30 November 2005 at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_trust_funds/child-trust-funds.htm

A statistical and distributional analysis of the child trust fund will be published in 2007.

Construction Industry (Taxation)

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment HM Revenue and Customs has made of the relative influence of the taxation system and the practice of individual contractors as causes of miscategorisation of construction workers as self-employed individuals. [45485]

John Healey: It is a general requirement that businesses correctly determine the employment status of individual workers by reference to the terms and conditions of the contract under which they are engaged.

The Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) requires that subcontractors working within the industry register with HM Revenue and Customs. Some contractors in the construction industry operate under a misconception that holders of CIS registration cards or tax certificates, which are issued to show whether the holder should be paid gross or under deduction, are accepted as self-employed by HMRC. This is not the case and HMRC have worked with the industry to dispel this misunderstanding.

The new construction industry scheme to be introduced in April 2007 will dispense with cards and certificates and remove this source of misunderstanding. It will also require contractors to consider properly the precise terms of engagement of each subcontractor so as to ensure that the right taxation consequences follow.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of compliance for payments of deductions to HM Revenue and Customs under the Construction Industry Scheme was in each year since it was introduced. [45486]

John Healey: Deductions from payments made to subcontractors under the Construction Industry Scheme are paid by contractors to HM Revenue and Customs monthly along with any PAYE and NICs due in respect of the contractor's employees. It is not possible to separate out the CIS element of those payments.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many contractors had their gross payment status revoked for the tax year *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2005–06. [45487]

John Healey: No record is kept of the number of sub-contractors who lose their entitlement to gross payment status.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the reform of the Construction Industry Scheme. [45488]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 19 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 1106W.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will answer the letter to him dated 10 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Ms Ruckshah Choudhury. [45409]

Dawn Primarolo: I have already done so.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40282]

John Healey: The Treasury actively promotes flexible working arrangements. A central record is not maintained of staff working from home.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41348]

John Healey: The Treasury does not own any cars. The GCS provides six cars to the Treasury's Ministers and the permanent secretary. For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport has asked the chief executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

EDS

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the total cost, including legal fees, of reaching the settlement with EDS concerning tax credits. [41989]

Dawn Primarolo: The costs, including legal fees, from the time the claim for compensation became litigious were around £4.5 million.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which legal firms were involved in the settlement with EDS for problems with the tax credit system on which Queen's Counsels opinions were sought; how many hours were charged by lawyers for work in connection with the settlement; and how many face to face meetings took place between *(a)* lawyers and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) staff and *(b)* the HMRC's lawyers and EDS's lawyers. [41990]

Dawn Primarolo: Morrison & Foerster and Pinsent Masons were the law firms involved.

Jeremy Storey QC provided the principal advice. Sir Jeremy Lever QC advised on a narrow point in the settlement agreement.

The hours charged by solicitors and Counsel for work in connection with the prospective litigation and the settlement came to 9,496.

There were many more meetings between lawyers and HMRC staff than can be readily enumerated. There were 18 meetings attended by legal representatives of HMRC and EDS.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library the written advice from *(a)* internal and *(b)* external lawyers recommending accepting the settlement with EDS concerning compensation for problems with the tax credit system. [41991]

Dawn Primarolo: This advice is legally privileged and commercially sensitive. It would therefore be wrong to make it available in the way suggested.

HMRC retains the ability to revive its Claim against EDS if the settlement sum is not paid in full. Disclosure of this legal advice could prevent that, thereby depriving HMRC of its main enforcement mechanism.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Advisory Committee for coordination in the internal market field, *(b)* Advisory Committee on opening up public contracts, *(c)* Customs Cooperation Subcommittee—EEC-Albania and *(d)* Customs Cooperation Subcommittee—EEC-Bulgaria have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39023]

Dawn Primarolo: The Internal Market Advisory Committee met once on 18 November 2005, chaired by a senior official from the European Commission. The UK was represented by an official from the Department for Trade and Industry.

The Advisory Committee on opening up public contracts met on 25 October 2005, chaired by the European Commission. The UK was represented by the Office of Government Commerce. Agendas for meetings of this group are forwarded by the OGC to the Scottish Executive, who may attend at their discretion. No representative of the Scottish Executive attended on 25 October.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Subcommittee—EEC-Albania during the UK presidency.

There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Subcommittee—EEC-Bulgaria during the UK presidency.

With the exception of the Advisory Committee on opening up public contracts, these working groups deal with reserved matters and as such no provision was made for representation of the devolved Administrations.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Cooperation Subcommittee-EEC-Israel, *(b)* Customs Cooperation Subcommittee-EEC-Hong Kong, *(c)* EEC-Mexico Special Committee on Customs Cooperation and *(d)* Advisory Committee on the Communities' own resources have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39024]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Subcommittee-EEC-Israel during the UK presidency.

(b) There was one meeting of the EC-Hong Kong Joint Customs Cooperation Committee during the UK presidency on 18 November, Co-chaired by European Commission and Hong Kong Customs. Officials from Foreign and Commonwealth Office and HMRC represented the UK presidency. No provision was made for representation of the devolved governments.

(c) The EEC-Mexico Special Committee on Customs Cooperation met once during the UK presidency on the 21 October 2005 in Brussels, chaired by the Commission.

The UK was represented by officials from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU. This was attended by UKRep.

(d) There were three meetings of the Advisory Committee on the Communities' own resources during the UK presidency, on 7 July, 13/14 October and 8 December. The Commission chaired these meetings. The UK representatives were officials from HMRC.

These working groups deal with reserved matters and as such no provision was made for representation of the devolved Administrations.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Customs Cooperation Committee-EEC-San Marino and *(b)* EEC-Denmark-Faroe Islands Joint Committee have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39025]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) There have been no meetings of the Customs Cooperation Committee-EEC- San Marino during the UK presidency.

(b) There has been one meeting of the EEC-Denmark-Faroe Islands Joint Committee during the UK presidency on 8 December 2005. The Commission represents the EC—apart from Denmark, no member state attended.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Joint Committee (EEC-Switzerland) on the simplification of inspections and formalities (and working party), *(b)* Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-

Norway), *(c)* Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-Iceland) and *(d)* Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-Switzerland-Liechtenstein) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39027]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) There has been one meeting of the Joint Committee (EEC-Switzerland) on the simplification of inspections and formalities (and working party) and the *(d)* Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-Switzerland-Liechtenstein) during the UK presidency on 27 October 2005. The Commission represents the EC.

(b) There were no meetings of the Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-Norway) during the UK presidency.

(c) There have been no meetings of the Customs Section of the Joint Committee (EEC-Iceland) during the UK presidency.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings of the EU *(a)* European Area Joint Committee, *(b)* Joint Committee with the countries of the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland), *(c)* Joint Committee on the Agreement concerning products of the clock and watch industry between the EEC and Switzerland and *(d)* Joint Committee on the Agreement between Switzerland and the EEC on the processing traffic in textiles have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representations of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [39030]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) The European Economic Area Joint Committee is made up of representatives of the EEA EFTA States and the European Commission and met on 8 July, 30 September, 21 October and 2 December. The UK did not attend.

(b) We are not aware of any meetings of the "Joint Committee with the countries of the European Free Trade Association" during the UK presidency; however representatives of the Finance Ministries of the EFTA countries met in Brussels alongside the ECOFIN Council meeting on 8 November. The Paymaster General chaired a meeting with EFTA on behalf of the EU Presidency.

(c) The Joint Committee on the Agreement concerning products of the clock and watch industry between the EEC and Switzerland did not meet during the UK presidency.

(d) There was one meeting of the Joint Committee on the Agreement between Switzerland and the EEC on 27 October 2005. The Commission represents the EC.

These working groups deal with reserved matters and as such no provision was made for representation of the devolved Administrations.

Financial Services Authority

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the financial impact of the work of the Financial Services Authority on firms of independent financial advisers with *(a)* up to five employees and *(b)* with more than five employees; and if he will make a statement. [45612]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The FSA is working with independent consultants to assess the cost of financial regulation on firms. The Chairman of the FSA will write with more details of this work.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many letters of complaint the Department received about the Financial Services Authority in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2004. [46218]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury does not keep this information and could obtain it only at disproportionate cost.

HMRC

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the full-time equivalent staffing complement is of each HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) office in *(a)* the Isle of Wight and *(b)* Hampshire; what proportion of that complement is filled in each office; what percentage of those employed have worked for HMRC for (i) less than one year, (ii) one to two years, (iii) three to five years, (iv) six to 10 years and (v) more than 10 years; and what the annual expenditure was by each office on job advertising in each of the last three years for which information is available. [45713]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is given in the tables.

Hampshire

	Andover	*Basingstoke*	*Portsmouth*	*Southampton*	*Winchester*	*Grand total*	*Percentage length of service*
Less than 1 year	—	—	72.0	20.7	—	92.7	3.98
1 to 2 years	1.6	—	194.7	122.3	8.5	327.1	14.04
3 to 5 years	9.0	—	244.0	131.9	5.0	389.9	16.74
6 to 0 years	4.0	—	159.2	54.7	6.7	224.5	9.64
Over 10 years	18.6	7.5	742.9	495.9	30.7	1295.6	55.61
Total	33.1	7.5	1412.8	825.5	50.9	2329.8	100.00

Isle of Wight

	Percentage	*Percentage length of service*
Less than 1 year	—	0.00
1 to 2 years	6.4	9.10
3 to 5 years	3.0	4.30
6 to 10 years	3.8	5.46
Over 10 years	56.7	81.15
Totals	69.8	100.00

Information relating to recruitment advertising costs is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the lease will expire on the HM Revenue and Customs office in Newport, Isle of Wight; how many premises are under consideration for its relocation; and how many *(a)* full-time equivalent employees and *(b)* employees are expected to be accommodated in the premises being sought. [45832]

Dawn Primarolo: The lease at 33 St. James Street, Newport, Isle of Wight will expire on 24 March 2006 although HMRC occupation of the building has been extended until 31 May 2006.

There are three premises under consideration for staff relocation, all located in Newport.

There are approximately 56 staff located at 33 St. James Street. HMRC also occupy 88/91 St. James St where approximately 14 staff are based. There is additional capacity in that building to accommodate another eight to 10 staff. The department is therefore looking to acquire a new building that can accommodate the balance, taking into account our projections of staff likely to remain on the island in both the short and long-term.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the evidence of the Chairman of HM Revenue and Customs to the Public Administration Committee on 20 October 2005, question 78, on the tax credit IT system, if he will list those improvements and interventions made; and on what date each came into effect. [45834]

Dawn Primarolo: There have been two releases for the tax credit IT system during 2005, the first in spring 2005 and the second in autumn 2005.

The tax credits release in spring 2005 made improvements to the following areas:

the claim form

the award notice

to customer guidance

functionality for finalising and renewing awards

functionality for managing overpayments, including functionality to enable Tax Credit Office to adjust the level of payments to avoid hardship for customers

support for compliance risk assessment

payment accounting and reconciliation

This release also created new functionality to ensure that children from low-income families can receive the additional child trust fund endowment to which they are entitled.

The tax credits release in autumn 2005 made improvements to the following areas:

replacement of payment through the employer with direct payment

data matching to increase protection against non-compliance while reducing unnecessary delays for compliant customers

payment accounting and reconciliation

functionality for paying additional child trust fund endowments

This release also created new functionality for civil partnerships and gender recognition.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41279]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs staff deal with a wide range of functions and their training varies depending on the operational need of the particular business unit and staff involved. Customer confidentiality and identification training is provided for customer-facing staff and in addition specialist training and guidance is provided in some business areas.

Inheritance Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much revenue was raised from inheritance tax in *(a)* each Government office region, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each financial year since 1996–97; [26940]

(2) how many estates paid inheritance tax in *(a)* each Government office region, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each financial year since 1996–97. [26941]

Dawn Primarolo: Regional annual figures for inheritance tax receipts and estates paying inheritance tax by Government office region are not available.

The totals for inheritance tax receipts are published in Table 1.2 Annual Receipts of Inland Revenue taxes. http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/tax_receipts/menu.htm.

The totals of estates paying inheritance tax are published in Table 1.4 Estimated number of taxpayers. http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/tax_receipts/menu.htm.

Iraq

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government's most recent estimate is of the cost of the British presence in Iraq, broken down by *(a)* military and *(b)* reconstruction costs in each month since the start of the conflict. [37146]

Mr. Des Browne: The Treasury does not estimate costs for Iraq in the manner requested.

The net additional costs of operations in Iraq, as recorded in the Ministry of Defence's annual reports and accounts total £3,068 million as follows:

Financial year	*£ million*
2002–03	847
2003–04	1,311
2004–05	910

The costs of operations in Iraq in 2005–06 will depend on force levels and operational tempo.

At the Madrid Donors' conference in October 2003, the Government announced a total UK pledge of £544 million towards the reconstruction effort in Iraq. To date, the Department for International Development have committed £423 million and disbursed over £350 million.

London Congestion Charge Zone

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the change in *(a)* VAT, *(b)* corporation tax and *(c)* national insurance contributions receipts which would arise from the extension of the London congestion charge zone. [45630]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government do not hold the figures requested, which would be extremely complex to estimate. The London congestion charge is the responsibility of the Mayor of London, who has published an assessment of the potential impacts of the planned Western Extension.

Long-term Savings

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to provide long-term security and reasonable return on long-term savings invested in the private sector. [45820]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government have established a system of financial services regulation that works through the regulator, the Financial Services Authority, the Financial Ombudsman Service, and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme to provide statutory protection for consumers.

These bodies are independent of Government, although subject to the provisions of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. They replaced a collection of multiple regulators, complaint adjudicators, and compensation schemes.

Under The Pension Act 2004, the Government have also established The Pension Regulator and the Pension Protection Fund to protect the interests of members of occupational pension schemes.

Returns on long-term savings invested in the private sector are for the market to determine and lie outside the Government's remit.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list private finance initiative projects which have been refinanced in each year since 1997; and what the value of each project was; [46033]

(2) how many private finance initiative projects were subject to refinancing in 2005; what the refinancing gain was in each case; and how much of this gain the relevant government body received through *(a)* a lump sum and *(b)* a reduction in the unitary charge. [46035]

John Healey: The table shows all recorded refinancings of PFI projects since 1997 and the value of each project.

There were five PFI projects, subject to refinancing in 2005. The following list shows the date the refinancing closed, the amount of the gain and the authority's share:

London borough of Tower Hamlets Groups Schools, 8 March 2005, no refinancing gain, no authority share.

Laganside Courts, 15 July 2005, refinancing gain £2.41 million, authority share £0.722 million.

Nottingham Tram, 10 November 2005, the outcome of the Authority's negotiations on gain share is yet to be confirmed.

Tyne and Wear Fire Services, November/December 2005, no refinancing gain, no authority share.

Greater Manchester Police Authority, 22 December 2005, total refinancing gain £1.02 million, total authority share £0.607 million.

Additionally, the BBC White City project was not concluded under a PFI structural framework, but shares many similar characteristics.

BBC White City, 23 March 2005, total refinancing gain £90 million. Total authority gains £62.00 million.

The list shows the refinancing gain in each case and produces a total refinancing gain of £93.42 million of which £63.329 million was for the public sector.

Information regarding how much gain the relevant government body received through a lump sum, or reduction in unitary charge, is not collated centrally.

Refinancings completed as of 25 January 2006

Project name	*Sponsor department*	*Date refinanced*	*Value (£ million)*	*Comments*
Refinancings taking place before the Code				
Colfox School	DFES	1 June 1999	15.60	
Royal Armouries Museum—Refinancing	DCMS	1 July 1999	42.00	
Altcourse (Fazackerley) Prison	HO Prison Service	1 November 1999	88.00	
Ashfield (Pucklechurch) Prison	HO Prison Service	1 January 2000	30.70	
Dovegate (Marchington) Prison	HO Prison Service	1 January 2000	64.00	
Hassockfield (Meadomsley) STC	HO	1 January 2000	10.00	
Kilmarnock Prison	Scot Exec	1 January 2000	32.00	
Lowdham Grange Prison	HO Prison Service	1 January 2000	32.00	
Sussex Weald and Downs NHST—Graylingwell Hosp. Reprovision Chichester	DoH	1 February 2001	27.00	

Refinancings completed as of 25 January 2006

Project name	*Sponsor department*	*Date refinanced*	*Value (£ million)*	*Comments*
A19 Dishforth to Tyne Tunnel DBFO	DfT (Highways)	1 March 2001	29.00	
"Heart of the City" Offices	ODPM	1 April 2001	20.00	
Parc Bridgend) Prison	HO Prison Service	1 May 2001	74.00	
Balfron School	Scot Exec	1 June 2001	16.50	
Dundee Ninewells Psychiatric Services	Scot Exec	1 June 2001	10.00	
Mearns Primary and St. Ninian's High School	Scot Exec	1 June 2001	12.50	
Newcastle Estate Development	IR	1 June 2001	163.80	
HM Customs and Excise—IT Infrastructure PFI	C&E	1 July 2001	20.00	
M1—A1 Link Road (Lofthouse to Bramham)	DfT (Highways)	1 September 2001	214.00	
M40 Junctions 1 to 15	DfT (Highways)	1 October 2001	130.00	
Antarctic Survey Ship	DTI	31 December 2001	22.00	
North Wiltshire DC—Property Rationalisation	ODPM	1 January 2002	7.00	
Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge	Defra	1 February 2002	21.00	
Calderdale Hospital	DoH	1 May 2002	65.60	
Joint Services Command and Staff College	MoD	1 June 2002	93.00	
Manchester Inland Revenue Accommodation Project	IR	1 July 2002	32.00	
Refinancings taking place under the Code (ie 30/70 per cent. split authority/private sector)				
A69 Carlisle to Newcastle DBFO	DfT (Highways)	1 May 2004	9.00	
A30/A35 Exeter to Bere Regis DBFO	DfT (Highways)	7 November 2002	75.00	
A50/A564 Stoke-Derby Link DBFO	DfT (Highways)	7 November 2002	21.00	
Bute Avenue	Wales	12 February 2003	45.00	
Debden Park School	DFES	31 March 2003	17.70	
Hillingdon—Barnhill School	DFES	1 May 2003	18.80	
Cardinal Heenan (VA) School	DFES	20 May 2003	7.70	
Central Scotland Family Quarters—Bannockburn	MoD	10 June 2003	25.00	
Haringey Schools	DFES	11 September 2003	62.50	
Bridlington Schools	DFES	10 September 2003	26.00	
Brent Jews Free School	DFES	22 September 2003	9.00	
Bromley NHST—New Hosp	DoH	28 April 2004	156.00	
Hairmyres Hospital	Scot Exec	24 August 2004	92.00	
Medium Support Helicopter	MOD	30 December 2004	114.00	
Sheffield Schools	DFES	15 December 2004	58.80	
Dartford and Gravesham Hospital NHS Trust	DoH	25 March 2003	122.00	
Norwich and Norfolk Health Care NHS Trust	DoH	18 December 2003	335.00	
LB Tower Hamlets Group Schools	DFES	8 March 2005	88.50	2005 refinancing
Laganside Courts	First Secretary of State acting on behalf of the Northern Ireland Court Service	15 July 2005	28.20	2005 refinancing
Nottingham tram	DfT	10 November 2005	172.00	2005 refinancing; details to be finalised.
SOPC gain-sharing (ie post-Code, 50/50 gain share)				
East Lothian Council—Schools and Community Facilities PPP	SE	11 March 2004	45.00	
Tyne and Wear Fire Services	ODPM	November/ December 2005	30.00	2005 refinancing
Tube Lines Ltd.—London Underground	TfL	11 May 2004	2,079.00	
Greater Manchester Police Authority	HO	22 December 2005	76.90	2005 refinancing; numbers estimates at present to be finalised shortly
Total			4,986	
Total for 2005			396	
Other projects				
Second Severn Crossing	DfT (Highways)	31 December 2002	331.00	
BBC White City	DCMS	23 March 2005	365.00	2005 refinancing
Grand total			5,682	

Notes:
1. This is a list of UK-wide local and central government completed refinancings notified to PUK
2. The code referred to is a voluntary code of conduct on the sharing of refinancing gains on PFI projects, introduced in 2002.

Public Sector Pay

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received on public sector pay. [45835]

Mr. Des Browne: Treasury Ministers receive a wide range of representations, in different forms, from different groups, bodies and individuals. There are different pay setting processes across the public sector and it is the responsibility of the relevant decision-making body to consider any representations that have been made.

Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when his Department received the application to

approve the private finance initiative contract for the Queen Alexandra hospital, Portsmouth; and when approval was given. [46034]

John Healey: Department for Health Ministers submitted the application for the private finance initiative contract for the Queen Alexandra hospital, Portsmouth on 15 November 2005. The Chief Secretary provided Treasury approval on 9 December 2005.

Real Estate Investment Trusts

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of introducing unlisted real estate investment trusts; and what representations he has received on this. [46178]

John Healey: As set out in the 2005 pre-Budget report, the UK Real Estate Investment Trust regime will be open to qualifying property companies that are publicly listed on a recognised stock exchange as defined for tax purposes. The Government have consulted extensively on Real Estate Investment Trusts, and summaries of responses to these consultations were published alongside the 2005 Budget and pre-Budget report. Draft legislation to establish Real Estate Investment Trusts was released for consultation on 14 December 2005. Updated draft legislation, including clauses relating to groups of companies, will be published tomorrow. Copies will be available in the Libraries of both Houses and on HM Revenue and Customs' website, www.hmrc.gov.uk. The Government continue to consult extensively with representatives of the property and investment industries.

Special Compliance Office Staff

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many full-time equivalent staff have worked in the Revenue's special compliance office in each month of the last five years; how many and what proportion of them have worked on tax credits in each of the last three years; and what the administrative cost was of the special compliance office in each of the last five years. [38698]

Dawn Primarolo: The table shows, on a monthly basis for each of the last five years, the number of full-time equivalent staff working in the special compliance office of the Inland Revenue and HMRC.

Monthly staff in post for the past five years

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
January	486	616	683	789	823
February	475	621	690	796	826
March	470	623	718	797	821
April	479	623	734	791	812
May	499	628	739	801	812
June	550	627	750	805	799
July	574	638	759	808	816
August	572	638	764	810	796
[illegible]mber	568	645	764	811	794
[illegible]ber	572	642	769	804	788
[illegible]ber	586	669	775	827	791
December	618	652	786	830	—

It is not possible to identify the proportion allocated to tax credits work.

Cost information on the special compliance office is available only for 2001–2004, as follows:

	Administrative cost on special compliance office (£ million)
2001	29.96
2002	27.75
2003	30.59
2004	35.30

Stamp Duty Land Tax

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what funds have been returned to *(a)* individuals and *(b)* businesses as a refund of interest charges on late payments of stamp duty land tax in each year since 1997. [45936]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs announced on 5 September 2005 that it had discovered a deficiency in its legal powers to charge interest on late payments of stamp duty land tax for the period from 1 December 2003 to 25 September 2005 inclusive, and that it would identify and repay (with supplementary interest) charges levied in error for this period. The total amount of interest wrongly charged was £1.5 million. HMRC started to make refunds in November 2005 and will complete all repayments by the target date of 31 January 2006. Refunds are made directly to the purchaser or lessee concerned. Information breaking down refunds to individuals and businesses is not collected.

Unemployment

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the unemployment rate was in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each year from 2003 to 2005; and what the employment rate was in each as a percentage of the working age population. [45202]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 26 January 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment and unemployment rates for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. (45202)

The attached table gives the levels and rates of the number of employed people of working age and unemployed people aged 16 and over for the above countries and the UK, for the years 2003 to 2005.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistic's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

People in employment and those who are unemployed by country of residence: United Kingdom
Four quarter average

	Employment[1]		*Unemployment 16 +*	
	Thousands	*Percentage*[2]	*Thousands*	*Percentage*[3]
2003				
UK	27,003	74.6	1,451	4.9
England	22,709	75.0	1,200	4.9
Wales	1,263	72.6	64	4.6
Scotland	2,323	74.3	145	5.7
Northern Ireland	708	68.3	43	5.5
2004				
UK	27,157	74.7	1,395	4.7
England	22,848	75.1	1,150	4.6
Wales	1,259	72.1	61	4.5
Scotland	2,343	75.0	146	5.7
Northern Ireland	707	67.7	37	4.9
2005				
UK	27,218	74.7	1,426	4.8
England	22,890	75.0	1,188	4.8
Wales	1,257	71.8	62	4.5
Scotland	2,349	75.2	140	5.4
Northern Ireland	723	68.9	37	4.7

[1] Includes men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59.
[2] In employment as a percentage of all persons of working age in each country.
[3] Unemployed aged 16 and over as a percentage of economically active aged 16 and over in each country.
Note:
Data based on average of four quarters each year. (2003: four quarters of period March 2003 to February 2004; 2004: four quarters of period March 2004 to February 2005; 2005: four quarters of period December 2004 to November 2005).
Source:
ONS – Labour Force Survey

VAT (Commemorative Headstones)

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to exempt commemorative headstones for graves from VAT. [45812]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Chorley (Mr. Hoyle) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2275W.

VAT Fraud

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he intends to bring forward legislation to combat missing trader intra community, or carousel, VAT fraud as a consequence of the European Court of Justice judgment in the joined cases of Optigen Limited, Fulcrum Electronics Limited and Bond House Systems Limited; [45395]

(2) what estimate HM Revenue and Customs has made of its total liability for VAT refunds as a consequence of the European Court of Justice judgment in the joined cases of Optigen Limited, Fulcrum Electronics Limited and Bond Houses Systems Limited; [45398]

(3) what the implications are of the European Court of Justice judgment in the joined cases of Optigen Limited, Fulcrum Electronics Limited and Bond Houses Systems Limited; and if he will make a statement. [45399]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government note the decision of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and will, of course, follow the guidance it has given. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will now consider the detail of the ruling in order to determine the extent to which it applies to their previous decisions. The amounts claimed as recoverable VAT by the three traders total almost £40 million.

It is not possible to give a precise figure of the total amount that may be repaid to all traders affected by the decision, as the status of each case is being reviewed in the light of the ECJ's guidance and other action to protect the revenue may be taken.

The Government remain determined to tackle Missing Trader Intra Community (MTIC) VAT fraud and the criminals perpetrating it. HMRC is intensifying its operational activities throughout the UK and its co-operation with other countries to combat this fraud.

In order to strengthen further our strategy to combat VAT fraud, the Government have made an application to the European Commission (EC) for a derogation from the provisions of the EC sixth VAT directive to enable it to introduce a reverse charge procedure for

transactions between VAT-registered businesses in certain goods. The Government consider this measure to be a proportionate response to MTIC fraud. This is only one facet of a comprehensive strategy designed to thwart MTIC fraud by taking the criminal profit out of the transaction.

This measure will be targeted on those goods used in MTIC fraud, in particular mobile telephones, computer chips and some other similar electronic items. However, the Government will also be monitoring very closely how those carrying out this fraud react to this measure and will not hesitate to act to prevent any further threats to the tax system.

PRIME MINISTER

Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether he plans to *(a)* review and *(b)* reform the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925. [45974]

The Prime Minister: No.

Rendition

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Prime Minister when he was first informed of the United States policy on international rendition. [45343]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave the right hon. Member for Ross, Skye and Lochaber (Mr. Kennedy) at Prime Minister's Questions on 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 862–63.

TRANSPORT

A46 (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost to public funds has been to date of the promotion of, preparation for, design of and public consultation on the proposed improvements to the A46 between Widmerpool and Newark-on-Trent in Nottinghamshire. [45935]

Dr. Ladyman: The A46 Newark to Widmerpool Improvement scheme was added to the National Roads programme in May 1989 and was withdrawn in 1997. There are no records of historic costs for this period. Since its re-introduction and entry into the Targeted Programme of Improvements the cost to public funds for the development of the scheme has been £10.2 million (exc. VAT).

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42870]

Ms Buck: 100 per cent. of departmental premises that require audible fire alarms, as determined by the departments risk assessment of the premises, are fitted with audible fire alarms.

However the Department does have a number of small, regional operational sites, such as vehicle test stations and coastguard sites, for which information is not collected in the form required and an audit of the departmental estate could only be conducted at disproportionate cost. The Department is committed to ensuring compliance with fire safety law in premises it occupies. That includes provision of fire detection and warning systems that are appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

Aylesbury North (Railway Station)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the proposed construction of an Aylesbury North railway station. [43298]

Derek Twigg: On 15 January, the Department received proposals, including a business case, from Chiltern Railways for a new station at Aylesbury Vale Parkway. We will be considering these submissions during 2006.

C2C Rail Line (Benfleet)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the need for additional rolling stock on the c2c rail line to Benfleet; and if he will make a statement. [43311]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1464W. The two remaining units referred to in my answer due to return to c2c by the end of December 2005 have now been returned, increasing capacity on the route.

It is for the operator to ensure that sufficient rolling stock is available to deliver the train service specified in the franchise agreement.

Concessionary Travel

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he plans to make of the number of *(a)* people aged 60 and over and *(b)* disabled people obtaining bus passes under the Government's concessionary fare schemes; and what funding is being made available by central Government to provide free travel outside district and unitary authority boundaries. [44701]

Ms Buck: The percentage of people 60 and over holding a bus pass will be estimated using data from the National Travel Survey, a continuous household survey. The Department will be surveying local authorities on their concessionary fares schemes, and will be asking for the number of bus passes issued to disabled people.

The Government are providing an extra £350 million for 2007–08 which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities of introducing free local off-peak bus travel. As now, there will be no specific central Government funding for cross-boundary travel. Local authorities will have discretion to work together to provide travel outside their area, as they do at present, based on their judgment of local needs and their overall financial priorities.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pensioners in *(a)* the Tees Valley and *(b)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland will qualify for free off-peak bus travel from April. [45105]

Ms Buck: The number of residents aged 60 or older who will qualify for free off-peak bus travel in *(a)* the five unitary authorities which comprise the Tees Valley,

is 137,200. This is from mid-2004 population estimates from the Office for National Statistics. In *(b)* the Parliamentary Constituency of Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland, over 17,100 people were of retirement age; that is men aged 65 or older and women aged 60 or older, at the time of the 2001 census.

Consultancy Contracts

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total amount spent by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Highways Agency on consultancy contracts was in each of the past five years. [43596]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 13W, to the hon. Member for Angus (Mr. Weir).

Crossrail

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the final construction cost of Crossrail. [43600]

Derek Twigg: The estimate of expense submitted with the Crossrail hybrid Bill in February 2005 estimates the cost of Crossrail as £10.292 billion in first quarter 2002 prices.

Cycling

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what budget he has made available for improvements to facilities for cycling in each of the past five years. [43599]

Derek Twigg: The Department provides funding for cycling through the local transport plan settlement and English local highway authorities outside London have informed the Department that their investment in cycle facilities for each of the last five years is as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	29.58
2002–03	39.90
2003–04	32.13
2004–05[1]	38.89
2005–06[1]	35.39

[1] Estimate

London boroughs also receive funding from the Department via a block settlement through Transport for London and TfL estimate they have invested a further £50 million over this period from this source.

To supplement this spend, the Department has provided an additional budget for cycling programmes and initiatives. A further £4.37 million was allocated in 2002–03 and 2003–04 and £10.56 million in 2004–05. The Department has also awarded Cycling England a budget of £5 million for 2005–06 to fund their work plan aimed at encouraging an increase in cycling of which £3.15 million has been allocated for cycle facilities.

Departmental Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants in each grade have left his Department in each of the last three years to join consultancy firms; and which firm each joined. [37366]

Ms Buck: Under the business appointment rules, staff are required to submit an application for approval to accept an outside appointment following resignation or retirement from Crown service. All senior civil servants must seek formal approval for any outside appointments within two years of leaving the Department. There have been two members of staff below the senior civil service and three senior civil servants who have left the civil service and taken up appointment with a consultancy within the past three years.

Identifying individual firms might lead to individual's identities being revealed.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in the Southend, West constituency. [41749]

Ms Buck: The Department owns no land or property in the Southend, West constituency.

Insurance Certificates (Display)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it mandatory for certificates of insurance to be displayed on the windscreens of vehicles. [45971]

Dr. Ladyman: We are not persuaded that a windscreen disc would help reduce uninsured driving and have no plans to make them mandatory. During 2004 Professor David Greenaway of Nottingham University carried out a review of motor insurance arrangements in the UK to see what could be done to tackle the problem of uninsured driving.

He considered windscreen insurance discs but reached the conclusion that they were unlikely to have any significant or long-term impact on uninsured driving and did not recommend them.

Ladbroke Grove Crash

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1857–58W, on the Ladbroke Grove crash, when he expects the remaining four recommendations from public inquiry reports to be implemented. [41846]

Derek Twigg: The four outstanding recommendations and the anticipated completion dates are:

1. Pilot schemes (on train protection) using ETCS or ETCS elements should be carried out.

Trial of ERTMS on the Cambrian line is due to enter service in 2008.

2. The selective fitment of GSM-R (a radio system) in advance of ETCS fitment to trains should be considered.

3. There should be a national system of direct radio communication between trains and signallers.

Network Rail is implementing GSM-R across the network, starting with Strathclyde during 2006 with full national completion due in 2012.

4. Suppliers of products or services of a safety-critical kind should be required to hold an accreditation but the features of such a system require further study.

The Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme is scheduled to be rolled out throughout 2006, starting in March.

Marine Environment

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans *(a)* to announce the location of marine environment high risk areas in waters within UK jurisdiction and *(b)* to consult on the proposed protective measures for these areas. [R] [45494]

Dr. Ladyman: We will make an announcement on marine environmental high risk areas (MEHRAs) shortly.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the national targets are for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; and what the performance of offices in South Devon is in relation to those targets. [46615]

Dr. Ladyman: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Ministerial Targets for the 2005–06 business year appear on page 19 of the agency's annual plan and accounts 2005, which is also available on the agency's website, www.mcga.gov.uk. They focus on search and rescue response times, ship survey and inspection targets and other projects, including prevention.

Agency performance against these targets will be published in the MCA's annual plan and accounts 2006, following audit and ministerial scrutiny, but performance of specific offices are not published.

P-plate Scheme

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what consultations his Department undertook on introducing a compulsory probationary P-plate scheme for newly-qualified drivers; [45606]

(2) what steps his Department has taken to encourage take-up of the P-plate scheme among newly-qualified drivers. [45608]

Dr. Ladyman: A compulsory P-plate scheme was one of the options discussed in the Department's consultation paper, "A Structured Approach to Learning to Drive", published in 2002. The decision letter responding to that consultation, published in August 2004, explained that Ministers had decided against additional regulation of newly-qualified drivers, and no further work has therefore been done on a P-plate scheme. Copies of the consultation paper and the decision letter were placed in the Library of the House and are also available online at—http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=10204&l=2.

The Department also commissioned research in September 2003 on the likely impact of a trial P-plate scheme, during which free plates would be issued to all those passing the practical driving test. This study found so much resistance to P-plate use within the target population, however, that the trial itself was abandoned. A short report on this project will be published by the Department in due course.

Road Building

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what public expenditure per head on new road building was in each of the counties of England for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 in descending order; and what the planned spending is for 2006–07 in each case. [42317]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport does not hold centrally information on all public expenditure per head on new road building.

The following tables contain public expenditure per head in each year for those authorities/counties in England which have new Highways Agency roads or local authority roads built at a cost of £5 million of more. There are separate Highways Agency and local authority programmes of expenditure on road improvements costing less than £5 million. However, it is not possible to identify separately within these programmes new road building schemes from other types of road improvement. Therefore this information is not included.

County/authority	*2004–05 public expenditure - per head (£)*
Stoke-on-Trent	78.74
Peterborough	67.19
Bedfordshire	40.44
Staffordshire	36.76
East Riding of Yorkshire	36.36
Medway	29.87
Surrey	24.52
Nottinghamshire	23.01
Greater Manchester	21.91
Southend-on-Sea	21.55
Hertfordshire	18.45
Kent	16.05
Northumberland	15.28
Lincolnshire	14.63
South Yorkshire	14.52
Suffolk	14.16
Cambridgeshire	12.75
South Gloucestershire	11.15
Somerset	11.06
Rutland	10.96
Leicestershire	9.58
Durham	8.23
East Sussex	7.95
North Yorkshire	7.19
Stockton-on-Tees	7.04
Gloucestershire	6.58
Buckinghamshire	4.66
Tyne and Wear	4.37
Norfolk	4.30
Wiltshire	4.00
West Midlands	3.92
Reading	3.61
Swindon	3.40
Shropshire	3.37
Cumbria	2.24
Essex	1.54
Warwickshire	0.89
West Yorkshire	0.51
Worcestershire	0.49
Wokingham	0.07
Rutland	164.38

County/authority	2004-05 public expenditure per head (£)
Stoke-on-Trent	93.32
North Somerset	75.75
Peterborough	70.96
Bedfordshire	63.74
East Riding of Yorkshire	48.00
Hertfordshire	43.14
Kent	39.94
Cornwall (excl. Isles of Scilly)	37.67
Cambridgeshire	31.93
South Yorkshire	30.24
South Gloucestershire	29.54
Devon	28.12
Buckinghamshire	27.77
Swindon	26.18
Staffordshire	25.83
Plymouth	25.08
Suffolk	22.29
Southend-on-Sea	21.93
Northumberland	20.98
Greater Manchester	20.42
Cumbria	20.23
Tyne and Wear	14.78
Warwickshire	9.76
Stockton-on-Tees	8.92
Lincolnshire	8.14
North Yorkshire	7.88
Norfolk	6.97
Bristol, City of	6.50
Durham	4.45
West Midlands	4.21
Nottinghamshire	3.70
West Yorkshire	2.08
Leicester	1.54
Merseyside	1.23
Shropshire	1.11
Medway	0.20
Essex	0.04
Cumbria	251.62
Rutland	98.90
Hertfordshire	98.41
Cornwall (excl. Isles of Scilly)	97.71
Kent	83.37
Buckinghamshire	65.32
Cambridgeshire	62.73
Swindon	53.40
North Somerset	53.01
Stockton-on-Tees	51.72
Bedfordshire	46.30
Cheshire	35.00
Stoke-on-Trent	29.41
North Yorkshire	27.42
Suffolk	27.25
Norfolk	27.04
East Sussex	24.34
Lincolnshire	24.14
Nottinghamshire	21.40
Devon	17.88
South Yorkshire	15.77
West Yorkshire	14.89
Warwickshire	14.60
East Riding of Yorkshire	14.10
Durham	12.90
Northumberland	8.72
Hampshire	4.99
Merseyside	4.25
Staffordshire	3.25
Greater Manchester	1.97
Tyne and Wear	1.34
West Midlands	1.21
Medway	0.80
Shropshire	0.73

Road Safety

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by central Government on road safety in relation to *(a)* speeding, *(b)* drink driving, *(c)* seat belts and *(d)* cyclists' safety in each of the past 20 years. [45671]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 152W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody). Detailed information as requested is not available.

Romsey/Chandlers Fore/Eastleigh Railway Line

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will discuss the future of the Romsey/Chandlers Ford/Eastleigh passenger railway line with Hampshire county council before any final decision is made; [43861]

(2) what plans he has to maintain the Romsey/Chandlers Ford/Eastleigh passenger railway; and if he will make a statement. [43867]

Derek Twigg: The South Western franchise replacement consultation document proposed a shuttle service between Romsey and Eastleigh via Chandlers Ford. Meetings to discuss the document were held with stakeholders, including Hampshire county council. The consultation closed on 13 January 2006. Responses will be considered prior to the issue of a core specification for bidders to price as part of the franchise replacement competition.

South West Trains

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his timetable is for publishing the responses to the Rail Franchise and Utilisation consultation for the South West trains area. [43865]

Derek Twigg: A document responding to the comments received on the Department's South Western franchise consultation will be issued once all the comments have been considered fully. This is expected to be before the invitation to tender is issued at the end of March. Timing of the publication of responses to the South West Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy consultation document is a matter for Network Rail.

Thameslink 2000

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the *(a)* Thameslink 2000 and *(b)* the East London Line extension projects will be completed. [41709]

Derek Twigg: The public inquiry into the Thameslink 2000 project re-opened on 6 September 2005 and closed on 7 December 2005. The inspector is expected to present his report to the Secretary of State and the Deputy Prime Minister in March 2006. A separate report by London TravelWatch on railway closures in connection with the Thameslink project is expected to be completed around spring 2006. This will also need to be considered by the Secretary of State. Were all the

various consents and orders required for the project to be approved, and funding made available, construction would be likely to take approximately five years.

Phase 1 of the East London Line extension, which will connect the line to Dalston Junction to the North and Crystal Palace and West Croydon to the South, is on course to be delivered by June 2010. Phase 2 of the extension, which will further extend the line to Highbury and Islington in the North and add a new branch, just south of Surrey Quays, to Clapham Junction, is not included in the Mayor's current five year investment strategy. However, the Mayor has indicated that he intends to take forward construction of this further extension in the future.

Transport Expenditure

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much his Department has spent on *(a)* reducing crime on public transport, *(b)* (i) widening and (ii) building (A) roads and (B) motorways, *(c)* rail safety, *(d)* transport for school children, *(e)* ensuring disabled people have access to public transport, *(f)* concessionary travel for students, *(g)* building cycle lanes, *(h)* promoting the use of bicycles, *(i)* promoting environmentally friendly travel options, *(j)* investigating new technologies for environmentally friendly travel, *(k)* road safety *(l)* initiatives and (2) campaigns, *(l)* installing new speed cameras, *(m)* ensuring the safety of level crossings, *(n)* preventing public access to railway tracks, *(o)* repairing bridges, *(p)* refurbishing railway stations, *(q)* ensuring maritime safety, *(r)* maintenance of lighthouses, *(s)* improving ports, *(t)* ensuring air safety and *(u)* studies into increasing airport capacity since May 2002; and what projections his Department has for spending on each category of expenditure over the next three years; [43025]

(2) how much his Department has spent on schemes to promote *(a)* road travel, *(b)* rail travel, *(c)* bus travel, *(d)* cycling and *(e)* walking in each of the past three years. [43597]

Ms Buck: It is not practical to produce a detailed breakdown under the requested categories. This is due to the following factors:

(a) the identified objectives in many cases constitute a part of the rationale for individual projects that are intended to achieve a range of objectives, with not all spending being targeted only at a single objective;

(b) Department for Transport spending in many cases consists of general funding support for partner organisations, rather than support for particular projects or objectives; and

(c) in other cases, spending towards the objectives is funded by user charges or levies, rather than by taxation, and thereby does not score as part of DfT's public expenditure.

Details of spending since 1999–2000 by the Department for Transport and its predecessor are set out in Tables A1 to A3 of DfT's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527), copies of which were placed in the Library of the House when it was published in June 2005. These tables also set out spending plans for the current year, 2006–07 and 2007–08. Spending plans for 2008–09 will be set as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Antisocial Behaviour

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General what progress has been made towards establishing *(a)* a team of specialist prosecutors and *(b)* specialist courts to deal with cases of antisocial behaviour. [45203]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) established a team of specialist antisocial behaviour (ASB) prosecutors in March 2004. They are located in 14 CPS areas, and have led the CPS' contribution to the multi-agency drive to reduce antisocial behaviour. In September 2005, those CPS areas without a specialist ASB prosecutor were required to appoint an ASB co-ordinator to lead on ASB work in their CPS area.

Antisocial behaviour response courts, which are magistrates courts having a particular focus on dealing effectively with ASB cases in co-operation with local agencies, were established in 12 areas in summer 2004. These locations were chosen so as to dovetail with the appointment of the CPS specialist prosecutors. There are now 157 ASB response courts located within 31 criminal justice areas across England and Wales. Lesson learned from their operation have been circulated to all courts to promote best practice in the handling of ASB cases.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what consultation events were held with key stakeholders in relation to child care during 2005; what Government representatives attended these events; and what the cost of each event was; [43670]

(2) how many structured discussions were held with parents through local forums about child care during 2005; what Government representatives attended these discussions; and what the cost of each discussion was. [43939]

Beverley Hughes: We have consulted widely with parents and key stakeholders on child care throughout 2005 and details of principal events are given in the following table:

Event	*Government representatives who attended*	*Cost*
Eight events held to consult on the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage attended by a range of key stakeholders	Primary National Foundation Stage Advisors	£34,400
Seven regional seminars held with local authorities on Phase 2 of the Children's Centre's programme	DfES officials	£50,000
A consultation with key stakeholders on the Ten Year Strategy for Childcare at 11 Downing Street	Minister and Paymaster General from Treasury	£700 (excluding food)

Event	Government representatives who attended	Cost
Several events held with local authorities and practitioners from the private and voluntary sectors to discuss the free entitlement code of practice. Staff time only	DfES Officials	
Five focus groups held with parents looking at their information needs	DfES contractors	£40,000
Parenting strategy stakeholders meeting to discuss parenting issues to develop a DfES Parenting strategy.	DfES officials	£1,102
11 events held with parents to discuss the Ten Year Strategy	Ministers and Paymaster General from Treasury	£70,000
Seminars for representatives of local authorities, PCTs, strategic health authorities, the voluntary and community sector and the police consulting on "The 10 Year Childcare Strategy" were held as part of the "Every Child Matters : Delivering change for children" regional events.	DfES officials	The total cost of these event, (which included nine other seminar choices in addition to those on childcare) was £569,607.65 (excluding VAT)

In addition, the national remodelling team within the Teacher Development Agency has an ongoing programme of events with local authorities, schools and other key stakeholders to consult and support them in the development of extended services, including childcare accessible through schools. Costs vary according to region and the number of attendees but some examples of key events held during 2005 include a national conference with Directors of Children's Services, other senior local authority staff and key stakeholders at a cost of £84,351 and nine regional briefings for local authority delivery managers and stakeholders from the early years, childcare and health sectors at an average cost of £7,538 per event.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many child care places have closed in each year since 1997; [43798]

(2) what percentage of child care providers closed in each year for which figures are available. [43947]

Beverley Hughes: The Department is unable to provide accurate details of closure rates for child care places and providers before 2003.

Since March 2003 data on closure rates have been available from Ofsted and are shown in the following table:

	April to March	
	2003-04	2004-05
Stock of child care places	967,821	1,102,686
Child care places closed	128,351	200,775
Percentage of places closed	13.2	18.2
Stock of child care providers	85,804	92,604
Child care providers closed	14,350	19,223
Percentage of child care providers closed	16.7	20.8

Closure rates recorded for the first six months of the 2005-06 financial year show that closures are declining. For the year September 2004 to September 2005 the provider closure rate has reduced to 18.3 per cent. with the closure rate for full day care for this period reducing from 14.2 per cent. to 13.1 per cent. Since April 2005, funding for local authorities has focused on sustaining existing good quality provision that meets local needs, rather than creating new places which may not match local demand and may put existing provision at risk.

From March 2003 to September 2005, despite closures the stock of child care places has continued to grow as follows:

Stock	Number of registered places	Increase since 2003 (percentage)
March 2003	967,821	n/a
March 2004	1,102,686	14
September 2005	1,220,607	26

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places were available in each of the past 10 years in West Lancashire constituency. [45007]

Beverley Hughes: Statistics have been collected by local authority area only since 1999 following the introduction of the National Childcare Strategy for England. We are unable to provide details of places by parliamentary constituency.

The following table details the stock of child care places in Lancashire, each year since 1999.

As at March:	Stock of child care places
1999	17,193
2000	18,072
2001	19,769
2002	22,288
2003	22,538
2004	26,391
2005	29,008

Consultants

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many consultants have been engaged by her Department since March 2005; and at what cost. [43684]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills spent £2.3 million from administration costs and £7.5 million from programme expenditure on consultants from March 2005 to date. The Department does not hold centrally information on the number of consultants engaged in this period and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All these figures relate to consultancy as defined centrally by the Office for Government Commerce (OGC). Other transactions also take place with consultancy firms, who supply a range of services which are not consultancy under this standard definition.

Contact Visits

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to ensure that contact visits are safe for adopted and fostered children. [44666]

Maria Eagle: The Children Act 1989 recognises that, in the majority of cases, it will be in a child's best interests to maintain contact with his or her birth family and includes a duty to promote contact, unless that is not reasonably practicable or consistent with the child's welfare. In such cases, the Act makes provision for contact arrangements to be supervised, restricted or suspended. Exceptionally, contact will be refused from the time the child enters care.

Consideration of contact is an essential part of the care planning process for looked after children and any arrangements for contact will therefore be kept under ongoing review and monitored in order to identify problems which may arise and changes which may need to be made to the arrangements. Detailed records about contact will form part of each child's case record and will be considered as part of regular formal review meetings, although the review of contact arrangements should not be restricted to such meetings. Following an amendment to the Review of Children's Cases Regulations in 2004, review meetings must, where possible, be chaired by an independent reviewing officer, whose role it is to ensure both that the child's views are understood and taken into account and that reviews are carried out in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Once an adoption order is made, any existing contact order will be extinguished and the adopters will acquire full parental responsibility for the child. Unless the court makes a new contact order, it will be for the adopters themselves to decide on the nature and extent of the child's contact with his or her birth family. The Government have, however, put in place a new framework for supporting adoptive families, which includes counselling, advice, information and assistance with facilitating appropriate contact arrangements.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the organisations to which her Department made payments through grants or contracts other than in relation to the Department's administrative expenditure over the value of £20,000 in 2004–05. [39512]

Bill Rammell: A list of organisations who received over £20,000 in grants and contracts in 2004–05 from the Department for Education and Skills other than in relation to the Department's administrative expenditure has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent by her Department on salaries paid to civil servants in each year since 1997. [41576]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is set out in the following table. The figures are taken from the Department's resource accounts for the years in question. They represent the gross wages and salaries of civil servants, including bonuses, but excluding the costs of Ministers and special advisers and social security and other pension costs.

	Salaries (£ million)	*Salaries as percentage of net admin costs*
1997–98	107	57
1998–99	108	47
1999–2000	135	49
2000–01	142	50
2001–02	109	47
2002–03	116	50
2003–04	130	55
2004–05	128	49

These figures reflect the Department as constituted at the time the accounts were produced and so are not adjusted for machinery of government changes.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for the percentage of children looked after for a year or more achieving five or more GCSE *(a)* A*-C and *(b)* A-G grades by 2009. [45522]

Maria Eagle: Our current targets in this area run until 2006 and 2008 respectively.

In SR 2002 (amended by the SEU report 'A better education for children in care' in 2003) a national PSA target was set to improve life chances for children by:

Substantially narrowing the gap between the educational attainment and participation of children in care and that of their peers by 2006. This will have been achieved if:

outcomes for 11-year-olds in English and Maths are at least 60 per cent. as good as those of their peers;

the proportion who become disengaged from education is reduced, so that no more than 10 per cent. reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam; and

the proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to five GCSE's graded A*-C has risen on average by 4 percentage points each year since 2002; and in all authorities at least 15 per cent. of young people in care achieve this level of qualification.

This target is still extant and will be reported on when the figures for 2006 are made available in May 2007.

In SR 2004 a national PSA target for looked-after children was set as follows:

To narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and their peers, and improve their educational support and the stability of their lives, so that by 2008, 80 per cent. of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or are placed for adoption.

This is underpinned by a number of indicators to improve absolute performance and narrow the gap

between the performance of looked-after children and that of their peers. For education this included the following measures:

percentage of children aged 11, looked after for at least 12 months, who obtain level 4 in key stage 2 English and Maths;

percentage of young people, looked after for at least 12 months, who reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam;

percentage of young people, looked after for at least 12 months and in year 11, who achieve five or more GCSEs graded A*-C or equivalent;

participation of care leavers aged 19 in education, employment and training.

Local authorities are still required to set targets against these performance indicators through the school and local authority target setting exercise (SaLTs).

Employer Training Programme

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the Institute of Fiscal Studies evaluation of the employer training programme; and if she will make a statement. [43052]

Phil Hope: The IFS report identified a number of issues relating to the employer training pilots. The report has highlighted that we need to do more to attract the harder to reach employers and the subsequent phases of the pilots have shown us better how to do so. That has been one of the many real values of the pilots and their evaluation.

In some ETP areas around 25 per cent. of eligible employers are now taking part in the pilots—a far higher penetration rate than the 8 per cent. that IFS estimated carried out similar training without the pilots. We therefore anticipate that a higher proportion will be additional. Skills brokers in the new national programme, Train to Gain, will have a target of at least half the employers they engage being "hard to reach", additional employers. We are making £15 million available in 2005–06 and £20 million in 2006–07 to develop the capacity of the brokerage network and implement a performance management system that focuses services on this priority and rewards achievement accordingly.

A number of evaluations, including the IFS report, have shown that employers identify many benefits from ETP including productivity improvement, changed attitudes to learning, improved motivation and provided employers and employees with a platform for progression. Participating employers were more likely to train their low-skilled staff to the benefit of their business and say that ETP has allowed them to train more people over a shorter period of time. So we are confident that we are already involving more hard-to-reach learners.

We expect Train to Gain to deliver over 40,000 additional level 2 qualifications in 2006–07; over 140,000 in 2007–08 and, by the time the programme reaches full capacity, 175,000 in 2008–09 and in each year thereafter.

Young Carers

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what guidance she has given to local authorities in relation to Fast-track to Attendance and young carers; [44305]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the proportion of identified serial truants who are young carers. [44307]

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will ensure that teachers and school staff are aware of *(a)* the needs of young carers and *(b)* the impact caring responsibilities may have on their schoolwork and attendance at school. [44132]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Government want to ensure that young carers can gain maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities. Local authority children's services and adults social services should work with families to ensure that young people are not expected to carry inappropriate levels of caring. We have also advised schools that in a genuine crisis, they can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements are made—the school should set a time limit for the absence and set some school work so that the pupil does not fall far behind while at home. This advice is reflected in the existing guidance on the codes which are used to record absence and attendance in the school register. It is also reflected in "Managing Behaviour and Attendance: Groups at Particular Risk". This guidance has been available since 1999, initially included within the Department's Social Inclusion circulars, and was published again on the Department's school attendance and behaviour website in 2005 as "Managing Behaviour and Attendance: Groups at Particular Risk".

The Department has not made any assessment of the proportion of young carers who have school attendance difficulties and does not collect or hold data that would enable it to do so. Census data are based on self-identification by carers' families.

When a pupil is not attending school regularly, for whatever reason, local authorities are best placed to decide on the most appropriate course of action on a case by case basis. The Government would expect, however, any assessment of school attendance difficulties to take into account the possibility of circumstances such as caring responsibilities.

One of the options available is the Fast-track to Attendance framework which is a time-focused approach to case management. Its aim is to ensure that schools and local authorities deal with attendance cases quickly and in the most effective way to get the child back into school. The Fast-track framework promotes early intervention both by the school and, when necessary, by the local authority and other agencies. Fast-track is not just about prosecutions or sanctions, rather the approach aims to ensure that appropriate action is taken to identify and tackle attendance problems as soon as they become apparent. Guidance on the 'Fast-track' process was issued to local authorities in 2003. As the guidance relates to a process it does not specifically refer to young carers or any other group.

Further Education

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what national target she has set for increasing the proportion of 16-year-olds taking part in further education; [44855]

(2) what target she has set for increasing the number of people in education at the age of 17 years. [44856]

Bill Rammell: The Government are committed to tackling our internationally low post-16 participation rate. In the 14–19 White Paper we set out our aim to increase participation at age 17 from 75 per cent. to 90 per cent. over the next 10 years. Critical to achieving this ambition will be securing our reform of 14–19 curriculum, in particular the introduction of specialised Diplomas from 2008.

Higher Education

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the participation rate of each age group in *(a)* higher education and *(b)* first degree courses in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex, (iii) Hertfordshire, (iv) Greater London and (v) England was in each year since 1978. [34231]

Bill Rammell: The available information is given in the tables.

The latest available figures on participation by local areas were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in January 2005 in "Young participation in higher education", which is available from the HEFCE website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/. The HEFCE report shows participation rates for young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 disaggregated by constituency, local education authority (LEA) and region for the years 1997 to 2000.

Figures for the relevant LEAs and Greater London, together with the comparable figure for England, are shown in the table.

Young Participation Rate (YPR (A))

Percentage

	Year cohort aged 18 in:			
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Southend-on-sea[1]	26	23	24	27
Essex[1]	27	26	27	28
Hertfordshire[1]	37	35	37	38
Greater London	33.1	34.2	35.0	36.4
England	29.2	28.8	29.2	29.9

[1] Figures are reported to the nearest whole number.
Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England

The Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) measures the percentage of English-domiciled students aged 17 to 30 years, participating in higher education (both full-time and part-time courses) at UK Higher Education Institutions and English Further Education Colleges. The available figures for the academic years from 1999/2000 to 2003/04 are shown in the table.

Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English domiciled entrants (full-time and part-time) to higher education courses from 1999/00 to 2003/04[1]

	HEIPR
1999	41
2000	42
2001	42
2002	43
2003	43

[1] Calculations are based on data provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Learning and Skills Council.
Source:
DfES National Statistics Statistical First Release 14/2005, "Participation Rates in Higher Education: Academic Years 1999/2000 – 2003/2004 (Provisional)".

The figure for 2004/05 will be published in April 2006.

The Age Participation Index (API) measures full-time participation by UK-domiciled students, aged below 21 years, in higher education courses in Great Britain. Ramsden, B. (1995), 'Participation in Higher Education: A Study to Determine Whether the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate Should Be Disaggregated', confirmed that there are significant weaknesses in the Age Participation Index and the figures should therefore be treated with caution.

The available figures are shown in the table.

Age Participation Index[1] *for UK-domiciled ants to higher education courses in Great Britain 1978/79 to 2001/02*

Percentage

	API
1978	12
1979	12
1980	13
1981	13
1982	13
1983	13
1984	14
1985	14
1986	14
1987	15
1988	15
1989	17
1990	19
1991	23
1992	28
1993	30
1994	32
1995	32
1996	33
1997	33
1998	31
1999	32
2000	33
2001	35

[1] The Age Participation Index is defined as the number of home domiciled initial entrants to full-time and sandwich undergraduate higher education courses in Great Britain, aged under 21, expressed as a percentage of the average number of 18 and 19 year olds in the population.
Source:
DfES.

Looked-after Children

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for reducing the number of looked-after children each year. [45532]

Maria Eagle: There is currently no national target for reducing the number of looked-after children by local authorities each year. In SR2004 a National PSA target for Looked After Children was set as follows:

> To narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and their peers, and improve their educational support and the stability of their lives, so that by 2008, 80 per cent. of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption.

This target is a recognition of the fundamental importance of stability to the lives of these most vulnerable of children and young people. Children become looked after for a variety of reasons, though the most common reason for children becoming looked after is abuse or neglect (in 62 per cent. of cases). It is important that this decision is based on the individual assessed needs of each child. To set a target to reduce the number of looked after children could create a perverse incentive that would serve as a barrier to children who may need to become looked after, which would not be in their best interests.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national targets she has set for reducing the number of looked-after children *(a)* placed more than 20 miles from their local authority, *(b)* placed in independent placements and *(c)* from black and ethnic communities. [45533]

Maria Eagle: There are currently no national targets for any of these categories. In SR2004 a National PSA target for Looked After Children was set as follows:

> To narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and their peers, and improve their educational support and the stability of their lives, so that by 2008, 80 per cent. of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or are placed for adoption.

This target is a recognition of the fundamental importance of stability to the lives of these most vulnerable of children and young people. However data on the groups of looked after children are available in the departmental statistical volume: "Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March". The most recent figures are available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/OL/v000569/index.shtml

Nursery Schools (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in West Lancashire constituency attended nursery in each of the past 10 years; and how many have taken up free nursery places since the policy was introduced. [45006]

Beverley Hughes: All four-year-olds have been entitled to a free early education place since 1998 and from April 2004 this entitlement was extended to all three-year-olds. The free entitlement consists of a minimum of five two and a half hour sessions per week for 33 weeks of the year for six terms before statutory school age, which is the term following their fifth birthday.

Some local authorities may additionally offer subsidised childcare places but this information is not collected centrally.

Figures for January 2005 show that all four-year-old children receive some form of free entitlement. The figure for three-year-olds is 96 per cent. This covers all maintained, private, voluntary and independent providers and represents 535,100 three-year-olds and 568,300 four-year-olds.

The available information on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in West Lancashire parliamentary constituency area and Lancashire local authority is shown in the tables.

The latest figures on early education places for three and four-year-olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 43/2005 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2005 (final)" in September, which is available on my Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Number of free nursery education places[1] taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds, Lancashire local authority

	3-year-olds			*4-year-olds*		
Position in January each year	*Maintained nursery and primary schools[2]*	*Other mtd and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 3-year-olds*	*Maintained nursery and primary schools3*	*Other mtd and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 4-year-olds*
1997	4,400	n/a	4,400	n/a	n/a	[4]12,400
1998	4,400	n/a	4,400	n/a	n/a	[4]13,500
1999	4,400	n/a	4,400	n/a	n/a	[4]16,000
2000	4,300	[5]0	4,300	n/a	n/a	[4]15,900
2001	4,200	[5]5,200	9,400	n/a	n/a	[4]15,700
2002	4,100	[5]5,300	9,400	10,500	[6]2,500	13,000
2003	3,900	[5]6,200	10,100	10,200	[6]2,500	12,700
2004	3,800	[5]6,700	10,500	10,100	[6]2,600	12,600
2005	3,700	[5]6,600	10,200	9,600	[6]2,500	12,100

n/a = Not available.

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.

[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.

[3] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.

[4] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Nursery Education Grant data collection exercise.

[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Nursery Education Grant data collection exercise.

[6] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census supplementary data collection exercise and the Annual Schools' Census.

[7] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.
[8] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Number of free nursery education places[1] taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds, West Lancashire parliamentary constituency

	3-year-olds			4-year-olds		
Position in January each year	*Maintained nursery and primary schools[2]*	*Other mtd and private, voluntary and independent providers[3]*	*Total 3-year-olds*	*Maintained nursery and primary schools[4]*	*Other mtd and private, voluntary and independent providers[5]*	*Total 4-year-olds*
2004	390	460	850	900	190	1,100
2005	400	450	850	810	190	1,000

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.
[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[3] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.
[4] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Changes in pupil figures may arise from changes to the underlying population in the local authority area and other factors. However, my Department doesn't publish population figures for individual age cohorts at sub-national level because of the unreliability of the underlying population estimates. The Office for National Statistics publish sub-national population estimates in five-year age bands.

Ofsted

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps Ofsted is taking to ensure that inspectors who have been removed from, and subsequently reinstated to, the list of team inspectors should not be disadvantaged in the award of future contracts. [43051]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM chief inspector, Maurice Smith has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice J. Smith, dated 24 January 2006:

Your recent parliamentary question has been referred to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, for reply.

You asked what steps Ofsted is taking to ensure that inspectors who have previously been removed from, and subsequently reinstated to, the list of team inspectors should not be subsequently disadvantaged in the award of future contracts.

In connection with inspections under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996, a person whose name was included on the roll of team inspectors should not have been disadvantaged in seeking and securing inspection work on the basis that they had previously been removed from, and then reinstated to, the roll. Inclusion on the roll signified that a team inspector satisfied the conditions of his or her enrolment: that he or she was fit and proper, and competent and effective, to discharge the functions of a team inspector. However, the roll of team inspectors was discontinued in September 2005 following the implementation of the Education Act 2005 and the introduction of the new Section 5 inspection arrangements.

Under the Education Act 2005, Ofsted has secured the provision of inspection services for the inspections of schools covered by Section 5 of that Act, by contract with six Regional Inspection Service Providers (RISPs). The RISPs are responsible for the recruitment, selection, training and deployment of inspectors, and the standards of competence required of the inspectors are specified; inspectors must be fit and proper, and competent and effective. Further details on the competencies of inspectors are available at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=1438

It is for the RISPs to satisfy themselves that inspectors meet these competences and they may only carry out Section 5 inspections once they have inspected satisfactorily under the supervision of HMI. The RISPs have different recruitment and selection processes but all include checking whether inspectors were previously Section 10 inspectors. Where an inspector had previously been de-registered or removed from the roll, the RISP would have to look at the individual's circumstances. However, we have no reason to believe that inspectors would be disadvantaged in seeking and securing inspection work simply on the basis that they were previously removed from, and reinstated to, the Section 10 roll of team inspectors. Finally, I should inform you that, although there is no longer a roll of team inspectors, HMCI is required, under the Education Act 2005, to publish at intervals of not more than 12 months the names of those persons who are notified to him by a RISP as persons with whom the RISP proposes to make arrangements for carrying out of inspections on behalf of HMCI. The list of these persons, known as additional inspectors, was published on the Ofsted website on 07 December 2005 and can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=4112

A copy of this reply has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Policy Reviews

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the policy reviews her Department has conducted in each year since 1997. [44330]

Bill Rammell: The Department maintains all of its key policies under review. Material on the key policy areas for which the Department is responsible can be found on our website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/

Recreation Areas and Holiday Play Schemes

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to develop *(a)* safe and accessible recreation areas and *(b)* affordable school holiday play schemes for the most vulnerable families. [39406]

Maria Eagle: Thanks to the £155 million play programme announced by the Big Lottery Fund in March 2005, a huge number of existing play facilities across England will be improved and new ones created. 80 per cent. of the fund will be used to develop free, open-access play provision in the areas of greatest need. Allocations will be made to local authorities based on child population weighted by the level of deprivation in each area but also taking into account where relatively affluent areas have pockets of deprivation (for example, rural areas).

For the older child, we have outlined new national standards for 'things to do and places to go' for young people. The standards include ensuring access to 'a range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time'. We intend to introduce new legislation that will clarify local authorities' responsibilities to secure access to such provision.

The Youth Matters Green Paper also outlined plans to put resources directly into the hands of young people so that they have more say over the way that resources are spent. Extra resources made available through the pre-Budget report mean that a total of £115 million will be available in the two financial years from April 2006 to support the provision of youth activities in communities, including the development of the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital funds which will particularly help to support access for young people from vulnerable families.

We have also committed £840 million to help develop extended services, including holiday play schemes, so that they are accessible through all our schools by 2010. These funds have also been distributed with a weighting for levels of deprivation. The National Remodelling Team within the Training and Development Agency has been appointed to provide support to all schools to help develop extended services.

Special Educational Needs

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements there are to enable the statutory assessment procedure for a statement of special educational needs to be continued for pupils who transfer to a school in another local education authority area during the course of the procedure; and if she will make a statement. [45171]

Maria Eagle: Under the Education Act 1996 local authorities have a duty, where necessary, to assess the special educational needs of children for whom they are responsible. If, during the course of the assessment, a child transfers to a school in another local authority's area but remains resident in the original authority's area then the original authority remains responsible for completing the assessment. If the child moves to the area of the school which he or she is transferring to or any area other than that of the original authority, the original authority is no longer responsible for the child or completing the assessment. If the new authority to which the child moves deems that it is necessary to assess the child's special educational needs then the new authority is under a duty to do so. In such circumstances we would expect the two authorities concerned to contact each other and, within any legal constraints, transfer information from the assessment begun by the original authority to inform the assessment by the new authority.

Student Finance

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received on allowing more flexibility to higher education institutions in the use of access funds; and if she will make a statement. [45215]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State and I have regular discussions with representatives from the higher education sector about a range of student finance issues, including the access to learning fund. The fund is designed to ensure that support is available to students from low-income backgrounds who might otherwise be unable to enter or remain in higher education. Higher education institutions, who administer the fund, have a high degree of discretion as to how to provide support, in order to target those most in need.

Last October, as part of our continuing commitment to part-time study, we announced an enhanced support package for part-time undergraduates from 2006/07, including an increase in the discretionary funds available to part-time students from £3 million to £12 million. Institutions will have the added flexibility to use this resource to provide additional fee support (on top of the statutory part-time grant) or to increase help to students facing financial hardship, for example, in meeting child care costs.

We also announced, in November, an additional £40 million (£20 million each from the Department and the Higher Education Funding Council for England) of institutional funding for 2006–07 to encourage participation and improve provision for part-time students from the most under-represented groups.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will introduce targets for teenage pregnancy reduction which reflect that some teenage pregnancies are planned; and if she will make a statement. [45230]

Beverley Hughes: We recognise that a minority of teenage pregnancies are planned. However, around half of under-18 conceptions end in abortion and the 1999 Social Exclusion Unit report on Teenage Pregnancy estimated that around 75 per cent. of teenage conceptions were unplanned.

While recognising that decisions about the outcome of pregnancy are for individuals to make, the aim of the Government's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy is to reduce unplanned pregnancies while encouraging young people to delay parenthood. Health and education outcomes for young mothers and their children are likely to be significantly worse than for older mothers.

Vocational Training

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of the impact of vocational training on industry. [40433]

Phil Hope: Our Department is committed to ensuring that everyone has the skills he or she needs to be employable and personally fulfilled. Our 14–19 and Skills White Papers set out our strategies for ensuring that education and training meets the needs of employers.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for the effective planning and funding of learning to raise the skills of the work force and the potential work force. It engages through the year with providers and employers to ensure that provision matches employer skills demands.

Recent findings of the LSC funded National Employer Skills Survey (NESS) in 2003 and 2005 show:

Just 4 per cent. of employers were reporting any vacancies relating to skill shortages.

The proportion of vacancies relating to skill shortages has fallen from 20 per cent. in 2003 to 17 per cent. in 2005.

Progress has been made in terms of skill gaps with the number of establishments reporting having staff not fully proficient falling from 22 per cent. in 2003 to 16 per cent. in 2005.

Young Parents (Higher Education)

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 16 to 19-year-old parents have returned to higher education in *(a)* the Wakefield district and *(b)* the Normanton constituency since 1997. [30435]

Bill Rammell: The information is not held centrally.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Gaming Machines

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the triennial review of stakes and prizes for category C gaming machines; and if she will make a statement. [45883]

Mr. Caborn: Following the triennial review conducted by the Gaming Board in 2004, the Secretary of State decided not to make any changes for the time being to gaming machine stake and prize limits. A schedule for stakes and prize limits on implementation of the Act was published when the Gambling Bill was introduced, and this remains Government policy.

The Government are committed to increasing the maximum stake category C gaming to 50p. This increase will be implemented in September 2007 when the new safeguards relating to social responsibility introduced by the Gambling Act 2005 will be in place.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41286]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows:

(a) The Department's front desk security staff, who deal with the public, are employed by an external security contractor who ensures that their staff are trained in relation to identity fraud.

(b) The Department currently has one administrative officer who checks the identity of new staff and who will be shortly undertaking a centrally held training course which covers identity fraud.

National Sports Foundation

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the English Cricket Board's Chance to Shine programme will be eligible for support from the National Sports Foundation. [45954]

Mr. Caborn: The England and Wales Cricket Board will be eligible to apply for funding from the National Sports Foundation (NSF). This will be subject to the Chance to Shine Programme meeting the NSF criteria and also delivering against the key performance indicators agreed between the England and Wales Cricket Board and Sport England for the £2 million lottery funding this year and in 2006–07.

Olympic Games

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what reassessment she has made of the costs of the London 2012 Olympics since the bid was successful; what further reassessments are planned; and if she will make a statement. [43401]

Tessa Jowell: I have commissioned KPMG to provide advice on the costs of the London 2012 Olympic games. Their work, which is ongoing, will inform our strategy for managing the Olympic project and costs will be kept under close scrutiny throughout.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of council tax collected by Hammersmith and Fulham council is expected to be used to finance the 2012 London Olympics in each year between now and 2012. [45289]

Mr. Caborn: The proportion of council tax collected by Hammersmith and Fulham council which is expected to be used to finance the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games is a matter for the Mayor of London.

Sports Programmes

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment she has made of the likely effects of the establishment of the National Sports Foundation on *(a)* the Football Foundation and *(b)* community programmes run by (i) the Rugby Football Union, (ii) the Rugby Football League and (iii) the Lawn Tennis Association; [45950]

(2) what part will be played by *(a)* Sport England and *(b)* regional sports boards in the operation of the National Sports Foundation; [45951]

(3) what decisions have been made on the *(a)* size of, *(b)* location of, *(c)* budget of, *(d)* condition of and *(e)* key personnel to be involved with the National Sports Foundation; [45952]

(4) what progress has been made towards establishing the National Sports Foundation. [45953]

Mr. Caborn: The National Sports Foundation (NSF) will be launched in April with funds being available from that date. The budget is £27.5 million over the next two years.

The NSF will be responsible for levering in additional private sector investment for grassroots sport and marketing and promoting the benefits of grassroots sport. It will have a strong, recognisable brand. There will be national and regional funding streams.

There will be three broad programmes for the initial period:

Fit for Sport—projects to improve both physical and human infrastructure for community clubs;

2012 Kids—building on the success of winning the Olympics, projects to encourage children to take up sport; and

Women in Sport—projects to increase female participation in sport.

The NSF will be delivered using Sport England's infrastructure. We need an established delivery structure so that the NSF is up and running from April. It will have a governance arrangement that allows for a light touch and speedy decision-making process, but ensures that appropriate checks and balances are in place.

Precise details of the governance arrangements, staffing, location and conditions, and the role of the Regional Sports Boards, is under consideration.

The five national governing bodies—the Rugby Football Union, Football Association, England and Wales Cricket Board, Lawn Tennis Association and the Rugby Football League—will be eligible to apply for NSF funds for specific projects that meet the criteria. The NSF will not however duplicate existing funding for community sport initiatives.

Sustainable Development

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [45828]

James Purnell: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's sectors contain many iconic and high profile buildings, which are used by large numbers of the public. Some have introduced innovative projects demonstrating sustainable development, such as the installation of photovoltaic panels in the roof of the Science Museum in South Kensington. These now power the Museum's Energy Gallery. The DCMS Sustainable Development Forum draws membership from DCMS's non departmental public bodies who share these innovative ideas and other examples of best practice. My officials also provide the secretariat for the Museums and Galleries Energy and Carbon Forum, a body which seeks to implement energy saving and the reduction of carbon emissions in national museums, galleries and libraries. Sustainable development considerations are being fully included in the current refurbishment of DCMS Headquarters building. The Department's Headquarters building and The Royal Parks are both powered entirely by renewable sources.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made on her Department's sustainable development strategy. [45829]

James Purnell: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport published a sustainable development strategy in February 2004. I expect to report in March on progress as part of the Department's sustainable development action plan.

Television Licences

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people in West Lancashire were prosecuted in 2004 for failing to hold a valid television licence. [43159]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows that 4,145 people were proceeded against at magistrates courts in Lancashire police force area for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1969 (mainly television licence evasion), in 2004. It is not possible to identify those prosecutions in West Lancashire, as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Urban Design

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she last met the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment to discuss aesthetic urban design. [45964]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment on 17 January. They discussed her role as Government Design Champion and the promotion of high standards in architecture and urban design, which goes beyond aesthetic considerations. They also discussed how the Commission can help deliver well designed facilities for the London Olympic games in 2012.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Carbon Emissions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding has been made available by her Department for schemes to tackle carbon emissions since 1997; and what money will be made available in future years. [39049]

Mr. Morley: Since DEFRA's inception in June 2001 we have provided significant grant funding for a number of schemes which aim to tackle carbon emissions. Headline programmes include: those governed by the Carbon Trust—who lead in encouraging business and public sector energy efficiency and low carbon innovation; the Energy Saving Trust—whose activities aim at increasing demand for domestic sector energy efficiency and the Emissions Trading Scheme—which reduces carbon emissions at least cost to industry. In summary, the following expenditure has been incurred.

	£ million
2001–02	59
2002–03	108
2003–04	121
2004–05	128
2005–06	[1]130

[1] Budget.

Final budgets for future years are still being determined. This Government remains committed to the policies and measures which will help us meet our goal of a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide levels by 2010, based on 1990 levels.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many coal-fired power stations she estimates are not complying with the proposed EU legislation which requires the installation of equipment to cut emissions. [45220]

Mr. Morley: Pollution controls for coal-fired power stations in England and Wales are a matter for the Environment Agency and are applied through authorisations issued under the integrated pollution control (IPC) system or by permits under the EU Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive which is replacing IPC. These contain emission limits and other conditions which have to be based on the use of best available techniques (BAT).

The EU Large Combustion Plants Directive (LCPD), which was finalised in 2001 and is being implemented through the IPPC Permit, sets emission limits for releases of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and dust from these plants but without prejudice to the requirements of IPPC which may in many cases be more stringent.

The LCPD requirements for emissions limits for "existing" coal-fired power stations (those first authorised before 1987) take effect from 1 January 2008. These will be taken into account in setting the emission limits in IPPC permits, for which operators of these power stations have to apply to the Environment Agency by 31 March 2006. Provided their operators comply with their permits (and they would face enforcement action if they did not), all those power stations should therefore comply with the extant EU legislation by the due date. There are currently no EU proposals for further legislation in this area.

Climate Change

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanisms are in place to ensure regular review of climate change indicators and policy to ensure that the necessary steps are being taken on emissions reductions. [45837]

Mr. Morley: Overall progress on climate change indicators is publicly reported annually, as described on the sustainable development website, and reviewed by the inter-departmental Sustainable Development Programme Board.

The current review of the UK Climate Change Programme is looking at how existing climate change policies are performing, and the range of policies that might be put in place in future to put the UK back on track to achieving our domestic carbon dioxide goals.

Additionally, the Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN), set up following the publication of the Energy White Paper in 2003, meets regularly at official and ministerial level to discuss progress on a range of climate change and energy policy issues.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions her Department has had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the climate change programme. [45838]

Mr. Morley: I and my officials have regular discussions with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the Climate Change Programme both as part of the review process, and our involvement in the Sustainable Energy Policy Network.

Illegal Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the amount of illegal timber imported into Europe from *(a)* China, *(b)* Indonesia and *(c)* Brazil in each of month of the last three years. [44797]

Mr. Morley: The UK is the world's fourth largest importer of wood products. However, with the exception of species included on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) we are unable to estimate how much illegally logged timber is coming into the UK as timber is not identified as legal or illegal at ports of entry.

Once the recently adopted EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation comes into force it will enable member states to prohibit the entry into the EU of illegal timber products from countries that enter into Partnership Agreements with the European Union.

Warm Front Scheme

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many households in *(a)* West Lancashire constituency and *(b)* North West region received assistance under the Warm Front scheme in each year since the scheme began; [45022]

(2) what steps the Government are taking to identify older people in fuel poverty who are not in receipt of benefits in West Lancashire. [45035]

Mr. Morley: Between the launch of the Warm Front scheme in June 2000 and the 31 December 2005, the number of households assisted in West Lancashire constituency each year are:

	Number of households assisted
2000–01	364
2001–02	1,023
2002–03	465
2003–04	534
2004–05	1,048
2005–06 (to 31 December 2005)	537
Total	3,971

The number of households assisted in the North West region each year are:

	Number of households assisted
Year 1	23,372
Year 2	74,134
Year 3	55,669
Year 4	48,729
Year 5	47,246
Year 6 (to 31 December 2005)	27,815
Total	276,965

The Warm Front scheme is the Government's main tool for tackling fuel poverty in the private sector. Eligibility for the scheme is via the receipt of one of a number of qualifying benefits.

Eaga Partnership, in their role as Warm Front scheme manager, carry out a range of activities at a national and local level to encourage those households at risk from fuel poverty to apply to the scheme for assistance. Those not in receipt of a qualifying benefit at the time of application are offered a benefit entitlement check, which is designed to provide both the potential of increasing household income and to establish eligibility of households to benefit from measures under Warm Front.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many central heating systems have been fitted for people over 65 years under the Warm Front scheme in each year since the scheme started; and what percentage this represents of the total systems fitted in West Lancashire. [45036]

Mr. Morley: During the first phase of the Warm Front scheme new gas central heating was available, as part of Warm Front plus, for those households over 60.

Between the launch of the Warm Front scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2005, the following table indicates:

The number of gas central heating systems installed by Warm Front across England. The number of gas central heating systems installed by Warm Front in West Lancashire

The number of gas central heating systems installed by Warm Front in households over 65 in West Lancashire.

The percentage of those gas central heating systems installed by Warm Front in West Lancashire for households over 65.

Scheme year	*All gas central heating*	*West Lancashire gas central heating*	*West Lancashire gas central heating (over 65)*	*Percentage of West Lancashire over 65*
2000-01	6,718	18	11	61
2001-02	34,004	67	51	76
2002-03	19,524	25	19	76
2003-04	13,652	26	21	81
2004-05	19,736	21	16	76
Total	93,634	157	99	63

Water/Sewerage Services (Aylesbury Vale)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Deputy Prime Minister on *(a)* the scale and *(b)* the cost of water supply and sewage treatment requirements arising from planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [45340]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State and the Deputy Prime Minister have not held discussions on these particular issues.

Aylesbury is served by Thames Water Utilities. Along with the other water supply companies, Thames Water produces a water resources plan, which looks forward 25 years. The plan is updated annually by the company, and is reviewed by the Environment Agency for consistency with the national and regional water resources strategies. Any planned residential developments in the area will be factored into this process.

An integrated study of the whole water cycle at Aylesbury has been commissioned jointly by the Environment Agency, Aylesbury Vale district council, Aylesbury Vale Advantage Ltd (the local delivery vehicle for housing growth) and Thames Water. The study is intended to examine the consequences of the additional housing for water supply, flood risk, sewer capacity, sewage treatment and for the ecology of the River Thames downstream of Aylesbury. The costs and timing of providing the necessary water and sewerage infrastructure and services will be a part of the study.

The first phase is expected to start shortly and to be completed in six to nine months.

DEFENCE

Administrative Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39822]

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39946]

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40013]

Mr. Touhig: Defence is a national capability and is funded accordingly. The wide variety of activities that support the Defence Mission are provided by the Department's 11 Top Level Budget Holders (TLBs) who are responsible for their own element of the Defence Budget. These activities are diverse and widely distributed throughout the UK and as a consequence we cannot answer the question without committing to disproportionate cost.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Dundee, East (Stewart Hosie) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 215W.

Armed Forces (Spiritual Care)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to make provision for the spiritual care of armed services personnel who have no declared religion. [45806]

Mr. Touhig: The armed forces provide a comprehensive range of support and care for all their personnel. In addition to this being a key responsibility of every commanding officer, such care is available from unit welfare officers, specialist welfare providers, doctors and other professionals. Chaplains, as well as providing spiritual care for Service personnel and their families within their denomination, also provide practical care for personnel of all religions or none. We also issued last year a "Guide on Religion and Belief", which includes a section on non-religious belief and no belief, including contact details for appropriate organisations.

Civil Servants

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41584]

Mr. Touhig: The gross salary costs (excluding national insurance contributions and superannuation) paid to civil servants and locally employed civilians (overseas) from 2000–01 to 2004–05 are detailed in the following table.

£ billion

	Civil servants gross salary costs	*Locally employed civilians salary costs*	*Total*
2000–01	1.756	0.221	1.977
2001–02	1.750	0.211	1.961
2002–03	1.754	0.218	1.972
2003–04	1.785	0.241	2.026
2004–05	1.892	0.257	2.149

Detailed analysis for 1997–2000 is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The Executive Defence Agencies established as Trading Funds fall outside the departmental accounting boundary. For completeness, I have included the gross salary costs for civil servants and locally employed civilians (overseas) of these organisations from 1997–98 to 2004–05 in the following table.

£ million

	Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA)/defence science and technology laboratory (Dstl)[1]	*UK Hydrographic office*	*Met Office*		*Defence Aviation Repair Agency*	*Army Base Repair Organisation*	
			Civil servants	*Locally employed civilians*		*Civil Servants*	*Locally employed civilians*
1997–98	281	16	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998–99	284	17	57	0.5	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	293	18	59	0.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000–01	305	20	59	0.5	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001–02	141	21	58	0.5	92	n/a	n/a
2002–03	90	22	61	0.5	94	54	n/a
2003–04	97	24	60	0.7	90	52	n/a
2004–05	102	25	58	0.7	81	54	0.9

[1] Up to 2000–01 the figures are for DERA, 2001–02 is three months for DERA and nine months Dstl, 2002–03 onwards are for Dstl

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43498]

Mr. Touhig: Information is not held centrally on the number of Ministry of Defence civil servants that have had disciplinary actions commenced against them and had resultant sanctions applied in each of the last five years. Because action on investigating and dealing with disciplinary offences has been delegated to line management in individual MOD business units, it would incur disproportionate cost to collate the data.

The sanctions that can be awarded against civil servants for breaches of minor and major discipline include any or all of the following (although the list is not exhaustive):

oral warning; written warning; reprimand; a bar on promotion (for up to three years); the withholding of pay and/or bonus payments; restitution (a monetary payment recoverable by deduction from pay);

suspension from duty;

downgrading or dismissal.

Gross misconduct is the only category of major disciplinary offence that can result in dismissal, usually even for a first offence.

Compensation (Japanese Detainees)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the original Treasury authority for payments to British civilian detainees of the Japanese allowed payments to be made to detainees with no blood links to the UK. [45336]

Mr. Touhig: HM Treasury agreed that funding for the Ex-Gratia Scheme would initially be made available from the Contingency Reserve pending parliamentary approval for the Scheme as part of the then spring supplementary estimate. At that stage, the birthlink criterion had not been defined though the estimates for the cost of the scheme assumed that payments would only be made to civilian internees with a close link to the United Kingdom.

Departmental Staff/Research Budget

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list, for each of the last three years, *(a)* the total number of staff in his Department and *(b)* the total budget allocation related to all aspects of research into thermobaric weapons. [43053]

John Reid: The MOD's research budget is focussed on examining technical possibilities in a variety of technology areas. We do not collate information on research activity in the way requested, not least given the lack of an agreed definition of the term 'thermobaric'. It would be disproportionately expensive and potentially misleading to provide a detailed breakdown for individual research projects.

The MOD remains committed to the UK's obligations and duties under international law and treaties. Any and all weapons introduced into service are subjected to appropriate legal review.

Destroyer/Frigate Tours

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many tours have been undertaken by each of the *(a)* Type 42 Destroyers, *(b)* Type 22 frigates and *(c)* Type 23 frigates in the last three years; where each tour was; what the length of each tour was; and what the length of time was between each tour. [45143]

Mr. Ingram: A Royal Navy tour or deployment is considered to be an activity of at least 90 days' endurance. A list of each deployment, its duration and the ships engaged on it is as follows:

Type	*Ship*	*Tour Length*	*Tour*
2003			
T42	Liverpool	January-July	Gulf/Far East
T22	Cornwall	March-October	West Atlantic
T22	Chatham	January-August	Gulf
T23	Portland	February-August	Mediterranean
T23	Iron Duke	January-August	Caribbean
T23	Richmond	February-August	Gulf/Indian Ocean
2004			
T42	Edinburgh	April-August	Standing Naval Force Atlantic
T42	Gloucester	January-June	Gulf with the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle
T42	Exeter	March-November	Five Powers Defence Arrangement
T22	Campbeltown	October 2003-May 2004	Standing Naval Force Atlantic
T22	Cumberland	April-October	Gulf-Op Oracle
T23	Somerset	June-December	Gulf-Op Armilla/Telic
T23	Monmouth	December 2003-July 2004	Atlantic Patrol Task (North)
T23	Iron Duke	September-December	Atlantic Patrol Task (South)
T23	Richmond	July-December	Atlantic Patrol Task (North)
T23	Grafton	February-August	Gulf-Op Armilla
T23	Kent	August-December	NATO-Mediterranean
T23	St. Albans	November 2003-May 2004	Gulf-Op Oracle
2005			
T42	Gloucester	November 2004-March 2005	Atlantic Patrol Task (South)
T42	York	May-November	Five Powers Defence Arrangement
T42	Liverpool	December 2004-August 2005	Atlantic Patrol Task (North)
T42	Southampton	August 2005-February 2006	Atlantic Patrol Task (South)
T22	Campbeltown	July-December	Gulf-Op Telic
T22	Chatham	November 2004-May 2005	Gulf-Op Oracle
T22	Cumberland	August-December	Atlantic Patrol Task(North)
T23	Portland	March-September	Atlantic Patrol Task(South)
T23	Somerset	June-August	Nato
T23	Argyll	February-August	Gulf-Op Telic
T23	Monmouth	November 2004 May 2005	Nato
T23	Montrose	October 2005-April 2006	Gulf-Op Telic

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many of the violent contacts between Coalition forces and insurgents in Iraq in the last 12 months were initiated by *(a)* British forces, *(b)* non-British Coalition forces and *(c)* insurgents; and if he will make a statement; [29888]

(2) when he will answer the question from the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes, reference 29888, tabled on 15 November for answer on 17 November. [36797]

Mr. Ingram: During 2005 there were some 25,200 recorded violent incidents involving Coalition troops across the whole of Iraq. Of these, about 510 took place in MND(SE). It is not possible in all cases to determine whether those who engaged our troops were Iraqis or foreign insurgents. Nor is it always possible to determine whether those incidents represented planned attacks on the Coalition, or chance encounters with those engaged in criminal behaviour.

In MND(SE), British troops are authorised to open fire only when they judge that doing so is the only way in which they can avert a threat to life. It follows that in the vast majority of incidents, British troops will only have opened fire when fired upon, or when clear hostile intent had been demonstrated towards them.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British troops have visited the Iraqi Interior Ministry Building in the Jadirya district of Baghdad. [35803]

Mr. Ingram: United Kingdom troops have visited the Iraqi Interior Ministry building in the Jadirya district of Baghdad. They did not visit the detention facility in the basement of the building nor did they see any evidence of abuse.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many joint exercises have been conducted by elements from *(a)* 16 Air Assault Brigade and *(b)* the Joint Helicopter Command for possible deployment to Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [42986]

Mr. Ingram: Elements from the Joint Helicopter Command (JHC), including 16 Air Assault Brigade, have undertaken no joint exercises in preparation for a possible future deployment to Iraq. JHC has, however provided Battlefield Helicopter support to 12 joint exercises in order to prepare other units and formations for such a deployment.

I can however confirm that Joint Helicopter Command has undertaken three joint exercises in preparation for a possible deployment of elements of 16 Air Assault Brigade to Afghanistan.

Military Personnel (Private Hiring)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether members of *(a)* the Royal Military Police and *(b)* other military units have been hired on a (i) part-time and (ii) consultancy basis by (A) C Force Security and (B) other private security companies in the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [39600]

(2) who will conduct the investigation ordered into the unauthorised hiring of service personnel by private security companies; and if he will make a statement. [39604]

Mr. Ingram: Information on whether members of military units have been hired by any private companies is not held centrally. In accordance with The Queen's Regulations, records of all approved applications to undertake off duty employment are maintained by Commanding Officers. Such records are retained at unit level and only for as long as the applicant remains at the unit.

Recent allegations in the media concerning C Force Security are being investigated by the Royal Military Police.

QinetiQ

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what benefits employees of QinetiQ will receive from the company's flotation. [44178]

John Reid: The financial benefits to QinetiQ employees at the time of the initial public offering (IPO) are two-fold; first they will benefit from the award of free shares (£500 each) and the opportunity to purchase further shares in priority offers; secondly those who acquired shares or options at the time of the original public private partnership with the Carlyle Group will have the opportunity to exercise those options or sell those shares. Senior managers will be subject to a lock-up agreement which restricts the proportion of shares they are able to sell at the IPO and for the three years after flotation, and the chairman and chief executive will sell no shares at IPO. Full details of employee share schemes will be set out in the Prospectus, a copy of which will be placed in the Library of the House once it has been published.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the availability of shares in QinetiQ to QinetiQ employees. [43849]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* At present, a total of 13 per cent. of the company is owned by QinetiQ employees in the form of ordinary shares (including share options): 7 per cent. by the company's 250 to 300 managers, and 6 per cent. by other members of the work force. All QinetiQ employees were given the chance to buy shares in the company at the time of the Public Private Partnership between the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Carlyle Group, and around 2,000 chose to do so. The investment amount was not restricted and provided for employees to invest through a Co-investment share scheme on the same terms as the MOD and the Carlyle Group. All employees were also issued free share options worth a nominal value of £40 on 25 July 2003. All QinetiQ employees have now been offered £500 of free shares to be awarded on the date of the Initial Public Offering and they will also be entitled to purchase additional shares at that time. Full details of employee share schemes will be set out in the prospectus, a copy of which will be placed in the Library of the House once it has been published.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department will have the power to veto third party contracts proposed to be entered into by QinetiQ following its flotation. [44160]

John Reid: The existing arrangements, which were established in July 2001, and which allow the Ministry of Defence to prevent QinetiQ entering into transactions that would cause an unmanageable conflict of interest or otherwise be contrary to the defence or security interests of the UK, with the company's contracts with the MOD, will remain in place.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with the United States Administration on the proposed sale of QinetiQ; and if he will make a statement. [44532]

John Reid: The Ministry of Defence has kept the United States Administration, and other allies, informed throughout the Public Private Partnership process for QinetiQ (and formerly the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency). This has been through various means, including briefing by staff from the British embassy Washington and updates at international meetings.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what share options will be made available to each grade of employee of QinetiQ. [44956]

John Reid *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The Initial Public Offering will include an employee offer which will, regardless of grade, provide £500 of free shares to all QinetiQ employees. In addition, all employees will be entitled to purchase further shares at

that time. Full details of employee share schemes will be set out in the Prospectus, a copy of which will be placed in the Library of the House once it has been published.

RAF Hythe, Hampshire

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* current and *(b)* future roles of RAF Hythe, Hampshire, in respect of (i) the refurbishment of military watercraft and (ii) the repair of mobile military generators and trailers; [45316]

(2) whether he has received proposals by the United States to *(a)* discontinue and *(b)* relocate the functions carried out at RAF Hythe. [45318]

Mr. Ingram: RAF Hythe is an RAF facility made available to the United States visiting force under the terms of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement 1951. It is currently operated by the US Army as a combat equipment base whose mission is the repair and maintenance of US Army water vessels, vehicles and mobile equipment. This includes the occasional modification of US Army boats and the repair and refurbishment of flatbed trailers and power generators.

No US proposals have been received regarding an alteration to the US Army's current use of RAF Hythe.

Sea Cadets

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding was provided to sea cadets in each year since 1997. [45685]

Mr. Touhig: Prior to financial year 1999–2000 records of funding to the Sea Cadet Association, and more recently to the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, the parent charitable organisation of the Sea Cadet Corps, are no longer held. Details of funding provided since then are as follows:

Financial year	*£ million*
1999–2000	6,448
2000–01	6,942
2001–02	7,879
2002–03	7,852
2003–04	7,996
2004–05	8,397

Figures for financial year 2005–06 are not yet available.

Smuggling (Mediterranean)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* EU and *(b)* NATO colleagues about the use of British naval ships to combat people and narcotic smuggling in the Mediterranean. [44227]

Mr. Ingram: Ministers have had no discussions within either the EU or NATO about the use of British naval ships to combat people and narcotic smuggling in the Mediterranean.

However, we are alive to this issue and RN ships transiting the Mediterranean are in contact with littoral states and will, as appropriate, pass intelligence relating to people suspected of engaging in unlawful activity to the anticipated country of destination. For example, in October 2005 the UK contributed a Nimrod Maritime Patrol Aircraft on a short term basis to Operation NEPTUNE IV, a Greek-Italian operation to organise and perform counter illegal immigration operations in pre-defined sea areas and ports in the Mediterranean.

United States Military Assets

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the principal United States military assets in the United Kingdom; and where those assets are located. [45314]

Mr. Ingram: The locations of the principal United States military assets in the United Kingdom are:

RAF Alconbury, Cambridgeshire
RAF Croughton, Northants
RAF Daws Hill, Buckinghamshire
RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire
RAF Feltwell, Norfolk
RAF Hythe, Hampshire
RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk
RAF Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire
RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk
RAF Molesworth, Cambridgeshire
RAF Upwood, Cambridgeshire
RAF Welford, Berkshire.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the contribution made by United States military assets based in the United Kingdom to *(a)* the overall military capability of NATO and *(b)* local economies. [45317]

Mr. Ingram: United States visiting force military assets stationed in the United Kingdom are potentially available, as necessary, in support of NATO missions. Any actual deployment will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

The US visiting force makes a significant contribution to the local economies, where they have a large presence, largely through the direct hire of labour and the award of contracts on, for example, construction projects as well as more routine servicing and maintenance works. It is difficult to gauge a precise figure in monetary terms although one study by the US Air Force Europe suggests that the overall benefit to the UK economy in 2004 was in the region of $1 billion.

War Pensions Committee

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average time taken by a war pensions committee panel to report its findings once it has been convened is in the last period for which figures are available; and what the average time taken to act on the recommendation of such panels was in that period. [45224]

Mr. Touhig: For the period April 2004 to March 2005 there were 11 panel cases heard by war pensions committees. The average time taken for a War Pension Committee (WPC) to report its findings was 26 working days. It then took the Veterans Agency an average 33 working days to act on those recommendations.

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the age of claimants of war disability pensions is taken into account in the prioritising of the processing of such claims. [45225]

Mr. Touhig: The Veterans Agency client group consists primarily of the older world war two generation, with well over 60 per cent. being aged 70 or over. With such a high number of elderly pensioners cases are prioritised on a needs basis with terminally ill, cancer and far east prisoners of war cases being fast tracked. Other cases are dealt with as a matter of priority where individual circumstances of the case require it.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality if she will ensure that the Commission for Equality and Human Rights will provide a regional network of local organisations to carry out anti-discrimination and racial equality work. [44100]

Meg Munn: The Government are committed to the Commission for Equality and Human Rights having an effective regional presence to help it better serve all parts of Britain. These regional arrangements, which we will develop through consultation in due course, will enable the CEHR to understand local and regional priorities, build networks and partnerships with local bodies, and deliver services that are relevant and appropriate. The CEHR will have powers to make grants to local organisations, including continuing support for the network of Racial Equality Councils and its anti-discrimination and local race equality work. The work of the RECs is an important foundation on which the new Commission will build. The Government have made clear that funding through the CEHR for the RECs will be maintained at current levels for the foreseeable future.

Senior Public Appointments

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on the promotion of women to senior public appointments. [44052]

Meg Munn: I am pleased that the percentage of women in public appointments has risen from 32 per cent. in 1997 to 38 per cent. in 2004–05 but still below the Government target of 50 per cent.

I look forward to discussing how to continue with this important work once the post of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is filled.

SCOTLAND

Arbuthnott Commission

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when the Arbuthnott Commission on Boundary Differences and Voting Systems in Scotland will publish its report; and if he will make a statement. [44051]

David Cairns: The Arbuthnott Commission published its report on Thursday 19 January. My right hon. Friend welcomed the report and said he would consider carefully the recommendations and respond in due course.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39071]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. Since that date, the Scotland Office has spent the following on external consultants and advisers:

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	5,465
2001–02	17,864
2002–03	10,720
2003–04	10,044
2004–05	2,817

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39073]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999; since that date, the Office has spent the following on advertising:

	£
1999–2000	26,861
2000–01	270,494
2001–02	186,564
2002–03	10,390
2003–04	0
2004–05	0

Most of the expenditure in 2000–01 and 2001–02 relates to electoral registration matters; since 2001, this has been the responsibility of the Electoral Commission.

The Boundary Commission for Scotland has spent the following on advertising:

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	107,349
2003–04	66,105
2004–05	0

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39136]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not maintain a central record of electrical devices purchased. The information requested could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the total administrative costs of his core Department were in the last period for which figures are available; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39830]

David Cairns: The total administration costs for the Scotland Office for 2005–06 is £4.789 million which is all regarded as identifiable.

Scottish Parliament

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to meet representatives of the *(a)* Scottish Parliament and *(b)* Scottish Executive to discuss mechanisms for consulting on the Government's policy on changing the number of Members of the Scottish Parliament. [40020]

David Cairns: There are no plans for such meetings. Government policy on the number of Members of the Scottish Parliament is reflected in the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004.

PR Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39072]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999; since that date, no contracts have been awarded to any public relations companies.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much money was recovered in Livingston as a consequence of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in 2004. [38434]

David Cairns: This is a devolved matter and the information requested is not broken down by constituency or local authority area. However, from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, the Financial Crime Unit of the Crown Office successfully obtained confiscation orders for over £1,367,000 worth of assets gained from criminal activity for the whole of Scotland. In addition, restraint orders were granted during that period for £37,860,000 worth of assets.

Television Licence

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people in Livingston were prosecuted in 2004 for failing to hold a current TV licence. [38432]

David Cairns: Responsibility for these statistics lies with the Scottish Executive.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Aimspro

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the merits of the introduction of the medicine Aimspro in Northern Ireland for patients with secondary progressive multiple sclerosis. [44919]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has made no assessment of the merits of introducing Aimspro in Northern Ireland for patients with secondary progressive multiple sclerosis. Aimspro is not a licensed medicine in the United Kingdom. Before a product is granted a licence, an applicant needs to demonstrate that the product complies with appropriate standards of safety, quality and efficacy as laid out in the relevant European and national legislation and guidelines. This will include demonstration of the safety and efficacy of the product in appropriately conducted clinical trials in the population for which the medicine is to be used.

Child Care

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* state funded and *(b)* private child care places there are in each ward in each Parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland expressed as (i) a number and (ii) a percentage of children and listed in descending order. [45652]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the format requested. The latest available information on state funded and private child care places in Northern Ireland is detailed in Table 1 and Table 2 below by Health and Social Services Trusts, and relates to the position as at 31 March 2005.

The information in Table 1, column *(a)* details for each HSS Trust the total numbers of private day care places[1] for children, and this total expressed as a percentage of the population aged under 18[2] for each Trust and for Northern Ireland as whole (column *(b)*) in descending order.

Table 2 details similar totals *(c)* and percentages *(d)* as per Table 1, in respect of children placed and paid for by Trusts. Table 2 also details children placed and paid for by Trusts as a percentage of private day care places *(e)*.

[1] Including Day Nurseries, Play Groups and Child Minders

[2] Based on the 2001 Census of Population in Northern Ireland

Table 1

Trust	Private day care places for children (a)	Private day care places for children as a % of the population aged under 18 (b)
South and East Belfast	4,467	10.5
Ulster Community and hospitals	3,514	10.0
Causeway	2,329	9.0
Homefirst	6,764	7.9
Down Lisburn	3,260	6.8
Craigavon and Banbridge	1,800	5.4
Armagh and Dungannon	1,339	4.5
Sperrin Lakeland	1,248	3.7
North and West Belfast	1,405	3.3
Foyle	1,327	2.7
Newry and Mourne	464	1.8
Northern Ireland	27,917	6.2

Table 2

Trust	Children placed and paid for by Trust (c)	Children placed and paid for by Trust as a % of the population aged under 18 (d)	Children placed and paid for by Trust as a % of the private day care places (e)
Craigavon and Banbridge	129	0.4	7.2
South and East Belfast	140	0.3	3.1
Armagh and Dungannon	81	0.3	6.0
Ulster Community and hospitals	92	0.3	2.6
Down Lisburn	121	0.3	3.7
Causeway	60	0.2	2.6
Newry and Mourne	55	0.2	11.9
Homefirst	175	0.2	2.6
North and West Belfast	45	0.1	3.2
Foyle	18	0.0	1.4
Sperrin Lakeland	11	0.0	0.9
Northern Ireland	927	0.2	3.3

Civil Service

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to avert the possible Civil Service industrial action in Northern Ireland. [44801]

Angela E. Smith: The Government regrets the Trade Union's decision to proceed with a statutory ballot for strike action. As part of the normal negotiating process officials had a series of meetings with trade union representatives on the 2005 pay round dating back to July of last year. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland met personally with the Trade Union on two occasions in an attempt to reach agreement with them on the 2005 pay deal. During the course of the negotiations a number of information bulletins were issued to staff, continually up-dating them on the negotiations and providing them with details of the 3.49 per cent. pay offer made by management. This offer represented the maximum available to the Northern Ireland Civil Service under the terms of the Government's pay policy. Officials made it clear that they were prepared to negotiate the content of the offer in order better to meet Trade Union concerns, subject to remaining within the 3.49 per cent. envelope approved.

Under the terms of the offer the majority of staff this year will see their pay increase by between 2.2 per cent. and 6.5 per cent. depending on their position on their pay scale. It took cognisance of the fact that inflation was 2.3 per cent. at July 2005 (the settlement date was 1 August) while private sector earnings growth was less than 3 per cent. In this wider context I firmly believe that the 2005 pay deal is fair and reasonable and represents the best that could have been achieved for staff in the prevailing economic circumstances.

There was no additional money available for this year's pay round and as a result there was nothing to be gained in further delaying payment of the pay offer to staff. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State therefore wrote to all staff on 20 December 2005 indicating that the deal would be paid as soon as possible. This was the fairest course of action in all the circumstances. Naturally it would have been preferable if agreement could have been reached with the Trade Union not just on this year's pay deal but on how best to address next year's pay remit. In that context My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has invited the Trade Union to work with officials in developing the strongest possible business case in support of the 2006 pay remit. I hope that that invitation will be accepted and that we can work constructively together to secure the best possible deal for staff in 2006.

I hope that the staff will form a judgment based on the facts, and that a strike can thus be avoided. In the meantime however, Departments have been asked to draw up appropriate contingency plans to be put in train in the event of an all out strike. All appropriate measures will of course be taken to minimise the impact of any strike action on our public services.

Civil Service Relocation

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in relation to the Lyons Relocation Target for the Northern Ireland Office. [44514]

Mr. Woodward: The Lyons report asked that eight NIO staff be relocated from London and the South East of England by March 2008. The Northern Ireland Office is on target to deliver 9.5 staff by this date and have at present (January 2006) delivered 6.5 staff.

Communication Aids Project

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to extend the Communication Aids Project launched by the Department for Education and Skills in England in 2002 to Northern Ireland. [44201]

Angela E. Smith: There are no plans to introduce the Communication Aids Project, which has run in England and Wales from 2002 and will end this year, to Northern Ireland. The remit of this project is covered by the C2k (Classroom 2000) project in Northern Ireland.

Crime

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made by his Department in its objective of reducing crime and the threat of crime. [44886]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Office has a specific public service agreement to reduce the incidence of domestic burglary in Northern Ireland by 15 per cent. by March 2007 and to reduce vehicle crime by 10 per cent. in the same timescale. The reduction is measured against the recorded crime figures for the year 2001–02.

At 31 March 2005, the level of domestic burglary against the 2001–02 recorded crime figures had reduced by 19.5 per cent. and the level of vehicle crime by 37 per cent. Further reductions have been noted in the crime figures for the first nine months of the 2005–06 year against both categories of crime. We are therefore well on course to meet these targets but will continue to closely monitor progress and take appropriate action where necessary.

While there is no specific target to reduce the fear of crime, we consider reducing fear of crime to be a key part of our target to improve confidence in the CJSNI. It is crucial that the people of Northern Ireland feel safe in their homes and in going about their daily lives. The criminal justice organisations, working together through the Criminal Justice Board, are committed to improving public awareness and understanding of the justice system, and therefore help reduce fear of crime. A number of these initiatives include: a one-stop CJSNI website, a criminal justice module in the citizenship curriculum for key stage 4, and a series of criminal justice roadshows planned for spring and summer of this year.

All criminal justice agencies are working towards reducing crime and the fear of crime. The police are, for example, on course to meet their target in the Policing Plan around the number of police that are available for frontline duties by 2007–08. The Northern Ireland Community Safety strategy outlines further measures to be taken forward to tackle fear of crime among older people, vulnerable adults and children. A number of successful projects have or are being implemented, including the extension of the Bee Safe project for primary school children, supporting "Get Home Safe" projects across Northern Ireland and providing information to older people about bogus callers in addition to improving home security through the Lock Out Crime scheme.

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41273]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office (NIO), excluding its Agencies and NDPBs, is unable to provide all of the information requested by the hon. Member.

In regards to question *(a)* the Department has purchased the following number of laptops since 1997:

	Number
1997–98	28
1998–99	34
1999–2000	55
2000–01	30
2001–02	22
2002–03	34
2003–04	37
2004–05	34

Each laptop costs, on average, £1,500.

In regards to question *(b)*, we are unable to provide total numbers and costs of mobile phones as the majority of them have been purchased as part of a contract package which does not involve a cost at the time of purchase. The numbers of mobile phones we have purchased outside of contract packages are as follows:

	Number
1997–98	6
1998–99	8
1999–2000	1
2000–01	3
2001–02	3
2002–03	6
2003–04	1
2004–05	5
2005–06	2

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41256]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office (NIO), excluding its Agencies and NDPBs, is unable to provide an answer in the form requested by the hon. Member due to the NIO's financial system being unable to separate out this type of expenditure. To answer the hon. Member's question would involve a manual trawl of files which could only be carried out at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Finance

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what efficiency gains have been made by the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [44518]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office has been collating detailed information regarding efficiency gains since 2004–05. Information prior to this date would not be sufficiently comprehensive to allow for a wholly accurate picture to be articulated.

In 2004–05 efficiency gains of £8.6 million were identified across the range of bodies which come within the NIO departmental expenditure limit, including the core Department, PSNI, and NI Prison Service. In 2005–06, it is expected that these same organisations will generated efficiency gains of almost £39 million.

Education and Library Boards

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reason the senior education officer posts in the *(a)* Western and *(b)* Southern education and library boards are not being advertised publicly. [45185]

Angela E. Smith: The Senior Education Officer posts have been created as a result of a collaborative working proposal brought forward by the Southern and Western Education and Library Boards and are being trawled on a restricted basis between both Boards. The Boards and the Staff Commission for the Education and Library Boards have advised that under existing procedures, appointment to any reconfigured post/s within a new structure where voluntary redundancies have been approved can be made on the basis of a restricted trawl within the defined unit of redundancy. In the case of these posts, the unit of redundancy is the Western and Southern Education and Library Boards and the posts, which have a fundamentally new remit within a Collaborative Working context, are being trawled on a restricted basis within both Boards. This is to ensure that the necessary savings are achieved at each Board.

Under RPA Boards are conscious of the need to plan for reduction in staffing levels while taking all reasonable steps to avoid compulsory redundancies. To achieve this, Boards, with the agreement of the Staff Commission, are using restricted trawls to avoid adding to their staffing complements and to achieve efficiency savings.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether education and library boards require departmental approval before recruiting for a senior post by internal trawl rather than public advertisement. [45186]

Angela E. Smith: The Staff Commission for education and library boards is the statutory body that is responsible for the oversight of matters connected with the recruitment, promotion, training and terms and conditions of employment of education and library board staff. It has agreed with the five boards procedures for the recruitment of staff that reflect legislative requirements and good practice. The Department's approval role in such matters relates only to the arrangements for appointing at chief executive and chief librarian level and the terms and conditions of remuneration for second tier posts.

Under RPA boards are conscious of the need to plan for reduction in staffing levels while taking all reasonable steps to avoid compulsory redundancies. To achieve this, boards, with the agreement of the Staff Commission, are using restricted trawls to avoid adding to their staffing complements and to achieve efficiency savings.

Education Finance

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding per pupil in real terms was spent on *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary and *(c)* further education in each local authority area of Northern Ireland in each of the past 20 years. [44526]

Angela E. Smith: The information in the form requested is not available in the format or over the time period requested.

Firearms

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many suspected members of the IRA have been found in possession of firearms since the IRA declared it had fully disarmed. [43726]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI has confirmed that no suspected members of the IRA have been found in possession of firearms since the IRA declared it had fully disarmed.

Hospitals (Delayed Discharges)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to reduce unnecessary delays in discharges from hospitals in Northern Ireland. [44910]

Mr. Woodward: Reducing the number of delayed discharges is a key priority for the Government. We have set a target to reduce the number of delayed discharges in 2005-06 by 15 per cent. Action is being taken to streamline processes within hospitals to ensure that people remain as patients no longer than is necessary.

HPSS bodies have drawn up detailed plans to address delayed discharge, a key feature of which is the expansion of intermediate care services designed to prevent unnecessary admissions and facilitate prompt discharge. These developments are part of wider reform and modernisation across the HPSS, which aims to reduce reliance on hospitals by expanding community-based services so that people can have access to efficient and high quality services in the most appropriate setting.

Inter-community Projects

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures he is proposing to sustain PEACE II funded inter-community projects in Northern Ireland beyond 2008. [43829]

Angela E. Smith: EU PEACE funding is finite, special assistance. As a result, all assisted projects were required to have an exit strategy in place.

We have now secured a third round of EU PEACE funding but with a much smaller budget than before. The details of this third PEACE Programme, including its spending priorities and project selection criteria, will be developed following extensive consultation over the coming months. Some projects currently funded under PEACE II may be eligible to compete with other project proposals for a share of the available funding.

Alternatively, some current PEACE II projects may bid for mainstream public expenditure. Such bids will be assessed against other, competing bids on the basis of merit and potential contribution to the overall objectives of the relevant accountable Department.

Interuterine Insemination

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for how many patients each health board has commissioned interuterine insemination (IUI) treatment in each of the last five years, broken down by IUI *(a)* service provider and *(b)* location. [44817]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients for whom interuterine insemination treatment (IUI) was commissioned in each of the last five financial years is shown in the following table:

Number of patients receiving Interuterine Insemination Treatment

Health Board of Residence	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Eastern[1]	n/a	70	40	100	35
Northern[1]	n/a	n/a	102	111	129
Southern	150	150	150	150	150
Western	58	42	45	31	54

[1] Figures for Eastern Board are not available for 2000–01 and Northern Board figures are not available prior to 2002–03.

Note:
Eastern Board figures do not include unstimulated intrauterine insemination (SIUI) treatments.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients have received interuterine insemination treatment at Altnagelvin Area Hospital in each of the last five years. [44818]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients who have received interuterine insemination treatment at Altnagelvin Area Hospital is shown in the following table. It is important to note that each patient will have had up to four cycles of treatment with numerous hospital visits for each cycle.

	Number of patients
2000–01	58
2001–02	42
2002–03	45
2003–04	31
2004–05	54

Source:
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients have been affected by the withdrawal of interuterine insemination services at Altnagelvin Area Hospital. [44819]

Mr. Woodward: There are currently 68 patients on the waiting list for interuterine insemination treatment at Altnagelvin Area Hospital. In addition, there are 94 patients who have already been registered for interuterine insemination treatment and will have their treatment completed.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how long the *(a)* waiting lists and *(b)* average waiting times are for interuterine insemination treatments in Northern Ireland, broken down by provider. [44820]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid point waiting time band.

The number of patients waiting for interuterine insemination treatment (IUI) and the median waiting times for Altnagelvin Group, Craigavon Area Hospital Group and the Royal Group of Hospitals Health and Social Service Trusts (the three providers of this service) are shown in the following table.

Waiting for interuterine insemination treatment at 31 December 2005

Health and social service trust	*Number waiting*	*Median waiting time band*[1]
Altnagelvin Group	68	6 months for women approaching 38 years 15–18 months for younger women
Craigavon Area Hospital Group[2]	n/a	< 1 month
Royal Group of Hospitals	62	Not able to provide median waiting times

n/a = not available

[1] Waiting times are from consultant referral to commencement of treatment.

[2] For number waiting, fertility patients cannot be identified separately from gynaecology patients.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the limitation and subsequent withdrawal of interuterine insemination services at Altnagelvin Area Hospital in late 2005; and what steps he is taking to provide alternative service providers for the patients affected. [44821]

Mr. Woodward: Interuterine insemination (IUI) was provided at Altnagelvin until December last year. However, in 2005 the Trust assessed how it could most appropriately maintain existing services within Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the context of competing clinical priorities, the constraints of the new consultant contract and the effectiveness of treatments.

On the basis of this assessment the Trust, together with the Western Board, has determined that patients who require IUI treatment should more appropriately be referred to the specialised fertility services at the Regional Fertility Centre (RFC).

Patients wishing to access publicly funded IVF services are required to have had four IUI treatments. The Trust advises that those patients who have already commenced their IUI treatment cycle at Altnagelvin will have their four cycles completed there.

The Western Board has made arrangements to commission IUI treatment from the RFC for those patients who have not yet commenced treatment.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to review the number of interuterine insemination treatments a patient has to undergo in order to qualify for health service-funded IVF treatment; and if he will make a statement. [44823]

Mr. Woodward: In 2001 a Steering Group established by the Health and Social Services Boards recommended that couples with unexplained fertility of at least three years duration and those with minimal/mild endometriosis or mild or moderate male factor infertility should have at least four cycles of interuterine insemination before accessing publicly funded fertility services.

I expect to announce revised criteria for accessing IVF and related treatments in the very near future.

IRA Decommissioning

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 329W, on IRA decommissioning, what the *(a)* original and *(b)* final estimates were for the size of the IRA arsenal. [46467]

Mr. Woodward: It remains the case that publishing estimates of IRA armaments would be tantamount to pre-empting the IICD's report, which it intends to hand over to Government at the conclusion of its work.

The Government expect a full report on armaments to be published when the IICD's mandate is complete.

IRA Prisoners (Early Release)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of the IRA have been released from jail before their sentence has been fully served since 1997, broken down by the year which they were released. [43752]

Mr. Woodward: The information sought is available only in relation to the perceived affiliation of those persons who were released 'early' under the terms of the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998 as follows:

	Number
PIRA	208
UDA	90
UVF	67
INLA	31
LVF	17
UFF	13
RHC	3
'Loyalist'	4
'Republican'	2
No Affiliation	12
Total	447

For those believed to be affiliated to PIRA the number of releases by year since 1998 are as follows:

	Number of Releases
1998	112
1999	31
2000	54
2001	11
Total	208

Note:
Perceived affiliations are noted at the time of a person's committal to prison or taken from a prisoner's assertion at time of application for 'early' release.

IVF Treatment

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for how many patients IVF treatment has been commissioned in each of the last five years. [44822]

Mr. Woodward: It is not possible to provide precise data on the number of patients that have received IVF treatment as the data collected refer to treatment cycles provided rather than patients treated. The following table sets out the number of IVF treatment cycles commissioned since 2002–03. Accurate data are not available prior to 2002–03.

	Number of IVF cycles commissioned
2002–03	132
2003–04	203
2004–05	183

Jobcentres

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to change the amount of personal advice available to unemployed people at jobcentres in Northern Ireland. [44911]

Angela E. Smith: Jobs and benefits offices provide a personal adviser service for every jobseekers allowance, income support and incapacity benefit claimant. The Department and the Social Security Agency are increasing the support offered to incapacity benefit (IB) customers through Pathways to Work pilots in Lurgan, Magherafelt and Ballymoney. IB claimants in these areas are supported by a specialised personal adviser, who is trained to deal with the additional challenges these customers face. It is intended to expand the pilot to an additional seven offices during 2006–07.

Kidney Transplants

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide ring-fenced funding for kidney transplants in Northern Ireland. [44921]

Mr. Woodward: The kidney transplant service in Northern Ireland, based at the Belfast City Hospital, is one of a number of specialised services commissioned by the Health and Social Services Boards, which work collaboratively through the Regional Medical Services Consortium to ensure a co-ordinated, regional approach. Funding for specific specialist or regional services is not normally ring-fenced. There are no plans to ring-fence funding for the kidney transplant service.

Lavery Report

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in respect of each recommendation of the Lavery Report on vetting and child protection in Northern Ireland *(a)* whether the Government accepts the recommendation, *(b)* the action that the Government have taken to date in respect of the recommendation; *(c)* any further action he intends to take; *(d)* the time scale for such further action and *(e)* whether the recommendation requires legislation. [43914]

Angela E. Smith: The Government issued a response to the report by the Commissioner for Children and Young People on vetting arrangements in Northern Ireland, "A Right to Protection", which was conducted by Ruth Lavery on 22 November 2005. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House. Government have accepted all of the Commissioner's recommendations. The response sets out the actions that have been or will be taken. Government have agreed to provide the Commissioner with time scales for the completion of outstanding actions as soon as possible. Finally,

legislation will be required for those recommendations linked to the implementation of the Bichard Report in Northern Ireland.

Measuring Public Opinion

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria are used to assess confidence of the public in the police in Northern Ireland. [44743]

Mr. Woodward: A range of quantitative surveys are commissioned by both the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Policing Board with a view to measuring community confidence in various aspects of the service provided by the police in Northern Ireland.

Three main quantitative surveys are used, each of which is conducted by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency:

(a) The Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), a personal interview survey of experiences and perceptions of crime, being conducted on a continuous basis since January 2005.

(b) The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, a 'snapshot' personal interview survey covering a range of topics, run several times each year.

(c) The District Policing Partnership (DPPs) Public Consultation Survey, a postal survey covering local policing priorities, satisfaction with the police and awareness of DPPs, conducted every two years.

Public confidence in the police is presently being measured as part of the NIO 2004 public service agreement (PSA target 1). The aim of target 1 is to increase confidence in the police throughout all parts of the community in Northern Ireland by 3 percentage points, by April 2008, from a composite baseline figure of 73 per cent. (obtained through NICS 2003–04 and the April 2004 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey). The NICS is being used to monitor progress towards this target via a suite of seven indicators, which elicit views on the fairness and effectiveness of the police and policing arrangements:

1. how good a job the police are doing in the local area;

2. whether they can provide an ordinary day-to-day policing service;

3. whether they treat Catholic and Protestant members of the public equally;

4. whether the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) is part of the police or independent of the police;

5. whether the NIPB helps ensure that the police do a good job;

6. whether the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (OPONI) is part of the police or independent of the police; and

7. whether OPONI helps ensure that the police do a good job.

The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey is used by the Policing Board to commission research on public perceptions of the police, DPPs and the NIPB. Results from these surveys are published twice a year and can be found on the Policing Board website at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

Ministerial Meetings

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many meetings Lord Rooker has attended in *(a)* Brussels and *(b)* Westminster on sea fisheries since taking up the position of Minister with responsibility for Agriculture and Rural Development. [44696]

Angela E. Smith: Lord Rooker has not attended any meetings in Brussels and Westminster on sea fisheries matters, but he has been fully briefed by senior officials on issues of significance and has contacted ministerial colleagues to press the Northern Ireland case as appropriate.

He met with EU Fisheries Commissioner Borg when he visited Kilkeel on 11 November 2005.

Missed Outpatient Appointments

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to reduce the number of patients who fail to keep hospital outpatient appointments. [44909]

Mr. Woodward: The problem of patients failing to attend for an outpatient appointment is, at least in part, symptomatic of the very long time many of them have to wait. In the past patients here were given an appointment date months or even years in advance. To address this I recently announced a total redesign of the whole outpatient system and by March 2008 no patient will be waiting more than 13 weeks for an outpatient appointment following referral by his or her GP.

In the meantime, partial booking systems are already being implemented in all outpatient specialties to ensure that patients are given a choice of available appointment times and that no appointments are booked any more than six weeks in advance. Outpatient improvement managers are also being put in place in all trusts to ensure that services are more responsive to patients' needs.

Multiple Sclerosis

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent action has been taken to improve access to specialist drugs for patients with *(a)* relapsing and remitting and *(b)* primary progressive multiple sclerosis in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [44914]

Mr. Woodward: An additional £9 million has been provided over the last four years for specialist drug therapies, including disease modifying therapies for people with multiple sclerosis. A further £100,000 was made available from 2002–03 specifically to support the infrastructure for the provision of disease modifying therapies for MS. The number of people who currently have access to these drugs has increased from 442 in April 2003 to 579 at present.

It is for the health and social services boards, as commissioners of services, to prioritise how funding is used, taking into account the competing demands and pressures in their areas and the strategic objectives and priorities of my Department. This year, the boards will spend an estimated £4.7 million providing disease modifying treatment to patients with multiple sclerosis.

The Department remains committed to improving access to specialist drugs which offer the potential for significant improvements in patient care. Last November I indicated my intention to allocate an

additional £9 million recurrently for hospital and specialist drugs in 2006–07, with a further £5 million in 2007–08. I will be making a further announcement about specialist drugs shortly.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) in each of the four health board areas are waiting to receive MS drugs; what the waiting times were in each of the four health board areas from *(a)* general practitioner referral to first appointment with a hospital consultant and *(b)* first appointment until treatment was actually received in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44915]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients waiting for MS drug treatment at 4 January 2006 and the median waiting time in each health and social services board is shown in the table.

Waiting for MS drug treatment at 4 January 2006

Health board of residence	*Number waiting*	*Median waiting time band (month)*
Eastern	54	6–8
Northern	63	6–8
Southern	17	6–8
Western	22	9–11
Northern Ireland total	156	6–8

Notes:

1. Nine patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.
2. Waiting time is measured from when the decision to treat the patient with disease modifying drugs for MS was taken.

Source: :

Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust

The Department remains committed to improving access to specialist drugs which offer the potential for significant improvement in patient care. Disease modifying treatments for people with multiple sclerosis have been available in Northern Ireland since the mid-1990s and some 579 people are currently receiving these drugs.

New Books

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on new books in each of the education and library boards in each of the last four years. [46340]

Mr. Hanson: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave the hon. Member for East Londonderry (Mr. Campbell) on 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 854W.

Orange Hall (Attacks)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2101W, on Orange Hall (Attacks), how many attacks were carried out in each month of 2005. [46464]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI has supplied the following statistical information in response to this question.

Month	*Number of attacks*
January	3
February	2
March	2
April	1
May	0
June	0
July	13
August	5
September	3
October	3
November	0
December	1
Total	33

Note:

Includes incidents such as stones thrown, petrol bombs thrown, shots fired, malicious fires, etc.

Organised Crime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Government are taking to tackle organised crime in Northern Ireland; and what assessment he has made of the scale of this problem. [43723]

Mr. Woodward: The Government are committed to tackling organised crime across the board, from whatever source. Through the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) the Government have brought together key law enforcement agencies in Northern Ireland to deliver a multi-agency, partnership response. The restructuring of the Task Force last year will further improve operational co-operation and strengthen the analytical focus on which this work is based.

The 2005 OCTF annual report has made clear that the overall levels of organised criminal activity remain high and criminal gangs are increasingly sophisticated and ruthless in the way they undertake their activities. The operational successes of the OCTF partner agencies continues to have a significant impact on top level organised crime gangs and I pay tribute to their on-going effectiveness and commitment.

Police

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent by his Department on police oversight arrangements in each year since the publication of the Patten report. [44744]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 860W.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Policing Board on the administration and running of district policing partnerships in Northern Ireland. [44745]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office is not responsible for spending on the administration and running of District Policing Partnerships in Northern Ireland. In accordance with the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 the Policing Board is required to make to the district councils a grant equal to three-quarters of

the expenses reasonably incurred by the council in connection with the establishment of, or the exercise of functions by, a DPP.

The Policing Board has advised me that the total cost to the Policing Board of the administration and running costs in relation to the District Policing Partnerships from initial set up to the year ending 31 March 2005 was £7,283,000.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent by the Police Ombudsman's Office on *(a)* administration and *(b)* case work in each year since its formation. [44746]

Mr. Woodward: The following information was provided by the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland:

£

Financial year	*Case related expenditure*[1]	*Administration expenditure*[2]
2004/05	4,445,271	3,304,840
2003/04	3,952,881	2,869,500
2002/03	3,902,966	2,945,546
6 November 2000 to 31 March 2002	4,342,610	3,478,768

[1] Case related expenditure covers specifically the costs of investigative staff designated to receiving and investigating complaints, as well as directly related expenditure incurred during the course of this work.

[2] All other costs incurred by the Office is classified under the broad heading of 'administration' and include premises related expenditure, stationary and equipment, non-cash elements such as depreciation, diminution of assets and notional cost of capital and support functions of the Office such as corporate services, executive, legal, media and policy and practice which are vital to underpin the work of the Investigations Directorate.

Private Sector Jobs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what policies have been introduced in Northern Ireland since 1997 to increase the number of private sector jobs in the economy. [43627]

Angela E. Smith: Since 1997, Government have introduced a wide range of measures to deliver its long-term goal of improving Northern Ireland's competitive position which will ultimately lead to better employment opportunities for all. Examples include DETIs Accelerating Entrepreneurship and Regional Innovation Strategies, DARD's Vision Action Plan and a number of DSD initiatives designed to regenerate urban areas and promote private sector investment and job creation.

A significant policy decision taken has been to bring a more integrated approach to economic development through amalgamating the Industrial Development Board, Local Enterprise Development Unit and the Industrial Research and Technology Unit into one single agency, Invest Northern Ireland.

The Economic Vision for Northern Ireland recognises that the private sector must grow if Northern Ireland is to improve its economic performance. Investing in innovation, enterprise, skills and infrastructure will facilitate private sector growth in the Northern Ireland economy while policies such as national minimum wage, tax credits and new deal will ensure that work pays.

Since 1997, the number of private sector jobs in Northern Ireland has increased by 16.5 per cent. to 472,944 compared to an 11.6 per cent. increase in public sector jobs which at September 2005 stood at 217,805 jobs.

Sexual Violence Strategy

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether there is a timetable for the *(a)* publication and *(b)* implementation of the Sexual Violence Strategy; whether there is a publication date for the consultation paper; and what plans there are in each Department to prioritise the strategy's implementation. [45786]

Mr. Woodward: The development of a regional strategy to address sexual violence in Northern Ireland is being taken forward jointly by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Northern Ireland Office, in conjunction with other Departments and agencies whose responsibilities also have a bearing on matters relating to sexual violence. It is proposed to publish a consultation document by this summer and to publish the final strategy in April 2007. Implementation plans will be agreed with each Department and agency following the consultation process and prior to the strategy being finalised. The implementation plans will be published with the strategy.

Shorts/Bombardier

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many unfair dismissal claims were made against Shorts/Bombardier in each of the last five years; and what the outcome was in each case. [44698]

Angela E. Smith: The following table, provided by the Office of the Industrial Tribunals and the Fair Employment Tribunal, sets out the number of claims made against Shorts/Bombardier for each of the lasts five years, the outcome of those processed to date and the number of live cases.

Unfair dismissal cases registered against Shorts/Bombardier 2001–05

UD[1] *cases*	*Total number of claims which include jurisdiction of UD*[1]	*Number of cases allowed*	*Number of cases dismissed*	*Number of cases conciliated*	*Number of cases withdrawn*	*Number of cases stayed*[2]	*Number of cases DFWOP*[3]	*Number of cases WDS*[4]	*Number of live cases*
2001	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
2002	97	0	9	0	6	2	0	7	73
2003	358	0	1	2	77	0	29	4	245
2004	11	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	8
2005	5	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1
Total	474	0	10	5	87	2	29	13	328

[1] UD—Unfair dismissal.

[2] Stayed—the proceedings are stopped until further notice.

[3] WDS—withdrawn following settlement.

[4] DFWOP—dismissed for want of prosecution.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the *(a)* amounts, *(b)* categories and *(c)* purposes of grant aid from public expenditure allocated to Shorts/Bombardier in each of the last five years. [44699]

Angela E. Smith: Shorts/Bombardier has been made a total of £26,678,958 in offers of assistance over the last five years. The information requested is set out as follows.

Public funding allocated to bombardier financial years 2000-01 to 2004-05

Allocating department/agency	*Financial year*	*Amount of grant offered (£)*	*Category: revenue/capital*	*Purpose of grant*
IDE	2000-01	11,752,000	Revenue	Participation in new aircraft programmes.
IDE	2000-01	2,090	Revenue	Attendance at Farnborough Air Show.
IRTU	2000-01	408	Revenue	To encourage Bombardier to meet with European Commission re collaborative R and D.
IDE	2001-02	181,780	Revenue	To improve and introduce new skills in company.
IDE	2001-02	1,155	Revenue	Attendance at Paris Air Show on Invest NI group stand.
Invest NI	2003-04	5,240,000	Revenue	To improve and introduce new skills in company.
Invest NI	2003-04	8,800,000	Revenue	Participation in Global 5000 and Learjet 40 Aircraft Programmes.
Invest NI	2004-05	701,525	Revenue	Research and Development on three new (Start) projects.

HEALTH

Arm's Length Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list her Department's arm's length bodies; what each body's full-time equivalent staffing level is; and what the annual budget of each body was in the last year for which figures are available. [42664]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

Arm's length body (ALB)	*Operating costs budget 2005-06 (excluding non-recurrent elements) (£000)*	*Number of staff in whole-time equivalents as at May/June 2005 (data from ALBs)*
Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection (the HealthCare Commission)	78,732	771
Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health	29,930	189
Commission for Social Care Inspection	144,260	2,622
Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence	1,950	11
Dental Practice Board	23,062	272
General Social Care Council	14,310	262
Health and Social Care Information Centre	42,900	366
Health Protection Agency	228,600	3,144
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority	8,421	106
Human Tissue Authority	1,000	[1]16
Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts (Monitor)	12,000	28
Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency	62,970	807
Mental Health Act Commission	5,218	36
National Institute for Biological Standards and Control	19,739	308
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence	29,894	230
National Patient Safety Agency	28,618	238
National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse	11,510	88
NHS Appointments Commission	5,981	51
NHS Blood and Transplant	415,272	6,156
NHS Business Services Authority[2]		
NHS Connecting for Health	115,230	786
NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service	14,897	250
NHS Dental Vocational Training Authority England and Wales	281	3
NHS Direct	161,900	3,461
NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement	80,000	170
NHS Litigation Authority	14,095	166
NHS Logistics Authority	70,658	1,462
NHS Pensions Agency	22,066	363
NHS Professionals	31,000	807
NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency	22,081	356
Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board	6,742	36
Prescription Pricing Authority	75,606	1,940

[1] The Human Tissue Authority was not fully operational May/June 2005. The staff figure cited is therefore at January 2006.

[2] The NHS Business Services Authority will take on the functions of the Dental Practice Board, the Prescriptions Pricing Authority, the NHS Pensions Agency and the NHS Counter- Fraud and Security Management Service in April 2006.

Avian Influenza

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts have drawn up emergency plans for a possible outbreak of avian influenza. [23647]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal influenza, avian influenza and pandemic influenza. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal influenza refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic influenza will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans, and to which they do not have immunity.

All primary care trusts and health organisations are required to develop and maintain local contingency arrangements to respond to any influenza outbreak, including a pandemic and those plans are currently being audited.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedure is in place to treat people exposed to potential cases of Avian influenza; which treatments are available; and what time scale has been set within which such treatment should be administered. [33054]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 29 November 2005]:* It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal flu, avian flu and pandemic flu. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal flu refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic flu will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans and to which they do not have immunity.

In the event of a confirmed outbreak of Avian influenza, all those who have been exposed, or at risk of exposure will be offered anti-viral therapy and seasonal influenza vaccine, as appropriate, within 24 to 48 hours of disease confirmation.

Antiviral drugs and seasonal influenza vaccine will be made available through the Health Protection Agency's local health protection units in collaboration with the national health service, similar arrangements will apply in Wales and Scotland.

Barts and the London NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the Government's policy is on the provision and specialised cancer and cardiac care services at the St. Bartholomew's site as part of a dual site operation at the Barts and the London NHS Trust; and if she will make a statement. [43445]

Jane Kennedy: In line with our policy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", the relevant local national health service organisations will need to plan their services within the framework of the NHS Plan and other national documents, such as the improving outcomes series of cancer service guidance and the national service framework for coronary heart disease, to meet the needs of the population they serve.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what response her Department's access and capacity review yeam made to the full business case for redevelopment at the Barts and the London NHS Trust; [43449]

(2) what estimates she has made of the requirement for capacity at the Barts and the London NHS Trust. [43450]

Jane Kennedy [holding answer 19 January 2006]: No estimate of capacity requirements for Barts and the London NHS Trust have been made centrally. Capacity planning is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) in conjunction with their primary care trusts; NHS trusts; and other relevant stakeholders in their local health economies. SHA level capacity plans are taken forward through the Department's local delivery planning process.

The Department's access directorate undertook an assessment of the Barts and the London NHS Trust private finance initiative scheme in October 2005. The assessment found that the bull business case for the scheme took into account the expected impact of the key elements of the capacity planning agenda and was broadly consistent with national assumptions and projected local capacity requirements. To supplement this work, the Secretary of State has asked the SHA to commission an independent review to ensure we have the right balance of cancer and cardiac services in North East London.

Bowel Cancer

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to prepare for increases in demands placed on NHS bowel cancer services as a result of the roll-out of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme. [43777]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The national health service bowel cancer screening pilot showed that screen detected cancers had no detrimental effect on bowel cancer services.

Training in endoscopy (bowel scoping) is vital to the diagnosis of bowel cancer. To prepare for the bowel cancer screening programme, we have built on the training established as part of the NHS Cancer Plan. A national training programme has been established, with three national and seven regional centres, to train medical staff, general practitioners, nurses and other health professionals to carry out vital procedures for diagnosing bowel cancer. By increasing the pool of staff able to undertake endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures, waiting times will be reduced and services made more convenient.

Based on current trends and definitions the training programme is projected to deliver 217 newly trained non-medical endoscopists and 1,353 medical endoscopists by 2006–07.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced updated guidance, "Improving Outcomes in Colorectal Cancers" (May 2004). This guidance is aimed at helping those involved in planning, commissioning, organising and providing bowel cancer services to ensure that services are

configured to ensure appropriate high quality services. Implementation of NICE guidance is a developmental standard as set out in National Standards Local Action (July 2004). The Healthcare Commission is responsible for assessing progress of healthcare organisations towards achieving developmental standards.

Breast Cancer

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress being made on *(a)* achieving the Government's commitment for all people with breast problems to be seen by a specialist within two weeks and *(b)* making HER2 testing available for all women diagnosed with breast cancer. [43372]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]*: The Department has assessed the need for additional staff required to meet the commitment and we have commissioned skills for health, which is the Sector Skills Council for Health, to develop competencies in breast assessment. Once these competencies are agreed they could be used to develop training programmes to increase the number of breast assessment staff. Skills for health are engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the development and piloting of the competencies including charities, Royal colleges, professional groups and national health service organisations.

It is very important that we identify those patients who are HER2 positive so that all the appropriate [redacted]ment options can be considered for them. Professor [redacted]hards, the National Cancer director, is [redacted]h Cancer Networks to ensure that facilities are put in place to enable women who need it to be tested. This work is ongoing.

Dentistry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 17WS, on national health service dentistry, how many new dentists each primary care trust will be receiving. [31966]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 28 November 2005]*: Information on the number of dentists recruited to each primary care trust at the 31 October 2005 has been placed in the Library.

The total has increased slightly from 1,453 to 1,459, reflecting the fact that the data includes dentists recruited via local buy back at the end of October 2005. The published figure included dentists recruited at the end of September 2005 as October data had not been received at the time of the announcement.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether primary care trusts will be able to commission dental services from providers not operating under general dental services contracts and personal dental services agreements from April 2006. [39352]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) must use their powers under section 16CA of the National Health Service Act 1977 to provide or secure the provision of primary dental services within their area to meet all reasonable requirements. Primary dental services may only be provided under a general dental services contract, a personal dental services agreement or by the PCT itself under section 16CA(2) of the 1977 Act.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her oral answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1704–05, on dentistry, if she will make it her policy to ensure that private dentists may be sued for medical negligence on the same terms as NHS dentists. [40251]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Private dentists may be sued on the same basis as national health service general dental practitioners. In July 2005, an Order amending the Dentists Act was made to empower the General Dental Council to make it a condition of registration that every dentist, whether practising privately or in the NHS, has adequate and appropriate indemnity cover. This provision will come into force in the summer, once the General Dental Council has made rules on the detail of this requirement.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what resources her Department has allocated for NHS dentistry in 2004–05. [37109]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Most primary dental care services are provided within the general dental service (CDS), which is currently a demand led service where expenditure is mainly determined by the activity of dentists rather than set by a fixed budget allocation. Net expenditure on the GDS in England in 2004–05 amounted to £1,246 million.

In 2004–05 the Department made an additional £262 million pounds available to primary care trusts (PCTs) to support the net cost (after taking account of dental charge income from patients) of personal dental service pilots. In addition, the Department distributed a total of £24 million revenue funds to help PCTs with particular dental access difficulties support local access and quality initiatives, and £35 million was distributed amongst all PCTs to fund capital grants to dental practices to improve access and practice facilities.

Funding levels for hospital and community dental services are set locally by PCTs and resourced from their general national health service budget allocations.

Departmental Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in her Department have been relocated into London and the South East in each of the last five years for which records are available. [31768]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department. Details on staff moving to London and the South East is held locally on individual personnel files. The information can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Any relocation into London and the South East during 2004–05 and 2005–06 to date would have been agreed as an exception to the Government's relocation policy.

Influenza Pandemic

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how she plans to incentivise general practitioners to provide extra capacity in primary care in the event of an influenza pandemic. [23009]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department published the revised "UK Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan" in October. The plan provides guidance for health professionals and the public in preparing for a future pandemic. Operational guidance to the national health service was issued in May which encourages them to work closely with local stakeholders in all sectors to ensure robust local plans are put in place, regularly tested and updated.

As part of their statutory duties, primary care trusts (PCTs) should ensure arrangements are in place for the provision of primary care services in the event of influenza pandemic. Local capacity planning should include arrangements with all primary medical care contractors including general medical services, personal medical services, PCT-led medical services and alternative provider medical services. In order to meet the likely volume of work during a pandemic, PCTs should discuss with their general practitioners the non-essential work that can be put on hold. Specific arrangements will also be needed with their out of hours providers.

Medical Provision (Aylesbury Vale)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether there is a need for a new community hospital in Aylesbury Vale as a result of housing expansion in the area. [44188]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State has made no assessment.

Responsibility for the provision of local services rests with local national health service organisations working in conjunction with other key stakeholders. The organisation responsible for managing planning and implementation in this part of the Milton Keynes south midland sub-region growth area is Aylesbury Vale Advantage, which is a company limited by guarantee, consisting of five key partners including Vale of Aylesbury Primary Care Trust.

Mental Health

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has a preventative strategy on mental health; and if she will make a statement. [40899]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Preventative mental health strategies are set out in the 1999 national service framework (NSF) for mental health, standard one, which is dedicated to promoting mental health for all, working with individuals and communities and to combating discrimination against individuals and groups with mental health problems and promoting their social inclusion. Local national health service bodies are expected to implement standard one in their localities.

The NSF should be seen in conjunction with the commitments made in the White Paper "Choosing Health" to fully implement standard one nationally.

In addition, the joint publication by the Care Services Improvement Partnership/National Institute for Mental Health in England, "Making it Possible: Improving Mental Health and Well-being in England", sets out good practice in relation to developing and delivering improved mental health well-being. This contributes to the United Kingdom commitment to developing a country-wide action plan on mental health, in line with the World Health Organisation's declaration on mental health which I signed in January 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Department for Constitutional Affairs regarding the transfer of responsibility for mental health tribunals from her Department to the Department for Constitutional Affairs. [44482]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In line with the White Paper, "Transforming Public Services: Complaints Redress and Tribunals", the mental health review tribunals will transfer to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, where they will form part of the Tribunals Service. Following discussions between our Departments, we have agreed that the transfer will take place with effect from April of this year.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in her Department's discussions with SANE on Government funding for SANELINE. [43892]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Discussions with SANE are continuing. SANE, like other voluntary and community sector organisations, can apply for Government funding for work they wish to undertake.

NHS Finance

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest estimate is of the budget over-spending at *(a)* University College Hospital, *(b)* the Royal Free Hospital and *(c)* Whittington Hospital. [44582]

Jane Kennedy: The forecast outturn position for 2005–06, as submitted by National Health Service organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts) at the mid-year point (month six), is available in the Library and is also available on the Department's Health website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en.

The Department does not hold this data for University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

University College London Hospital is an NHS foundation trust. As such, my noble Friend Lord Warner has written to the chair of the trust, Peter Dixon, informing him of my hon. Friend's inquiry. He will reply shortly and a letter will be placed in the Library.

Policy Reviews

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list policy reviews her Department has conducted in each year since 1997. [44328]

Jane Kennedy: The Department maintains all of its key policies under review. Material on the key policy areas for which the Department is responsible is available on our website at: www.dh.gov.uk.

Private Finance Initiative

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest estimate is of the cost of implementing the Bristol health services plan; whether the financing of the plan will be made through the private finance initiative; and if she will make a statement. [43548]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Bristol health services plan affects the two major capital investment projects being taken forward for Bristol—the United Bristol Healthcare (UBH) and the North Bristol National Health Service Trust/South Gloucestershire primary care trust schemes. Both schemes are currently revising the funding and service options in their outline business case. The latest capital cost of the former is approximately £100 million and, of the latter, £420 million.

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when a decision to make progress on the private finance initiative scheme for a new hospital for Plymouth will be taken by her Department. [44627]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The outline business case (OBC) for a new £200 million diagnostic and care centre for Plymouth Hospitals National Health Service Trust has been approved by South West Peninsula strategic health authority and has now been submitted to the Department for approval. The proposal for the emergency and specialist services centre is at a much earlier stage; the trust is currently developing options for the OBC.

Sexually-transmitted Diseases

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of *(a)* HIV, *(b)* chlamydia, *(c)* gonorrhoea, *(d)* syphilis, *(e)* genital warts and *(f)* genital herpes there have been in England in each year since 1997. [41971]

Caroline Flint: The number of cases of chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis, genital warts and genital herpes diagnosed in genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics in England from 1997 to 2004, are shown in the table. The number of HIV diagnoses in England from 1997 to 2004 are also shown, and include diagnoses made in GUM clinics as well as other settings such as infectious disease units and general practice.

Diagnoses of HIV and other selected sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in England between 1997–2004

Condition description	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
HIV	2,533	2,635	2,902	3,646	4,801	5,883	6,827	6,789
Primary and secondary syphilis	147	131	211	322	717	1,196	1,531	2,008
Uncomplicated gonorrhoea	12,399	12,535	15,549	20,494	22,398	24,357	23,497	20,919
Uncomplicated chlamydia	38,839	43,912	50,960	61,370	68,180	78,117	85,397	92,799
Genital herpes	15,079	15,815	15,880	16,147	17,054	17,510	17,120	16,953
Genital warts	58,711	59,681	61,157	60,661	62,423	63,934	65,194	68,155

Source:
Reports of HIV diagnoses and KC60 returns (other STIs)

Waiting Times

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have been waiting longer than six months for a non-urgent ear, nose and throat appointment in the West Hertfordshire NHS trust; and if she will make a statement. [44400]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There were no patients waiting longer than 17 weeks for an outpatient appointment at West Hertfordshire hospitals national health service trust at September 2005. This is the latest data available.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Agricultural Tariffs

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the weighted average tariffs applied by the EU on *(a)* all imports from the rest of the world, *(b)* agricultural imports from the rest of the world and *(c)* non-agricultural imports from the rest of the world are in (i) most favoured nation terms and (ii) effectively applied terms; [40941]

(2) what the weighted average tariffs applied by the EU are on *(a)* imports, *(b)* agricultural imports and *(c)* non-agricultural imports from each country listed in the World Trade Organisation and world integrated trade solution database in (i) most favoured nation terms and (ii) effectively applied terms. [40943]

Ian Pearson: The calculation of weighted average tariffs requires detailed trade data at a highly disaggregated level and requires that trade data be classified according to the tariff rate at which each trade transaction takes place, i.e. it is possible for imports of a specific good to the EU from a single country to take place at more than one effectively applied tariff. Although the world integrated trade solutions database contains information on trade and tariffs, and reports weighted averages for EU trade with other countries, given the gaps and uncertainty in the data sets we are reluctant to report weighted average data as the answer may be misleading or inaccurate.

The World Trade Organisation does provide data on the simple average most- favoured nation tariffs, i.e. those that prevail when no preferential arrangements exist, applied by the EU. These are:

(a) 4.2 per cent. on all imports;

(b) 5.9 per cent. on imports of agricultural goods;

(c) 4.0 per cent. on imports of non-agricultural goods.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the weighted average tariffs applied by the EU on non-agricultural imports from each country listed in the World Trade Organisation and world integrated trade solution database will be if the EU's current WTO offer is accepted in *(a)* most favoured nation terms and *(b)* effectively applied terms. [40942]

Ian Pearson: The calculation of weighted average tariffs requires detailed trade data at a highly disaggregated level and requires that trade data be classified according to the tariff rate at which each trade transaction takes place, i.e. it is possible for imports of a specific good to the EU from a single country to take place at more than one effectively applied tariff. Although the world integrated trade solutions database contains information on trade and tariffs, and reports weighted averages for EU trade with other countries, given the gaps and uncertainty in the data sets we are reluctant to report weighted average data as the answer may be misleading or inaccurate.

Before the WTO ministerial conference in Hong Kong the EU put forward a conditional proposal that included a reduction of non-agricultural tariffs through a simple Swiss formula with a co-efficient of 10 (i.e. a maximum resulting tariff of 10 per cent.). This was overtaken by negotiations in Hong Kong and the resulting ministerial declaration which adopted a Swiss formula with coefficients at different levels but did not agree those levels.

The effect of the conditional proposal would have been to reduce the simple average tariff applied by the EU in most favoured nation terms on non-agricultural imports from 4.2 per cent. to 2.5 per cent.

This simple average most favoured nation tariff would be the same for all WTO members.

Annual Leave

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what average number of days annual leave was given to employees by each main business and industrial sector in 2004–05. [45503]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the average holiday entitlement of full-time permanent employees by industry in the UK in autumn 2005. These data take no account of public holiday entitlement. These figures are from the Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics.

Average length of paid holiday entitlement[1] for full-time permanent employees by industry[2]: United Kingdom, autumn 2005, not seasonally adjusted

	Days
Public admin, education and health	32
Energy and water	26
Transport and communication	25
Other services	24
Banking, finance and insurance	24
Manufacturing	24
Construction	23
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	23
Agriculture and fishing	22
UK average	26

[1] Takes no account of public holiday entitlement. Excludes those who did not give their holiday entitlement and those who were non-contactable in the autumn quarter.

[2] Industry groups are coding according to the 1992 Standard Industrial Classification.

Source:
Labour Force Survey

Career Development (Women)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the achievements of *(a)* female entrepreneurs and *(b)* female-owned businesses. [43391]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The Government recognises the significant achievements of female entrepreneurs to the UK economy. Female entrepreneurs and female-owned businesses make a significant contribution to UK economy adding up £70 billion to gross value added.

That's why the Government views the development of women's enterprise in the UK as an economic imperative. The Government are continuing the development of the economic argument for Women's Enterprise following the publication, in March 2005, of the booklet, "Promoting Female Entrepreneurship", which captures headline facts and has been used to stimulate thinking across Government and the regional development agencies.

There are encouraging signs that entrepreneurial activity amongst women is increasing. Nearly one million women are self employed in the UK and this number has increased by around 10 per cent. over the last four years. 19 per cent. of UK businesses are now majority-owned by women.

Women are seizing the opportunities to turn their good ideas into great businesses. Women such as Manjit Sahota whose business, the Rocking Horse Kindergarten based in the Holbrooks area of Coventry, provides a supportive and stimulating learning environment for pre-school children. This business provides employment for fourteen members of staff. That's good news for the local and national economy.

Coal Aid Scheme

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Scottish Coal received from the coal aid scheme in each month of 2001; and whether any of this assistance was ring-fenced for redundancy assistance. [30608]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 21 November 2006]*: I apologise for not replying to this question when it was first tabled.

Scottish Coal (Deep Mine) Ltd. operated Longannet mine as a subsidiary company of Mining (Scotland) Ltd. Mining (Scotland) Ltd. received payments under the UK coal operating aid scheme (UKCOAS) of £19.65 million for Tranche 1 (2000) and £21.53 million for Tranche 2 (2001) to support Longannet. The aim of UKCOAS was to support mines badly affected by short term market problems by helping to bridge the gap between their production costs and income from coal sold for generating and other industrial uses. None of the payments made to Mining (Scotland) Ltd. was ring-fenced for redundancy assistance.

Company Rankings

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which 10 companies with a presence in the UK have the highest *(a)* number of employees and *(b)* annual turnover. [45131]

Alun Michael: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Dentistry

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the potential impact on NHS and private dentistry of the General Dental Council's decision of 7 December to prevent public access to dental care professionals without referral by dentists; and if he will make a statement. [41879]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

The General Dental Council's (GDC) decision on 7 December signalled an important first step in removing unnecessary restrictions on the business of dentistry. Under recently conferred powers, the GDC has agreed that appropriately qualified clinical dental technicians, who are also known as denturists and whose practice is currently prohibited by law, should be allowed to see edentulous patients, without prior review by a dentist, for the purpose of supplying and maintaining complete dentures.

There will also be wider scope for treatments by other dental care professionals such as dental hygienists and dental therapists. The GDC has agreed that a dentist should carry out a full mouth assessment and provide a treatment plan, which specifies the intervals at which the patient should attend for further examination or treatment. Pending the re-assessment, the patient could take the treatment plan to any appropriately registered dental professional who could, within the overall limits of the plan and the limits of his or her competence, treat the patient.

The GDC has made it clear that it would welcome proposals to expand the curricula of dental care professionals to enable increased direct access by patients to dental care professionals, where there is robust training to ensure that patient safety is protected.

The Department shares the GDC's view that this represents the right balance between improving flexibility and patient choice and protecting patients.

Energy Review

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will ensure that the energy review takes into account the work of the interdepartmental task force established by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to look at energy use in existing buildings. [45982]

Malcolm Wicks: The work of the task force on the sustainability of existing buildings, to identify suitable measures to improve the energy efficiency and reduce emissions from existing building stock, is clearly an important one. As stated clearly in our consultation document: "Our Energy Challenge. Securing clean, affordable energy for the long term", the energy review will take into account the work of the task force.

Energy Supply

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2252W, on energy, what assessment has been made of the international supply of gas in relation to the anticipated demand for gas; and how many years of supply can be provided from the existing resources of gas in the world. [45728]

Malcolm Wicks: The department does not estimate world gas reserves and supplies, or future world gas demand. However, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has estimated that there are currently 180 trillion cubic metres of proven gas reserves. At current production rates, the IEA estimates that these would last for 66 years; based on its expectation that production rates will increase at 2.3 per cent. per year, these reserves could then last some 40 years (source—"World Energy Outlook 2004", www.iea.org.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to assess the percentage of electricity supplies produced by gas, coal and nuclear energy in light of the anticipated shortage of gas supplies in the future. [45729]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department already reports monthly, via statistics published on its web site, on the electricity supplied by fuel by major power producers, and quarterly in "Energy Trends" on electricity supplied by fuel by all electricity generators http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/index.shtml). Copies of "Energy Trends" are available in the Libraries of the House.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of total UK piped gas imports he estimates will pass through each interceptor in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2015 and *(c)* 2020. [45721]

Malcolm Wicks: The current UK gas market arrangements are already delivering a number of gas pipeline import projects. By 2010, under current plans, the Belgium-UK Interconnector will have a total import capacity of 66 million cubic metres per day (mcm/d); the new Balgzand-Bacton pipeline (BBL) from the Netherlands of 44mcm/d; and the Langeled pipeline from Norway of up to 70mcm/d. Projections at and beyond this date are highly uncertain as key infrastructure investment decisions have yet to be made. The proportion of future gas imports to the UK made

via these pipelines, and any plans to construct further pipeline connections, will be commercial matters for market participants.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of total gas for the UK he expects will be imported in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2015 and *(c)* 2020; and what proportion of this he expects will be (i) piped and (ii) imported by ship. [45722]

Malcolm Wicks: Details of new import infrastructure can be found in my right hon. Friend's "First Report to Parliament on Security of Energy Supplies" (http://www.dti.gov.uk/engegy.publications/policy/sec_supply_first_report.pdf), which shows forecast supply and demand to 2013. Projections beyond this date are highly uncertain as key infrastructure investment decisions have yet to be made. In addition to the projects listed in the report, new liquefied natural has (LNG) projects at Canvey Island and Teesside have recently been announced. Independent studies have suggested that imports may account for around 75 percent. of total gas supply to the UK by 2015–16 and 90 percent. by 2020–21. The proportion of future gas imports to the UK from pipes and ships, and any plans to construct further infrastructure, will be commercial matters for market participants.

Engagements (Nuclear Industry)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings *(a)* he, *(b)* his Ministers and *(c)* his officials have had with representatives of the nuclear industry over the last four months; and what the (i) date and (ii) attendance was of each meeting. [45508]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has many meetings with the nuclear industry and with other interested groups, such as oil, gas, coal, renewables and microgeneration industries.

Due to the number of meetings that take place, the effort required to compile a full list of meetings involving Ministers and officials would result in disproportionate cost to provide a comprehensive answer.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) had with *(a)* BAE, *(b)* Rolls Royce and *(c)* Airbus regarding the ECGD consultation on the changes to the ECGD's anti-bribery and corruption procedures that were introduced in December 2004. [42565]

Ian Pearson: ECGD has not had discussions with the three companies named regarding the ECGD Consultation on the changes to its anti-bribery and corruption procedures introduced in December 2004, although employees of two of the companies named have represented the CBI at discussions which ECGD has had with the CBI. See, for example, the meeting of 9 June 2005, minutes of which are available on ECGD's website at: www.ecgd.gov.uk/index/pi_home/pi_pc/abc_int_resp.htm

Exports

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value of British exports to *(a)* the Eurozone area, *(b)* the pre-enlargement 15 EU member states and *(c)* the post-enlargement 25 EU member states was in each quarter since 1997. [43269]

Ian Pearson: Data is not available for all the quarters requested. Those quarters for which data has been published are shown in the following table.

UK exports of goods and services to European countries

£ million

	EMU12	EU15	EU25
1997 Q1	—	29,281	—
1997 Q2	—	29,333	—
1997 Q3	—	29,490	—
1997 Q4	—	30,246	—
1998 Q1	—	30,106	—
1998 Q2	—	30,410	—
1998 Q3	—	30,249	—
1998 Q4	—	30,201	—
1999 Q1	28,078	30,270	31,335
1999 Q2	28,535	30,703	31,781
1999 Q3	30,229	32,394	33,496
1999 Q4	30,573	32,708	33,919
2000 Q1	30,996	33,365	34,547
2000 Q2	31,986	34,341	35,491
2000 Q3	32,908	35,351	36,598
2000 Q4	34,055	36,400	37,893
2001 Q1	33,807	36,286	37,843
2001 Q2	34,000	36,449	37,781
2001 Q3	33,309	35,654	36,988
2001 Q4	32,245	34,492	35,946
2002 Q1	33,517	35,298	37,233
2002 Q2	35,240	37,446	39,233
2002 Q3	33,542	35,769	37,539
2002 Q4	32,130	35,086	35,822
2003 Q1	33,833	35,442	37,661
2003 Q2	32,423	34,302	36,184
2003 Q3	32,631	34,430	36,532
2003 Q4	34,069	35,565	38,210
2004 Q1	32,398	32,635	36,343
2004 Q2	33,683	—	37,844
2004 Q3	34,355	—	38,497
2004 Q4	35,530	—	39,751
2005 Q1	34,957	—	39,230
2005 Q2	34,989	—	39,344
2005 Q3	35,694	—	40,057

Notes:
Balance of payments basis.
If the data for the EU15 had continued to be published, it is likely that the final figures shown here would have been revised, probably slightly upwards.

Fairtrade

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what criteria are used to determine whether a product can be classified as fairtrade, with particular reference to how much of the profit must go to the farmer. [44105]

Ian Pearson: For a product to be labelled Fairtrade, producers and traders must meet standards set by the Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO). Producer Standards comprise the organisational, social and environmental criteria that must be met for them to be certified as a Fairtrade producer. Smallholder cooperatives or other organisations must be instruments for the social and economic development of the

members, who must receive the benefits of Fairtrade. For workers on plantations and in processing factories, their employers must pay decent wages, guarantee them the right to join a trade union, and provide good housing, where relevant. Minimum health and safety as well as environmental standards must be complied with, and no child or forced labour can occur.

The price paid to producers is not determined as a percentage of profit, but Fairtrade criteria establish a minimum guaranteed price that covers the cost of production and ensures a living wage for growers. In addition to the purchase price paid by importers, a separate payment is designated for social and economic development in the producing communities. The farmers and growers themselves decide how these funds are to be spent, while being encouraged to invest in further sustainable development.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assess the merits of encouraging companies selling food produced in the developing world to publish on the packaging what proportion of the sale price is paid to the farmers. [44106]

Ian Pearson: The Government believe that the most effective way to develop fair and ethical trade labelling schemes is to ensure that they are voluntary and business led as they are likely to be more flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. Government should provide an enabling rather than a prescriptive framework. There are already a number of successful voluntary labelling initiatives, which have been those developed by business, sometimes in partnership with civil society. For example, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label, put together in partnership with NGOs and full industry backing, fills a communication gap and delivers environmental improvements.

With regard to pricing, Fairtrade criteria establish a minimum guaranteed price that covers the cost of production and ensures a living wage for growers. In addition to the purchase price paid by importers, a separate payment is made which is designated for social and economic development in the producing communities. The farmers and growers themselves decide how these funds are to be spent.

Gas Prices

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2253W, on gas prices, what response the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry have had to the letters which they sent to Commissioner Kroes about supplies of gas; when the letters were sent; and if he will publish the correspondence. [45731]

Malcolm Wicks: We expect the Commission to respond in mid-February to the letter sent by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State on 5 December. The Commission are currently carrying out the investigation we requested and have already sought information from various parties.

So long as I am not prevented by confidentiality, I will write to you with a copy of the correspondence when we receive the Commission's reply and will also the place a copy in the Libraries of the House.

Green Ministers

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in relation to the environment and sustainable development. [45506]

Malcolm Wicks: As part of the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy 'Securing the Future' I oversaw and provided the Foreword to my Department's Sustainable Development Action Plan, showing how the DTI is taking forward its commitments under the strategy.

The Department is continuing to rationalise its main London HQ estate, reducing the space we occupy by about 30 per cent. by April 2006 compared to the position two years ago with corresponding reductions in all the building related environmental impacts.

I have announced an Energy Review which will be looking at securing clean, affordable energy for the long-term.

I have met representatives of a number of non-governmental organisations promoting policies for a better environment, including the Green Alliance.

I have set out the Government's position on climate change and sustainable energy at a number of events looking at these issues, including the British Wind Energy Association Annual Conference and the Cleaner Safer Greener conference in Croydon in October, and the Renewable Energy in Europe conference in Brussels in November.

I chaired a meeting of the EU Energy Council in December, which published Council Conclusions on climate change and sustainable energy.

I have appointed seven new members to the Renewables Advisory Board which provides advice to Government on a wide range of renewable energy issues.

I initiated a review on the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (known as WEEE) which requires producers to pay for treatment and recycling or recovery of all WEEE products.

As Minister for Corporate Social Responsibility, I was also involved in and spoke at the UK Presidency Corporate Social Responsibility Conference which took place on 1 and 2 December.

India

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the balance of trade between India and the United Kingdom was in each of the last five years. [43315]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's balance of trade in goods and services with India are given in the following table.

UK balance of trade in goods and services with India 2000–04

	£ million, current prices
2000	293
2001	-178
2002	-224
2003	110
2004	-242

Source:
United Kingdom balance of payments, The Pink Book, 2005

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Indian companies set up *(a)* a subsidiary company, *(b)* a branch office and *(c)* an other presence in the UK in 2004–05. [45130]

Alun Michael: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many identical miners' claims have been submitted by two firms of solicitors where one of the two firms is *(a)* Beresfords, *(b)* Wake Smith, *(c)* Moss, *(d)* AMS Law, *(e)* BRM and *(f)* Vendside. [45748]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of claims submitted by two firms where one is one of those listed is as follows:

	Number
(a) Beresfords	3,413
(b) Wake Smith	195
(c) Moss	216
(d) AMS Law	439
(e) BRM	341
(f) Vendside/UDM	342

If a claim has been submitted by two of the above, it will appear in the figures for both solicitors. These figures include potential duplicate claims that have yet to be investigated and resolved. Most duplicate cases relate to deceased claims where different members of the family submit a claim. Only one claim can be pursued.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many solicitors have had claims for miners' compensation suspended because an identical claim has been submitted by a second firm of solicitors. [45749]

Malcolm Wicks: 295 different solicitors have had claims suspended as a result of duplicate claims having been registered. Some of these claims will have been investigated and progressed. These figures include potential duplicate claims that have yet to be investigated and resolved. Most duplicate cases relate to deceased claims where different members of the family submit a claim. Only one claim can be pursued.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miners' claims in *(a)* Bassetlaw and *(b)* the UK have been temporarily suspended because they have been submitted by two separate firms of solicitors. [45750]

Malcolm Wicks: There are 160 duplicate claims temporarily suspended in Bassetlaw and 14,852 in the UK as a whole. These figures include potential duplicate claims that have yet to be investigated and resolved. Most duplicate cases relate to deceased claims where different members of the family submit a claim. Only one claim can be pursued.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when issues relating to miners' compensation were last raised by his Department with *(a)* the National Audit Office, *(b)* the Treasury and *(c)* the Legal Services ombudsman. [45908]

Malcolm Wicks: The National Audit Office regularly review aspects of the schemes as part of their audit of the Department's accounts. Twice each year, we submit our forecast of expenditure to the Treasury. This was last carried out in December 2005. We are not aware of any discussions with the Legal Services ombudsman.

Mobile Telecommunications (London)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the capacity of mobile telecommunications in London since the difficulties experienced with the network on 7 July 2005. [42581]

Alun Michael: The Government have reviewed with industry the performance of the telecommunications sector and provision of services on 7 July 2005. This shows that there was no failure of the mobile networks but the level of demand was significantly greater than usual and exceeded the extra margin of capacity—about 20 percent. above the average daily peak—that is built into the networks for unseen demand. Consequently, service was either restricted or not available for some customers at periods during the day. The congestion was managed by the operators through the application of network calming measures such as "call gapping", which restricted access from the fixed networks onto the mobile networks—but does not affect 999 services—and by squeezing more calls within the available capacity by reducing the quality of voice calls. Restricting customers to text messages only at such times to ease congestion, as has been suggested, is not possible because voice and text services use separately allocated network channels that are not interchangeable.

The measures taken by the operators, together with their advice to customers to keep calls short, succeeded in ensuring there was no collapse of the networks. This enabled a swift return to normal services when the congestion eased.

Nuclear Power (Wales)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Government have spent on the running costs of nuclear power plants in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [43326]

Malcolm Wicks: BNFL's records show that running costs of its nuclear power plants in Wales to 31 March 2005 are as follows.

£ million

	Trawsfynydd	Wylfa
1997	15.3	88.7
1998	14.2	85.8
1999	11.7	89.6
2000	18.6	95.6
2001	18.9	96.8
2002	22.5	89.7
2003	29.8	81.8
2004	34.9	98.3
2005	44.3	92.1

Parliamentary Questions

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will provide a substantive answer to question 38362. [45876]

Malcolm Wicks: I am sorry for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's question. I expect to reply very shortly.

Post Office Closures

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have been closed in *(a)* Westmorland and Lonsdale and *(b)* Cumbria in each of the last five years. [45813]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Renewable Energy

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants have been made by his Department to facilitate the development of *(a)* wind power and *(b)* other forms of renewable energy in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [46150]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to my replies of 25 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 296–302W, to the hon. Members for Lewes (Norman Baker) and North Norfolk (Norman Lamb).

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government are taking to promote renewable forms of energy; and if he will make a statement. [46292]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government's main mechanism for supporting new renewable generating capacity is the renewables obligation (RO). Introduced in April 2002, the RO requires electricity suppliers to source an increasing proportion of their electricity sales from RO eligible sources of renewable energy.

The renewables obligation is also supported with around £500 million of Government investment, between 2002 and 2008, in capital grants and research and development into renewables and other low carbon technologies.

SITPRO

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many hits there were on the SITPRO website in each of the last five years; and how many companies have been assisted by SITPRO in this period. [42377]

Ian Pearson: The total hits on the SITPRO website in each of the last five years were as follows:

	Number of hits
2001	423,271[1]
2002	923,465
2003	1,584,498
2004	2,963,879
2005	3,475,254

[1] Records cover July-December only

It is not possible to estimate accurately how many companies SITPRO has assisted over this period. Since 2004, after SITPRO's helpdesk was relaunched, it has handled over 1,000 inquires a year, mostly from small traders enquiring about import and export documents and procedures on which it is uniquely placed to assist. SITPRO helps many other small and medium sized companies through seminars and workshops. It also engages with companies of all sizes through its policy groups and other stakeholder fora to influence developments in customs and other border regulation, both domestic and international, to promote trade facilitation principles and standards.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the level of co-ordination between SITPRO, UK Trade and Investment and the regional development offices in promoting international investment; how many times these organisations met each other in the last five years; how best practice is shared between these organisations; how potential conflicts of interest between the organisations are resolved; and if he will make a statement. [42378]

Ian Pearson: SITPRO, UK Trade and Investment and the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have distinct roles. SITPRO is the world's leading trade facilitation agency and its expertise lies in the simplification of documents and procedures, e.g. customs, for clearing goods at the border. UKTI's role is to support UK businesses undertaking international trade and in attracting inward investment to the UK. The RDAs work closely with UKTI on both inward investment and trade development activity at regional level. UKTI promotes the whole of the UK as a location for inward investment, working in partnership with the English RDAs and the Development Agencies (DAs) of the Devolved Administrations. In addition to working with UKTI to attract, retain and add value to inward investment, staff in all these agencies have actively participated in the Committee on Overseas Promotion (COP), which brings together inward investment practitioners from throughout the UK to discuss strategic and operational issues, as well as share best practice. In addition to the regular meetings of COP and its sub-groups, there is regular contact with the RDAs and DAs on a daily basis concerning individual investor inquiries.

SITPRO complements the international trade work of UKTI by providing technical advice to traders on customs formalities. It also influences customs and

other border agency policy and regulation with a view to making trade procedures simpler. SITPRO and UKTI meet at least three times a year. UKTI is the largest source of inquiries referred to SITPRO's helpdesk, reflecting the close co-ordination they have on policy and operational issues affecting the UK international trading community and demonstrating full awareness of the unique way the two organisations work together.

Small Business Research Initiative

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what evaluation he has made of small business innovation research programmes in other countries; and if he will make a statement. [45279]

Alun Michael: The UK's small business research initiative (SBRI) was modelled on the US Government's small business innovation research (SBIR) programme, which remains the most relevant international benchmark for SBRI.

Both the UK and US programmes aim to raise productivity and business innovation by providing research and development contract revenues to technology-based small firms, helping them to commercialise their intellectual property and supplying Government bodies with R&D services.

The Chancellor mandated Departments to take part in SBRI in his Budget on 16 March 2005. Until then participation had been voluntary. We aim to publish the voluntary phase performance figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 under SBRI shortly.

Since its inception in 1982, the US programme has been subject to periodic evaluations by the US general accounting office and the UK Government keeps a careful eye on these. The reports to date have largely affirmed that SBIR is meeting its twin goals of furthering the economic development of technology-based small firms and delivering quality valuable R&D outputs to federal agencies.

Spent Nuclear Fuel

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much imported spent nuclear fuel is stored in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [43324]

Malcolm Wicks I am advised by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that around 750 tonnes of overseas spent fuel is currently stored at facilities in the UK, with the majority being stored at Sellafield.

Since 1976, all contracts for reprocessing of overseas spent fuel in the UK contain a clause stating that the materials, including waste, resulting from the reprocessing will be returned to the country of origin.

Telephone Preference Service

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints of alleged breaches of Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 were received by the *(a)* Information Commissioner, *(b)* Direct Marketing Association and *(c)* Telephone Preference Services Ltd. in each quarter of the last three years. [42499]

Alun Michael: I am advised by the Information Commissioner that direct complaints received and dealt with about alleged breaches of Regulation 21 (unsolicited direct marketing calls) of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 were as follows:

	2004	*2005*
Q1	28	336
Q2	44	397
Q3	213	184
Q4	308	96

Figures before 2004 are not available due to the casework management system previously operated by the ICO.

The Telephone Preference Service Ltd. (TPSL) is a subsidiary company of the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) and runs the Telephone Preference Service under contract from Ofcom, the Communications regulator. Complaints to the DMA are forwarded to TPSL—the DMA does not keep its own figures.

I am advised by TPSL that complaints received were as follows:

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Q1	1,953	4,456	8,613
Q2	1,143	3,776	9,154
Q3	1,925	5,354	5,561
Q4	1,944	7,008	4,889

If a customer's telephone number has been registered with the Telephone Preference Service for at least 28 days and the customer's is still receiving unsolicited telemarketing calls, he or she can complain to TPSL. TPSL will contact the organisation concerned with a view to stopping such calls and include the complaint in the regular report it sends to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner does not investigate individual complaints received by TPSL but does use the information provided to monitor trends of complaints and potential multiple breaches. Where appropriate, the Information Commissioner can use this information as further evidence in investigations into complaints.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 291–92W, on the Telephone Preference Service, how many companies were identified by complaints received in relation to alleged breaches of telephone call regulation; and how many companies received multiple complaints; [42500]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1487–88W, on the Telephone Preference Service, how many companies have received multiple warning letters for breaches of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003; and how many cases have been referred to the Regulatory Action Division for them to consider enforcement. [42501]

Alun Michael: I understand from the Information Commissioner that due to the nature of the casework management system used, they are unable to identify the number of different companies about which they received complaints in relation to an alleged breach of Regulation 21 (unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls) of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. The system similarly prevents them from identifying the number of companies about which multiple complaints were received. The Information Commissioner plans to develop this function in the casework management system in future.

THORP

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the future of the THORP reprocessing plant. [46036]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government's position on the future of THORP was set out in the July 2002 White Paper "Managing the Nuclear Legacy". The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) expects to complete their existing order book for reprocessing spent fuel at THORP by around 2010.

The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) are progressing with further investigations which will result in a separate report on the THORP incident. The plant will only reopen if the NII approves a safety case but if the NII is satisfied that its safety requirements can be met, the NDA in conjunction with the plant operator, the British Nuclear Group, will decide as to when to restart the plant. This decision is expected within the next few months.

Union of Democratic Mineworkers/Vendside

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings took place between officials in his Department and the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and Vendside in each year since 1995. [45751]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of meetings each year between the Department and the UDM/Vendside is as follows:

	Number
1999	5
2000	10
2001	6
2002	5
2003	6
2004	2
2005	1

These were mainly operational meetings about the progress of the coal health schemes.

Wind Power

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 791W, on wind power, what steps his Department is taking to encourage the growth of British manufacturing capability to provide for demand from wind power developers. [44750]

Alun Michael: The Department's 2010 Target Team has a number of ongoing business development workstreams, designed to encourage the growth of British manufacturing capability, to provide for demand from wind power developers.

One such workstream includes co-ordinating activity with regional partners in order to raise awareness of the market among new and existing suppliers, and to identify companies capable of addressing the weaknesses identified in the supply gap analysis carried out in 2004. The next Meet the Buyer event will be held in May 2006.

Other activities include three pilot programmes targeted at improving the quality, cost and delivery performance of UK suppliers to the renewables sector.

World Trade Organisation

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will *(a)* place in the Library and *(b)* post on his departmental website documents prepared by his Department for the trade negotiations meeting in Hong Kong; which departmental officials accompanied him to the meeting; what carbon offset measures were established to cover the Department's delegation; and if he will make a statement on (i) matters discussed and (ii) the outcome of the negotiations. [41488]

Ian Pearson: The Government have set out regularly its objectives for the Doha development agenda and the Sixth World Trade Organisation ministerial conference in Hong Kong but does not intend to publish documents prepared by the Department in advanced of the conference, many of which contain sensitive information.

Fifteen officials from the Department of Trade and Industry accompanied my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and the Minister for Trade.

The DTI is committed to participate in the UK Government's scheme to offset carbon dioxide emissions from central Government air travel from April 2006.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Welfare

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted of cruelty towards animals in *(a)* Coventry, South and *(b)* the West Midlands in each year since 1997. [43393]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* Persons found guilty for various offences connected with animal cruelty are shown in the table for Coventry Petty Sessional Area and West Midlands police force area, 1997 to 2004. It is not possible to identify Coventry, South as data are not broken down to that level of detail.

Number of offenders[1] found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in West Midlands police force area, 1997–2004

	Statute	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
108.02	Protection of Animals Act, 1911 (as amended)	21	26	17	41	56	37	47	48
108.03	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 sec 8	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
108.04	Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.06	Protection of Animals Act, 1934	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.08	Docking and Nicking of Horses Act, 1949	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.09	Pet Animals Act, 1951	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
108.10	Cockfighting Act, 1952	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.11	Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1954	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.12	Animal Health Act, 1981, secs 40–42, 46 and 49 and Orders made under secs 8, 9, 37, 38, 39 and 43	3	5	4	1	—	—	—	—
108.13	Slaughterhouses Act, 1974	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
108.14	Abandonment of Animals Act, 1960, sec 1	2	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
108.16	Animal and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 1988	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.17	Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act, 1962	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.18	Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.19	Riding Establishments Acts, 1964 and 1970	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.20	Slaughter of Poultry Act, 1967	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.21	Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1968, secs 1, 2 and 6	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.22	Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (except sec 13)	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
108.23	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 sec 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.24	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 sec 11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.25	Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
111.07, 111.08	Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
111.22, 111.23	Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
110	Diseases of Animals Act	—	4	—	—	—	1	2	—
190 (all)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, secs 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 17	—	—	4	3	8	5	1	—
Total		27	36	27	47	66	45	50	49

[1] Principal offence basis.

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers *(a)* became liable for removal in the last three years in which figures are available and *(b)* are signing with the UK Immigration Service (UKIS) as part of their reporting conditions; how many refused asylum seekers (i) are continuing to receive support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) because they have dependent minor children and

(ii) are receiving section 4 support from NASS; and for how many UKIS has a verifiable address other than their last NASS accommodation. [19037]

Mr. McNulty: Around 59,400 individuals, including dependants, were recorded as becoming failed asylum seekers (either did not appeal or appeal rights exhausted or clearly unfounded cases who meet the criteria for non-suspensive appeals) in 2004, 23 percent. lower that 2003 (77,200). Information for earlier years is not readily available and could only be produced at disproportionate cost.

Management information currently estimates that around 51,000 asylum applicants and failed asylum applicants report to immigration staff as a condition of temporary admission. Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by MASS with dependants under 18 who have no valid claim for asylum is not available and could only be produced at disproportionate costs by examination of individual case records. As at the end of September 2005, there were 7,630 people recorded as supported under section 4.

Information on the number of refused asylum seekers that UKIS has a potentially verifiable address other than their last MASS accommodation is not available and could only be produced at disproportionate costs by examination of individual case records.

British Citizenship

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people living in Livingston constituency became British citizens in 2005. [44021]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the basis requested is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Information is available by local authority area and indicates that 70 people who lived in the West Lothian local authority area were granted British citizenship in 2005. This is based on provisional management information. It is not a national statistic and may be subject to change.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 18 July 2005 from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on behalf of Abbas Adeli (Home Office Reference A1165607). [44614]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate responded to the letter from my right hon. Friend on 24 January 2006.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will reply to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green's correspondence of 10 October 2005 regarding a constituent, Mr. Henry Compagnie-Coker (Home Office reference: C442214). [44999]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the hon. Member's letter to the head of Member of Parliament correspondence section on 20 January.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 5 October 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. H. Akhtar. [41843]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 17 January 2006.

Crime Statistics

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* men and *(b)* women aged (i) under 25 years and (ii) 25 years or over arrested but not charged are subsequently convicted of a different crime; and what the conviction rate is for the general population in the same gender and age groups. [44204]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested on arrests is not collected centrally. Nor is it possible to identify those defendants arrested but not charged who are subsequently convicted of a different crime as the data on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is not collected at this level of detail.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug treatment and testing orders were made by courts in England in each of the last three years; and how many were breached in each year. [44145]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The number of drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) made by courts in England; for which breach proceedings were instigated; which were revoked at a breach hearing for failure to comply with the order; and/or revoked on application following conviction for another offence in each of the last three years is shown in the following table. Data on the number of orders where breach proceedings were instigated but the order expired before the case was heard has only been collected since 2004–05 so is shown only for that year. Since April 2005, the DTTO has gradually been replaced by the community order with a drug rehabilitation requirement (DRR) for offenders aged 18 and over.

	Number of DTTOs made	*Number of DTTOs for which breach proceedings were instigated*	*Number of DTTOs revoked for failure to comply with the requirements of the order*	*Number of DDTOs revoked following conviction for another offence*	*Number of DTTOs which expired with breach proceedings outstanding*
2002–03	5,747	5,096	2,087	915	—
2003–04	7,903	6,810	2,537	1,357	—
2004–05	9,726	8,450	2,453	2,238	332

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the provision of drug treatment programmes to serving prisoners. [44660]

Fiona Mactaggart: Drug treatment goes wider than drug rehabilitation programmes alone. A comprehensive range of drug interventions is available for drug misusers in custody.

These address low, moderate and severe drug dependency and comprise:

Clinical services (detoxification and/or maintenance prescribing programmes), available in all local and remand prisons;

CARATs (Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare services), available in all prisons;

Drug Rehabilitation Programmes, 116 drug rehabilitation programmes, 40 of which are the Short Duration Programme, are running in 103 establishments ;with treatment being supported by a range of mandatory and voluntary drug testing programmes.

Engagements

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next plans to visit India to discuss immigration issues. [45442]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary has no current plans to visit India. Officials maintain regular contact with their Indian counterparts on immigration issues and this involves some visits. I visited India to discuss immigration issues with the Delhi Government and the Punjab State Government in November 2005.

EU Accession State Workers

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of workers in the United Kingdom from EU accession states, broken down by *(a)* occupation and *(b)* country of origin. [44194]

Mr. McNulty: The Accession Monitoring Report for May 2004—September 2005 sets out the number of citizens from the Accession eight Countries of the EU (accession state nationals) who have applied to register with the Worker Registration Scheme during this period. This report is available on the Home Office website via:http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/0/reports/accession_monitoring.html

IRIS Project

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 597W, on the IRIS Project, when he will report the key findings to the House; and what elements of the pilot project will be commercially sensitive. [45949]

Mr. McNulty: Pursuant to my answer of 30 November key findings will be reported to the House following evaluation of the pilot. Implementation is scheduled for completion by the end of summer 2006. The contractual elements of the pilot project are commercially sensitive.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* role and *(b)* functions are of regional offender managers. [23269]

Fiona Mactaggart: Details of the role and functions of Regional Offender Managers were contained in the information pack sent to all prospective candidates in the summer of 2004. A copy of the information pack has been placed in the House of Commons Library for Members to read.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the latest job descriptions are of each of the regional offender managers working for the National Offender Management Service. [44878]

Fiona Mactaggart: Job specifications and selection criteria for the post of regional offender manager were contained in the information pack sent to all prospective candidates in the summer of 2004. A copy of the information pack has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to align public sector prison service areas to those of the regional offender managers. [44883]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The ten regions overseen by the regional offender managers (ROMs) are co-terminous with the prison service areas, with the exception of the south-east where three prison service areas fall within the ROM's remit. There are no plans to change these boundaries.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the job description for regional offender managers will be published; if he will place a copy in the Library; and if he will make a statement. [22656]

Fiona Mactaggart: The job description for the post of Regional Offender Manager was contained in the information pack sent to all prospective candidates in the summer of 2004. A copy of the information pack has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed by each regional offender manager. [44943]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* A full list of staff in post in each region, as of 10 January 2006, is shown in the following table:

	Number
London	5
South East	7
Wales	7
North East	6
Yorkshire and Humberside	6
North West	5
East Midlands	5
West Midlands	6
South West	8
East of England	7

Offenders' Children

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research the Government has evaluated on the likelihood of children with parents serving a custodial sentence being at risk of serving a future custodial sentence themselves; and if he will make a statement on the Department's plans to support children assessed to be at higher risk of offending due to their family circumstances. [41594]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no research which directly answers this question. However, there is a body of research evidence which shows that having parents who have been convicted is strongly predictive of their sons being convicted or cautioned (Maguire et al, 1997; Dodd and Hunter, 1992).

The National Reducing Re-offending Action Plan, published on July 19, 2004, committed the Government to developing a cross-government approach to providing information, advice and support for offenders' children and families. £2.04 million has been secured by the Home Office from the Invest to Save Budget to pilot a regional approach over three years which will evidence a model for engagement and inform national roll-out in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector, DfES, DWP, the Learning and Skills Council and the Legal Services Commission. The Home Office works closely with a wide range of organisations, including the DfES, on preventing young people who are at risk as a result of a number of factors, including family circumstances, from involvement in offending and a range of negative outcomes. For example, the Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams provide a number of targeted services for children and young people at high risk of offending. In addition, the Government's Every Child Matters reforms are an essential part of this work as they shift the focus of children's services towards early intervention and prevention. The DfES are supporting five organisations providing adult relationship and parenting skills support to prisoners' families.

Prison Service (Pay)

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in requiring the Prison Service Pay Review Body to consider local pay; and if he will make a statement. [44948]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* Local pay additions are currently paid to staff at 28 sites to address local recruitment and retention difficulties. In October 2005, the Prison Service proposed to extend the scheme to five new sites, in its submission to the Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSRB). The PSRB is due to make its recommendations in February.

Prisons

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned into strategies to raise the reading age of serving prisoners whose reading age is significantly below the national average for their age group. [43188]

Fiona Mactaggart: Calculation of age-related average reading scores is only feasible for children up to about the age of 16, and adults have neither individual reading ages nor average ones for separate age groups.

However, a few studies have been conducted expressly on this topic. In 2005, the Home Office published findings based on a longitudinal evaluation of basic skills training for prisoners which indicated that the only significant predictor to improved literacy and numeracy was the amount of training received (over 30 hours). This can be found at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/r260.pdfpercent5D The Home Office has also developed a new longitudinal study of prisoners that aims to explore how interventions, including education and employment programmes, might work in combination to address the range of prisoners' needs.

The study, Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR), began in late 2005 and is of four years duration. It should greatly improve our knowledge about the nature of prisoners problems and needs on reception, how prison interventions are targeted, the extent of association between participation in interventions and post-release outcomes, as well as which prisoners benefit the most from interventions.

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the drop-out rate for education courses undertaken by prisoners. [40532]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer January 2006]:* Percentages for uncompleted education courses undertaken by prisoners are not collected centrally.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison officers were employed by the Prison Service in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [43578]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of officers employed in each of the last five years is contained in the table. The figures include prison officers, senior officers and principal officers as well as specialist prison officer grades. The figures represent a snapshot staffing level on the last date of each year.

As at 31 December each year:	*Total officer grades*
2005	24,562
2004	24,355
2003	23,912
2002	23,327
2001	23,182
2000	24,046

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* full-time equivalent literacy and numeracy teachers have been employed by the Prison Service in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [43581]

Fiona Mactaggart: Learning and skills for offenders in custody in England are delivered by contractors. These contract arrangements mean that the teachers engaged in delivering literacy and numeracy in English

prisons are employed not by the Prison Service but by external providers, largely further education colleges under the current arrangements.

Numbers of literacy and numeracy teachers employed by contractors are not collected centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost. The Prison Service employs a total of 13.5 full-time equivalent literacy and numeracy teachers in its three establishments in Wales. Those arrangements have been in place since 1 September 2005. Prior to that, the Prison Service employed no literacy and numeracy teachers in England and Wales.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources are made available to assist inmates preparing for release in finding *(a)* work and *(b)* accommodation; what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of these resources; and if he will make a statement. [44337]

Fiona Mactaggart: In purely financial terms, over £60 million is available as part of the PS Plus two programme, and an additional £14 million a year through the Prison Service Custody to Work Scheme. The Voluntary and Community Sector is also an important provider of these services and a leading partner in several large European Union funded programmes, such as Women into Work (SOVA) and PRISE (Rainer).

There is also a significant amount of time invested in preparing prisoners for release by staff from both the Prison and Probation services, from other Government departments and by voluntary and private sector partners. Significant progress has been made in both areas: nearly all prisons now have housing advice workers drawn from a wide range of providers and Jobcentre Plus surgeries to provide job advice. In 2004–05 the proportion of recorded offenders released from prison without accommodation to go to fell by one third; and over 41,000 had an education, job or training place to go to on release.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what account he has taken of the views of inmates in the organisation of prison education; and if he will make a statement. [44338]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department for Education and Skills, along with the Home Office and the Department of Work and Pensions, published on 15 December a Green Paper on offender learning: "Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment". As part of the policy development for this document, officials invited a wide range of views, including those of organisations representing the rehabilitation and education of offenders.

Officials, and the Minister for Skills, Phil Hope, visited prisons and probation areas, where they were able to speak directly to offenders and staff. Two discussion groups were also run with prisoners prior to publication, focusing in particular on changes that would improve education provision. Offenders will also be able to take part in the Green Paper consultation—further discussion groups will be run to facilitate this. In addition, prisoners can on a day to day basis make their views known on education matters through other means, such as talking directly to prison or probation staff including the head of learning and skills; and they may refer matters to the prisons and probation ombudsman.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the levels of overcrowding were for *(a)* each prison and *(b)* the whole Prison Estate broken down by (i) public and (ii) private sector prisons for each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [44343]

Fiona Mactaggart: The percentage of overcrowding in each prison is shown in the following table. Figures are shown for each financial year since 1998–99. The table shows the sector into which each prison falls and includes totals for public prisons, contracted out prisons and for the whole prison estate.

Overcrowding

Percentage

Establishment name	*Public/Contracted out establishment*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 to December*
Acklington	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Albany	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Altcourse	Contracted out	30.4	53.6	71.6	79.5	98.1	96.8	78.4	83.7
Ashfield	Contracted out	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ashwell	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.1	0.7	2.1
Askham Grange	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aylesbury	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.0
Bedford	Public	40.0	40.1	42.1	35.6	55.7	58.9	54.0	64.0
Belmarsh	Public	18.9	10.0	32.9	39.5	49.9	0.0	40.4	39.1
Birmingham	Public	69.7	69.8	61.5	25.5	42.7	41.6	38.5	38.3
Blakenhurst	Public	43.5	44.2	41.8	21.5	24.4	25.7	24.8	20.6
Blantyre House	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blundeston	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.7	28.2	27.6	26.7
Brinsford	Public	30.5	31.1	18.5	14.5	12.3	11.5	10.0	11.2
Bristol	Public	14.9	18.2	15.3	14.7	16.0	15.0	53.5	23.6
Brixton	Public	51.7	52.4	29.9	31.5	31.7	29.5	26.0	30.9
Brockhill	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bronzefield	Contracted out	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	0.0
Buckley Hall	Public	0.0	0.0	11.0	13.8	8.5	14.6	18.3	11.4
Bullingdon	Public	21.0	21.3	17.9	30.9	35.3	27.8	37.7	42.1
Bullwood Hall	Public	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.6	4.3	0.0	0.0
Camp Hill	Public	24.4	30.0	22.0	40.9	51.7	47.2	21.6	21.6
Canterbury	Public	77.8	78.0	70.2	74.2	80.5	81.8	79.4	75.2
Cardiff	Public	67.9	72.2	67.4	76.6	79.2	79.5	69.2	65.3

Overcrowding

Percentage

Establishment name	*Public/Contracted out establishment*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 to December*
Castington	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Channings Wood	Public	37.7	37.8	17.2	2.3	6.5	6.0	5.6	6.9
Chelmsford	Public	9.3	16.4	20.3	17.9	51.0	45.3	43.8	46.8
Coldingley	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.6	8.6
Cookham Wood	Public	49.1	37.1	36.3	34.9	29.2	47.0	38.2	42.9
Dartmoor	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.5	8.4	6.9	6.9
Deerbolt	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Doncaster	Contracted out	58.7	54.1	60.4	58.6	29.4	93.9	57.5	59.3
Dorchester	Public	71.0	64.9	54.2	59.1	73.5	76.2	76.1	75.2
Dovegate	Contracted out	—	—	—	0.0	1.0	7.1	7.2	5.1
Dover	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Downview	Public	9.4	9.5	9.7	6.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drake Hall	Public	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Durham	Public	59.5	59.8	57.1	50.1	50.9	50.7	64.9	67.7
East Sutton Park	Public	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Eastwood Park	Public	6.6	14.0	15.8	16.8	16.8	15.7	13.9	12.4
Edmunds Hill	Public	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.0
Elmley	Public	42.8	43.6	24.1	25.8	47.7	53.5	55.0	54.9
Eriestoke	Public	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	4.1	5.4	5.3	5.2
Everthorpe	Public	13.9	13.9	1.2	13.9	13.6	13.7	12.9	18.4
Exeter	Public	84.6	80.3	69.4	64.9	72.5	35.7	64.8	54.5
Featherstone	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	3.8	3.6	3.9
Feltham	Public	3.0	5.6	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ford	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Forest Bank	Contracted out	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	11.6	24.2
Foston Hall	Public	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Frankland	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Full Sutton	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Garth	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	11.3	4.0	5.1	3.3
Gartree	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Glen Parva	Public	29.5	35.4	26.6	55.6	53.2	48.2	42.0	44.2
Gloucester	Public	54.7	61.9	51.6	57.7	60.7	55.3	64.6	52.5
Grendon/Spring Hill	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grays Marsh	Public	8.7	12.5	12.2	12.5	14.1	12.7	11.7	13.4
Haslar	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Haverigg	Public	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.1	2.2	1.9	2.3	2.5
Hewell Grange	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
High Down	Public	41.3	24.5	17.6	22.3	26.7	37.5	36.9	38.6
Highpoint	Public	6.1	0.5	0.0	2.2	5.3	6.1	5.4	3.9
Hindley	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	1.8	0.0	0.0
Hollesley Bay	Public	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Holloway	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Holme House	Public	7.6	11.5	0.0	9.4	21.9	21.0	26.1	26.9
Hull	Public	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	48.1	42.9	46.9	51.3
Huntercombe	Public	4.5	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kingston	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kirkham	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kirklevington	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lancaster	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	38.2	66.5	68.6	69.5
Lancaster Farms	Public	12.7	8.6	5.3	11.0	10.4	9.3	9.5	11.3
Latchmere House	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Leeds	Public	44.9	51.4	68.5	73.5	74.6	75.1	74.5	74.3
Leicester	Public	80.0	82.3	77.2	84.6	89.2	88.0	86.0	86.2
Lewes	Public	6.6	6.7	7.3	6.0	21.3	29.0	27.7	29.8
Leyhill	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lincoln	Public	68.0	64.4	64.3	63.4	59.6	68.0	69.8	68.2
Lindholme	Public	5.9	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	7.1
Littlehey	Public	7.5	6.9	6.4	4.8	10.2	10.4	13.1	10.7
Liverpool	Public	30.6	29.5	27.9	32.2	32.3	34.6	32.4	29.6
Long Lartin	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Low Newton	Public	83.3	25.3	28.9	28.3	30.8	28.8	25.1	24.4
Lowdham Grange	Contracted out	0.0	3.2	1.2	0.0	3.8	7.6	5.1	3.7
Maidstone	Public	7.3	15.5	15.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	21.0	4.1
Manchester	Public	35.5	33.7	25.6	48.7	57.4	56.3	55.6	54.0
Moorland	Public	5.9	5.5	6.2	6.1	7.1	5.8	5.5	5.7
Morton Hall	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mount	Public	11.2	1.6	2.0	11.0	12.7	13.5	7.2	0.8
New Hall	Public	16.7	16.2	16.5	17.3	16.6	12.5	7.7	10.8
North Sea Camp	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northallerton	Public	87.7	95.7	75.6	69.6	62.0	62.4	70.4	65.7
Norwich	Public	19.7	32.3	36.1	47.0	54.4	52.8	53.4	54.5
Nottingham	Public	0.0	0.0	24.7	45.5	57.0	56.7	62.1	54.9
Onley	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parc	Contracted out	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.5	16.8
Parkhurst	Public	8.0	4.8	5.1	0.2	0.0	8.1	6.5	6.1

Overcrowding

Percentage

Establishment name	*Public/Contracted out establishment*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 to December*
Pentonville	Public	33.9	39.4	33.8	31.0	34.3	36.8	40.1	37.7
Peterborough	Contracted out	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0
Portland	Public	16.0	25.8	23.5	8.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Preston	Public	79.6	79.7	81.0	79.9	92.5	91.4	90.2	93.5
Ranby	Public	20.9	19.7	11.0	11.7	15.7	20.0	16.2	23.0
Reading	Public	60.9	65.4	61.5	65.8	67.2	67.7	68.1	68.7
Risley	Public	8.5	8.5	0.0	3.6	6.9	4.7	5.5	7.5
Rochester	Public	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rye Hill	Contracted out	n/a	n/a	0.0	0.0	32.4	22.1	10.4	0.0
Send	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shepton Mallet	Public	47.3	18.6	37.9	12.0	33.0	35.3	33.2	22.4
Shrewsbury	Public	89.2	0.0	48.6	86.6	91.1	89.6	81.2	81.0
Stafford	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.1	62.1	55.4	58.7
Standford Hill	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stocken	Public	7.8	5.1	4.8	8.3	9.0	8.4	8.5	8.5
Stoke Heath	Public	0.0	0.0	7.8	3.4	28.4	27.6	23.7	23.8
Styal	Public	0.0	5.4	7.1	10.1	21.7	7.0	17.0	18.9
Sudbury	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.0
Swaleside	Public	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	3.1	3.2	3.0	4.5
Swansea	Public	67.8	65.0	68.9	60.1	77.6	71.6	68.8	67.3
Swinfen Hall	Public	13.5	13.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Thorn Cross	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Usk/Prescoed	Public	50.6	51.1	52.2	54.0	55.2	51.3	54.8	54.4
Verne	Public	6.8	6.1	5.1	6.4	10.0	9.7	9.2	11.1
Wakefield	Public	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wandsworth	Public	28.9	33.3	32.7	37.2	46.5	58.9	58.3	73.6
Warren Hill	Public	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wayland	Public	6.9	4.9	5.7	6.5	11.0	11.9	10.9	11.6
Wealstun	Public	1.6	1.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
Wellingborough	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0
Werrington	Public	0.0	0.0	12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wetherby	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0
Whatton	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	10.4	22.7
Whitemoor	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Winchester	Public	43.7	53.1	28.4	49.0	54.7	59.7	60.0	59.2
Wolds	Contracted out	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.2	0.0	0.0	22.3	0.5
Woodhill	Public	13.6	15.2	16.8	13.9	24.4	35.1	31.3	34.6
Wormwood Scrubs	Public	34.3	53.1	0.0	1.0	7.4	10.2	8.5	10.0
Wymott	Public	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	4.0	3.3	3.8
Contracted out total		24.5	27.4	26.1	23.0	23.0	34.1	26.1	25.0
Public total		19.6	19.6	16.8	18.2	23.4	22.9	23.7	23.8
Prison Estate total		19.9	20.0	17.5	18.6	23.4	24.0	23.9	23.9

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in each prison had *(a)* a job, *(b)* training and *(c)* an education placement to attend upon release in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44345]

Fiona Mactaggart: The data collected identifies prisoners entering Education Training and Employment (ETE) which includes those who attended FRESHSTART appointments at Jobcentre Plus. FRESHSTART is the initiative whereby prisoners who do not have a job or training place to go to on release are linked into employment, training and benefits advice and support immediately after release. The compound elements of ETE cannot be broken down except at disproportionate cost. Figures for ETE are given as follows.

Prison service area and establishment	*Total discharges 2004–05*	*ETE at discharge 2004–05*
East Midlands		
Ashwell	412	211
Foston Hall (F)	244	65
Gartree	1	0
Glen Parva	1,242	693
Leicester	495	290
Lincoln	643	209
Morton Hall (F)	214	56
North Sea Camp	834	406
Nottingham	493	278
Onley	945	507
Ranby	1,172	690
Stocken	320	160
Sudbury	569	353
Wellingborough	340	148
Whatton	162	59
	8,086	4,125
Eastern		
Bedford	876	421
Blundeston	175	142
Bullwood Hall (F)	232	84
Chelmsford	1,134	485
Edmunds Hill	462	77
Highpoint	593	340
Hollesley Bay	688	426
Littlehey	426	227
Mount	408	233
Norwich	1,501	499
Warren Hill (J)	420	334
Wayland	359	251
	7,274	3,519

Prison service area and establishment	Total discharges 2004–05	ETE at discharge 2004–05
High Security		
Belmarsh	1,079	504
Durham	844	326
Durham (F)	3	1
Frankland	46	12
Full Sutton	45	15
Long Lartin	26	5
Manchester	1,239	475
Wakefield	14	0
Whitemoor	10	6
Woodhill	1,021	386
	4,327	1,730
Kent		
Blantyre House	69	67
Canterbury	589	224
Cookham Wood (F)	227	90
East Sutton Park (F)	77	40
Elmley	902	298
Maidstone	141	51
Rochester	810	320
Standford Hill	1,083	566
Swaleside	39	11
	3,937	1,667
London		
Brixton	788	144
Feltham	351	147
Holloway (F)	663	191
Latchmere House	151	143
Pentonville	1,719	630
Wandsworth	1,477	631
Wormwood Scrubs	1,251	585
	6,400	2,471
North East		
Acklington	691	238
Castington	494	286
Deerbolt	549	369
Holme House	1,306	454
Kirklevington	157	149
Low Newton (F)	582	176
	3,779	1,672
North West		
Buckley Hall (F)	659	137
Garth	114	31
Haverigg	439	226
Hindley	497	221
Kirkham	1,445	791
Lancaster	269	202
Lancaster Farms	1,030	548
Liverpool	2,338	1,681
Preston	736	346
Risley	834	540
Styal (F)	824	90
Thorn Cross	547	373
Wymott	517	184
	10,249	5,370
South West		
Bristol	640	262
Channings Wood	403	230
Dartmoor	475	172
Dorchester	475	221
Eastwood Park (F)	767	142
Erlestoke	311	129
Exeter	1,191	464
Gloucester	511	325
Guys Marsh	578	317
Leyhill	671	383
Portland	533	458
Shepton Mallet	9	4
Verne	161	68
Weare	1,335	693
	8,060	3,868
Surrey and Sussex		
Coldingley	87	46
Downview (F)	363	48
Ford	1,250	582
Highdown	891	326
Lewes	537	217
Send (F)	199	38
	3,327	1,257
Thames Valley, Hampshire and IOW		
Albany	69	4
Aylesbury	88	77
Bullingdon	1,144	590
Camp Hill	420	375
Grendon/Spring Hill	514	315
Haslar	15	1
Huntercombe (J)	815	286
Kingston	0	0
Parkhurst	56	44
Reading	501	308
Winchester	1,033	515
	4,655	2,515
Wales		
Cardiff	1,109	401
Swansea	608	293
Usk/Prescoed	580	267
	2,297	961
West Midlands		
Birmingham	2,105	584
Blakenhurst	1,037	364
Brinsford	590	310
Brockhill (F)	240	16
Drake Hall (F)	332	135
Featherstone	277	149
Hewell Grange	438	249
Shrewsbury	643	267
Stafford	443	205
Stoke Heath	1,210	690
Swinfen Hall	87	56
Werrington (J)	352	315
	7,754	3,340
Yorkshire and Humberside		
Askham Grange (F)	157	84
Everthorpe	359	332
Hull	1,200	475
Leeds	2,038	976
Lindholme	637	416
Moorland and Hatfield	948	679
New Hall (F)	781	492
Northallerton	983	816
Wealstun	962	621
Wetherby (J)	567	347
	8,632	5,238
Total public prisons	78,777	37,733
Contracted out estate		
Altcourse	1,496	855
Ashfield	558	277
Doncaster	1,581	706
Dovegate	71	19
Forest Bank	1,579	594
Lowdham grange	42	14
Parc	1,357	833
Rye Hill	85	17
Wolds	139	98
Total contracted out estate	6,908	3,413
Total all prisons	85,685	41,146

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons have local learning centres; what the cost of each centre is; what plans he has to create more local learning centres; and if he will make a statement. [44349]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are 13 local learning centres. Their location and running costs, for 2004–05, are detailed in the following table. Funding for a further three centres has been approved.

Prison service learning centres and running costs for 2004–05

	Amount (£)
Blakenhurst	9,989
Gartree	10,232
Ranby	12,000
Lancaster	7,067
Thorn Cross	9,555
Frescoed	5,716
Pentonville	7,626
Holme House	10,180
Lindholme	11,057
Guys Marsh	9,839
Verne	10,239
Woodhill	3,083
London	2,580

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to change the *(a)* entry criteria and *(b)* initial training programme for prison officers; and if he will make a statement. [44350]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans to change the necessary entry requirements for new prison officers. However, all newly recruited prison officers now undertake an eight-week Prison Officer Entry Level Training course. The course provides new staff with a foundation level of training, including; interpersonal skills, mental health awareness, race and diversity, violence reduction, safer custody, security awareness and practical skills. An improved quality assurance system is now in place, which adheres to the Adult Learning Inspectorate common inspection framework.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the Prison Service's policy on the management of sickness absence; and if he will make a statement; [44353]

(2) what steps have been taken to ensure that the Prison Service achieves the National Audit Office target on sickness absence; and if he will make a statement. [44354]

Fiona Mactaggart: During the last three years, the public sector Prison Service has introduced a new and robust framework for managing absence caused by ill health. Provisional figures for 2005 show average absence rates in the public sector Prison Service (including absence caused as a result of accidents and assaults at work) at 12.5 days per staff member. This represents a fall of up to 21 per cent. since 1999 and a fall of 15 per cent. since the introduction of a new policy framework in 2002–03. Absence rates for the financial year 2005–06 are expected to show a further fall.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the views of *(a)* prison governors, *(b)* prison education managers and *(c)* prison education contractors on the state of education delivery in the prison estate; and if he will make a statement. [44364]

Fiona Mactaggart: Ministers receive regular analysis of the performance of the learning and skills arrangements in prisons through the Home Office's standard reporting arrangements. The development of new arrangements for delivering learning and skills to offenders, planned and funded by the Learning and Skills Council, has involved a wide range of stake holding partners.

A national Project Board includes very senior Prison Service representatives, and each region has set up a separate Regional Partnership Board to drive forward arrangements there. The Regional Partnership Boards include Prison Service Area Managers, Governors and Heads of Learning and Skills. At each stage, therefore, the views of Prison Service Managers—and Regional Offender Managers—have been influential in determining the strategic way forward in developing the new service as it affects prisons.

In addition, officials from the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit have taken account of contractors' views, for example through running a consultation workshop at the most recent Association of Colleges conference and arranging other stakeholder events at which contractors have been present as part of the preparatory activity towards publication of the Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment'.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of the Drug Intervention Programme at HMP Pentonville. [44372]

Fiona Mactaggart: The prison element of the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) is well established at HMP Pentonville and is proving effective in building on drug treatment deliveries in prison by making firm links for prisoners to continue their drug treatment on release.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to improve race relations in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [44416]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service Associate Race Equality Scheme for 2005–08 sets out the Prison Service's actions over the next three years to improve its management of race relations. This information is available on the Prison Service website at www.mprisonservice.gov.uk/abouttheservice/racediversity, it is also available in the House of Commons Library.

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases the Probation Service handled in each region in the last year; how many staff were employed by the Probation Service in each region; and if he will make a statement. [44383]

Fiona Mactaggart: The number of cases (in terms of people under National Probation Service supervision) handled by the Probation Service is not recorded in whole years. Instead, workload is measured by the

number of active cases being handled by the service on a specific day at the end of each quarter. This figure will fluctuate over time, but the snapshot at a particular date is representative of the number of cases that are being handled at any particular point in time.

The table shows the number of people being supervised by the National Probation Service as at 31 December 2004, which is the most recent published figure. In addition, the table also shows the number of staff in post (full-time equivalent) on the same day as the case load information was captured. The staffing figures do not include staff employed by the national probation directorate in the Home Office, or Chief Probation Officers.

	Number of cases	*Staff in post*
North East	11,486	1,277.50
North West	34,405	3,198.99
Yorkshire and Humberside	22,836	2,380.85
East Midlands	16,954	1,719.64
West Midlands	26,762	2,186.76
East of England	16,287	1,503.90
London	34,013	2,398.30
South East	21,995	2,194.70
South West	12,517	1,480.22
Wales	12,215	1,182.08
NPS Total	209,470	19,522.94

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what impact the introduction of *(a)* early release schemes and *(b)* intensive supervision schemes have had on the workload of the Probation Service; and whether additional resources have been made available to the Probation Service to deal with these schemes. [44386]

Fiona Mactaggart: The home detention curfew scheme was introduced in January 1999. Over 120,000 prisoners have been released on HDC since then. Before release on HDC is granted, Probation Service staff are involved in assessing the suitability of the offender and the proposed release address.

There is no special allocation of funding for this work. However in 1999, the year in which HDC began, funding for the Probation Service increased by 6 per cent. All offenders serving sentences of 12 months to four years, and young adult offenders aged under 22 years of age serving less than 12 months, are released subject to probation supervision. Changes in the way HDC has been applied have caused short term increases in the number of offenders released but they have not had any long-term impact on supervision resources.

The Probation Service piloted the Intensive Change and Control programme (ICCP) for young adult offenders in 17 areas from 2003. Additional funds were provided to the pilot areas in 2003–04 and 2004–05. From April 2005 the Criminal Justice Act 2003 has enabled orders to be made that contain several requirements. These new intensive orders are gradually replacing ICCP.

Funding to probation boards reflects the increase in workload stemming from the Criminal Justice Act. Funding increased by £54 million in 2005–06 (to £759 million) and is planned to increase further in 2006–07.

Prostitution

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what programmes to assist women who wish to stop working as prostitutes receive support from his Department. [44839]

Fiona Mactaggart: No dedicated projects currently receive support from this Department. In 2000 the Home Office awarded £850,000 from the crime reduction programme to 11 multi-agency projects to assess what works in tackling prostitution.

The evaluation of these projects was published in the Home Office research study report "Tackling Street Prostitution: Towards an Holistic Approach" and these findings will form the basis of commissioning guidance for dedicated support projects to be developed for local partnerships as part of the implementation of the recently published prostitution strategy. Government funding is already available, for example to fund drug and alcohol treatment services, to support essential elements of the work of these projects in developing routes out of prostitution.

Rates

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by *(a)* HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *(b)* HM Inspectorate of Prisons and *(c)* HM Inspectorate of Probation function in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [39163]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following were the rates payments made by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Probation during financial year 2004–05.

£

Local authority	*HM Inspectorate of Constabulary*	*HM Inspectorate of Prisons*	*HM Inspectorate of Probation*
City of Wakefield	16,051	—	—
Bromsgrove DC	11,172	—	—
Cambridge City Council	13,794	—	—
Woking Borough Council	46,136	—	—
Trafford Borough Council	—	—	19,860
Total Paid	87,153	—	19,860
(A) Region			
Scotland	—	—	—
Wales	—	—	—
Northern Ireland	—	—	—
North West			19,860
North East	—	—	—
Yorkshire and the Humber	16,051	—	—
East Midlands	—	—	—
West Midlands	11,172	—	—
East of England	13,794	—	—
South East	46,136	—	—
South West	—	—	—
London	—	—	—
(B) Nation			
England	87,153	—	19,860
Scotland	—	—	—
Wales	—	—	—
Northern Ireland	—	—	—
(ii) London	—	—	—

Notes:
1. These Inspectorates provide services in England and Wales.
2. Rates for their London offices which are within the Department's central London estate are paid centrally.

Remand Prisoners

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to assist remand prisoners in their preparations for trial. [44959]

Fiona Mactaggart: Remand prisoners who have not been tried are presumed to be innocent and it is the function of the Prison Service to hold them in readiness for their next appearance in court.

All prisons must have a Legal Services officer to assist prisoners in finding a solicitor, to whom they must provide confidential access. Prisons holding remand prisoners must also have a bail information scheme to assist the court in deciding if the period of remand should continue; and a comprehensive range of legal text books and facilities to obtain copies of relevant legal documents.

Inspectorates (Rental Costs)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid in rent for properties by *(a)* HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *(b)* HM Inspectorate of Prisons and *(c)* HM Inspectorate of Probation in 2004–05; and how much was paid in (i) each (A) region and (B) nation of the UK and (ii) London. [39166]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following were the rent payments made by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Probation during financial year 2004–05:

£

	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary	*HM Inspectorate of Prisons*	*HM Inspectorate of Probation*
(A) Region			
Scotland	—	—	—
Wales	—	—	—
Northern Ireland	—	—	—
North West	—	—	57,105
North East	—	—	—
Yorkshire and the Humber	53,756	—	—
East Midlands	—	—	—
West Midlands	51,278	—	—
East of England	40,410	—	—
South East	[1]205,510	—	—
South West	—	—	—
London	—	—	—
Total Paid	350,954	—	57,105
(B) Nation			
England	350,954	—	57,100
Scotland	—	—	—
Wales	—	—	—
Northern Ireland	—	—	—
(ii) London[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available.

[1] Net.

[2] The Inspectorates are housed in the Department's central London estate.

Note:

These Inspectorates provide services in England and Wales. Costs for their freehold London offices which are within the Department's central London estate are paid centrally.

Reoffending

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used, expressed as level of risk *(a)* to the public and *(b)* of re-offending, for each level of Probation Service supervision for an offender upon release from prison; and if he will make a statement. [44382]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Probation Service assesses offenders using the Offender Assessment System (OASys). There are two main elements within OASys, an assessment of the risk of serious harm posed by an offender and an assessment of the likelihood of reconviction.

Risk of serious harm to the public or to particular groups of people is assessed as low, medium, high or very high. The assessment involves two variables: the likelihood of an event occurring and the potential impact of that event. Serious harm is defined as life threatening and/or traumatic from which recovery (psychological as well as physical) can be expected to be difficult or impossible.

An offender's likelihood of reconviction is expressed as a numerical score that is split into three bands: low, medium and high. This assessment is based on such factors as the offender's criminal history and whether for example he or she is a drug misuser, abuses alcohol or anti-social attitudes. The two elements of assessment come together in the allocation of offenders to a four level 'tiering' structure through which all offenders under Probation Service supervision are managed.

Those offenders who require the least probation input will be in Tier One, while those requiring the most will be in Tier Four. Tier Four includes those offenders released on licence who are assessed as posing a high or very high risk of serious harm and where it is likely that more than one agency should be involved in their risk management under the Multi- Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

The MAPPA provide the framework to co-ordinate and strengthen the risk management activity of all the relevant agencies involved. High and very high risk of serious harm offenders are managed in the community at MAPPA Levels Two or Three, dependant on the nature and imminence of their risk and the level of resource, or senior management involvement, needed from the relevant agencies.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the re-offending rate was for individuals serving *(a)* custodial sentences and *(b)* community service orders in (i) England, (ii) the Tees Valley and (iii) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency in 2004–05. [37013]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates are not currently available on a regional basis. National re-offending rates are published in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort'. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05. This is available on the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html)

Security (Small Ports)

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on security at small ports; and how many intelligence-led checks were made at small ports during 2005. [44828]

Mr. McNulty: A small port is defined by the Immigration Service as

"any location where we do not have a permanent presence or any other port or airport which, by virtue of volume and type of traffic, is considered suitable for exercising a flexible control".

Port staffing levels in the United Kingdom are determined by a number of factors:

Current and projected numbers of passenger arrivals;

At seaports, the number of freight vehicles that will require searching;

An assessment of the casework generated from the arriving passenger traffic; and

Projected numbers of asylum seekers that will require interview on arrival.

At smaller ports resources are deployed to meet arriving traffic and in addition powers under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 are used to clear passengers remotely following checks against warning indices. Passengers subject to control will be examined to ascertain whether they qualify for entry to the UK. All small ports are threat assessed for the degree of risk to the integrity of the control. Special multi-agency, and in some cases multi-national, exercises are run alongside ad-hoc intelligence checks at small ports.

Tax Credit Fraud

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* prosecuted for and *(b)* convicted of tax credit fraud in each of the last five years. [38488]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The information is contained in the table.

	Prosecutions	*Convictions*
2001–02	28	28
2002–03	35	34
2203–04	59	56
2004–05	211	193
2005–06 (end December)	190	160

Young Offenders

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what target he has set for increasing the number of young offenders in education, training or employment when leaving the supervision of youth offender teams. [44858]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Youth Justice Board and the Connexions Service have jointly set youth offending teams a target of ensuring that 90 percent. of the young people they supervise are in full-time education, training or employment. Currently, 75 percent. of young people aged 10 and 17 who are supervised by youth offending teams are in full-time education, training or employment.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Access to Justice

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of systems of access to justice for *(a)* those with literacy problems and *(b)* other vulnerable groups. [40695]

Ms Harman: In 2005 my Department made an assessment of the additional support that might be helpful to vulnerable victims and witnesses, including those with communication difficulties, in the criminal justice process. An interdepartmental examination of early advice provision is also examining ways in which access to independent early legal advice can be improved for vulnerable groups. In addition my Department is testing the use of television as a means of delivering education and information for potential users of the Justice System, with a particular focus on vulnerable and socially excluded witnesses.

Her Majesty's Courts Service's victims and witnesses strategy aims to improve the court experience of victims and witnesses, including vulnerable ones. Examples of help given to vulnerable witnesses are: instructions to court ushers to offer witnesses the option of repeating the oath after the usher rather than reading it, thus assisting those with literacy problems; videolink facilities to enable housebound witnesses to give evidence from home and children to give evidence separate from the parties and in a less intimidating environment; and providing an interpreter automatically when a party has a hearing impediment and for those whose first language is not English in cases of committal, domestic violence and where children are involved, and in other cases if this is the only way in which a party can give evidence.

The Legal Service Commission, through the Community Legal Services Strategy, is looking at ways of targeting expenditure more on those who need it most, particularly the socially excluded. Community Legal Services Direct provides free legal advice and information which is available in different languages and formats and is particularly useful to people who may have problems accessing traditional services. People with literacy problems can call a national telephone service to find information about their nearest solicitor, obtain information leaflets in audio formats, and access a website that is speech-enabled.

Clinical Negligence

Mr. Baron: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to her answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1211W, on clinical negligence, how much the *(a)* 10 barristers and *(b)* 10 solicitors who received the highest legal aid fees for clinical negligence work in the last year earned; and, for each barrister and solicitor, in what proportion of cases where proceedings are complete a substantive benefit to the client was reported. [45761]

Bridget Prentice: The information requested is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Commission for Racial Equality

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State last met the Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality. [45448]

Ms Harman: The Secretary of State has met the Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality on several occasions.

Court Service (Northamptonshire)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the recent performance of the Court Service in Northamptonshire. [45003]

Ms Harman: The information is as follows:

Ineffective trials (PSA 1)

YTD (Dec) Crown—3.0 per cent. Target 10 per cent.

YTD (Dec) Mags—12.3 per cent. Target 20 per cent.

Timeliness (PSA 1)

YTD (Dec) Crown—75.15 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

YTD (Sep) Mags—30 days from first listing to completion. No formal target.

Persistent Young Offenders (PSA 1)

YTD (Dec) Area (Crown and Mags)—85 days. Target 71 days.

Payment rate (PSA 2)

YTD (Dec) Mags—78.1 per cent. Target 81 per cent.

Confiscation Orders (PSA 2)

YTD (Dec) Mags—Outstanding Balance rate—1 per cent. Target—less than 50 per cent.

YTD (Dec) Orders closed—44 per cent. Target—greater than 25 per cent.

Family Public Law (PSA 4)

Percentage cases completed within 40 weeks

YTD (Dec) Care Centre—35.7 per cent. Local target 32 per cent.

YTD (Dec) Family Proceedings Court—54.5 per cent. Local target 68.9 per cent.

Family Private Law

YTD (Dec) County—77.10 per cent. Target 70 per cent.

Adoptions

YTD (Dec) County 57.10 per cent. Target 70 per cent.

County Court Small Claims

YTD (Dec) 78.2 per cent. Target 80.5 per cent.

County Court Fast Track

YTD (Dec) 86.2 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

County Court Multi Track

YTD (Dec) 84.4 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Cranshy: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she is taking to improve the accuracy of the electoral register. [43093]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, introduced on 11 October, includes a new duty on electoral registration officers (EROs) to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers. Those steps include the following specific measures:

(a) Sending the canvass form more than once to any address;

(b) Making house to house inquires on more than one occasion;

(c) Making contact by such other means as the registration officer thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register;

(d) Inspecting any records held by any person which the registration officer is permitted to inspect; and

(e) Providing training to others carrying out the duty.

The Bill also includes a clause empowering EROs to remove from the register the details of an elector if it becomes apparent, after the process of registration has been completed, that the elector should not have been registered.

Freedom of Information

Peter Law: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she plans to institute charges for freedom of information requests assessed to cost less than £450 to prepare. [41811]

Ms Harman: The FOI Act gives the Secretary of State power to set an upper limit (known as the appropriate limit) for the cost of responding to FOI requests. The public authority is not required to comply with requests whose cost exceeds that limit. The Act also enables the Secretary of State to make regulations for public authorities to charge for requests that costs less than the appropriate limit. Under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 the appropriate limit was set at £600 for requests to central Government and £450 for requests to public authorities outside central Government. Public authorities could only charge for the cost of disbursements (such as photocopying and postage) if the cost of complying with the request was less than the upper limit.

DCA has no plans at present to revise either the appropriate limits or to change the fees that may be charged under those limits. As with any new regulations, however, provision was made for a review of fees and a ministerial commitment was given at the time of the passage of the regulations through Parliament that this should take place after the Act came into force. No timetable for any review has yet been agreed. There have also been no decisions taken on the scope of any review.

Judicial Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the written statement of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 161WS, on judicial pensions, what estimate she has made of *(a)* the annual cost of the long service award and *(b)* the annual yield from tax paid by scheme members on pension contributions. [44764]

Ms Harman: Based on recent retirement patterns, the cost of the service award is estimated at about £6.7 million for 2006–07. This will be balanced by tax

income (tax payable on the retirement lump sum, and on the service award), and additional national insurance contributions.

Based on recent member contributions data for the judicial pension scheme, the additional tax yield, arising from the fact that member contributions will cease to attract tax relief, is estimated at about £2.5 million per annum, balanced by reduced income to the scheme.

Jury Service (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people summoned for jury service in West Lancashire sought *(a)* deferment and *(b)* exemption in each of the last five years. [45014]

Ms Harman: It is not possible to break down the number of people summoned geographically, but it is possible to break them down by court. The majority of people living in West Lancashire are summoned for jury service at Preston Crown court. The number and rate of people who applied for deferral and excusal at Preston Crown court is as follows:

In 2001 903 people applied to have their jury service deferred (10 per cent. of those summoned) and 2,917 people applied to be excused from jury service (31 per cent. of those summoned); in 2002 949 (11 per cent.) applied for deferral and 2,905 (34 per cent.) applied for excusal; in 2003 833 (12 per cent.) applied for deferral and 2,221 (33 per cent.) for excusal; in 2004 1,037 (15 per cent.) applied for deferral and 1,890 (28 per cent.) for excusal; and in 2005 1,040 (16 per cent.) applied for deferral and 1,659 (26 per cent.) for excusal.

These percentages are broadly the same as the overall percentages for England and Wales.

Magistrates Courts

Joan Walley: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress on proposals to fund a new build magistrates court in North Staffordshire. [45040]

Ms Harman: The North Staffordshire magistrates court scheme continues to be within the programme of new court projects. Work continues to finalise investment plans, as part of the development of business and estates strategy for Her Majesty's Court Service. It is expected that a further announcement will be made once spending plans have been agreed with Treasury.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current waiting time is from allocation to hearing for small claims at West London magistrates court. [45262]

Ms Harman: Small claim hearings are not heard in the magistrates court, but are dealt with in the county court. The figures for the West London county court show that between April 2003 to March 2004 there were 441 case dealt with, with an average waiting time of 7.5 weeks. Between April 2004 to March 2005 the average waiting time was 9.5 weeks (354 cases), and between April and December 2005 the average waiting time was 7.7 weeks (286 cases).

Mr. Hands: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many possession cases were issued at West London magistrates court between *(a)* 1 October 2004 and 31 March 2005 and *(b)* 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005. [45288]

Ms Harman: Possession proceedings are a civil process, and dealt with in the county courts rather than the magistrates courts. The number of possession cases that issued at West London county court between 1 October 2004 and 31 March 2005 was 743, and 1 April 2005 and 30 September 2005, 833

National Mediation Helpline

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on the National Mediation Helpline during the last 12 months. [41747]

Ms Harman: In the last 12 months the Department has spent £75,197.00 on the National Mediation Helpline. The breakdown is as follows:

	£
Running costs	33,468.80
Publicity/launch	18,628.20
Independent evaluation	23,100.00

Supreme Court

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State last met Lord Bingham of Cornhill to discuss the new headquarters for the proposed Supreme Court. [45445]

Ms Harman: The Secretary of State has had regular meetings with Lord Bingham to discuss plans for the new headquarters of the Supreme Court.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress towards housing the proposed new Supreme Court. [45446]

Ms Harman: The DCA is continuing to develop detailed designs for the refurbishment of Middlesex Guildhall in consultation with the Law Lords. The intention is that these designs will be submitted for the relevant planning permissions in March. Subject to these approvals, it is planned that the Supreme Court will be open for business in October 2008.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Correspondence

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 959W, on correspondence, what guidelines he has given to his officials on the timescale for replying to correspondence from hon. Members. [45831]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) attaches great importance to the prompt handling of correspondence. The Office target is that 80 percent. of MPs' and peers' correspondence is

answered within 15 working days. Cabinet Office produce an annual report to Parliament monitoring the performance of departments and agencies for handling correspondence from Members of both Houses and their report for 2005 will be published in due course.

Guidance for officials on the handling of correspondence is available on the intranet site of the ODPM.

Departmental Effectiveness

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what evaluation his Department has undertaken of the findings of the MORI survey of perceptions of the effectiveness of his Department held by board members and unit heads within the Department; and if he will make a statement; [46577]

(2) if he will make a statement on the findings of the recent MORI poll on perceptions of the effectiveness of his Department held by external stakeholders of the Department. [46578]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Permanent Secretary is responsible for the effective leadership and management of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 2,000 staff and for the Government office network. As part of its work, the Permanent Secretary's management board commissions surveys to ascertain the views of staff on their working environment attitudes to their work in the Department, and the leadership provided by the senior civil service in the Office.

Peter Housden was appointed as Permanent Secretary of the ODPM in October 2005 and gave evidence to the Select Committee for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in November in which he described the purpose of the surveys. In its recent report the Committee welcomed ODPM's commitment to consulting its personnel on their experience of work and congratulated it on its success in encouraging participation in the staff survey undertaken in May 2005.

The Permanent Secretary has subsequently said:

"It is clear that the Office has achieved a huge amount since it was created in 2002. But we are not complacent. We have taken very seriously the views expressed in our stakeholder and staff surveys and put in place robust measures to address these concerns. We can demonstrate considerable strides forward over the past four years, but we all recognise we have more to do."

Responses to the 2005 survey showed that 65 per cent. of staff were satisfied overall with their experience of working in ODPM. This is in line with experience across Government. In responses to the statement

"I believe that this company/organisation is an equal opportunities employer,"

ODPM is in the second quartile of central Government organisations (and slightly above the central Government benchmark) according to the company that undertook the survey. In response to the statement

"I am treated with fairness and respect in this organisation,"

ODPM is close to the top quartile of central Government organisations, also slightly above the central Government benchmark.

In relation to bullying, responses in ODPM were in line with experience elsewhere in Government and in the second quartile of central Government organisations. Nonetheless the Permanent Secretary and Board take the issue extremely seriously and have instituted a wide range of activity to address the issues directly. The Permanent Secretary has confirmed:

"The ODPM does not tolerate bullying or discrimination. A programme of skills and awareness training is being put in place for all senior and middle managers, to ensure the organisation creates a positive climate for all staff and has the right procedures in place to deal with cases where staff are not treated with dignity and respect."

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41270]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Up until November 2004 phones were purchased jointly with the Department for Transport and laptops until April 2003. Information since then held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is as follows:

	Number	*Cost (£000)*
November 2004 to November 2005		
Mobile phones	191	22.4
April 2005 to January 2006		
Laptops	159	174

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what target he has set for improving the energy efficiency of residential accommodation by 2010. [44870]

Yvette Cooper: The Sustainable Energy Act 2003 requires the Government to set an aim to improve energy efficiency in the residential sector in England. This obligation was fulfilled in our 2004 Energy Efficiency Action Plan, which included an aim to save 3.5 million tonnes of carbon per year by 2010.

Section 217 of the Housing Act 2004 requires the Government to take reasonable steps to ensure that, by 2010, the general level of energy efficiency of residential accommodation in England has increased by at least 20 per cent. compared with the general level of such energy efficiency in 2000. Such an increase would be broadly in line with the aim published in the Energy Efficiency Action Plan.

Gypsy Sites

Mark Williams: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he intends to publish the replacement for planning circular 01–94, regarding Gypsy sites and planning. [44055]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to publish the new planning circular for Gypsies and Travellers, to replace DOE circular 1/94 "Gypsy Sites and Planning", shortly.

Local Government Structure (Lancashire)

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether Ministers from his Department plan to visit Lancashire as part of the review of the structure of local government. [44977]

Mr. Woolas: While the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not currently reviewing local government structures the ODPM is engaging in a wide debate about local governance, including the future of two-tier arrangements in the shire areas. Our aim is that, as part of this debate, council leaders in all shire areas will have had the opportunity to put their views to Ministers.

Rough Sleepers

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information his Department *(a)* collects and *(b)* evaluates to estimate the number of rough sleepers. [43042]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* As at June 2005 there were an estimated 459 people sleeping rough in England on any one single night, the lowest ever recorded figure.

This estimate is the result of data submitted to the Department from local housing authorities through their 2005 Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return. Data reported on the HSSA reflect either a recent street count or an estimate, where no recent counts have taken place. Further detail on the methodology employed in producing the annual estimate of rough sleeping in England can be found via the following link on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1150134.

Standards Board for England

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Standards Board for England and adjudication panel have so far spent on administering the complaints against *(a)* the Islington council chief executive and *(b)* the Mayor of London, including legal fees. [42613]

Mr. Woolas: The cases referred to at *(a)* involved allegations of misconduct against a number of councillors in Islington in respect of the appointment of Islington council's chief executive. The Standards Board estimate that the costs incurred in respect of these cases are £675,000 by the Board and £50,000 by the adjudication panel.

The case referred to at *(b)*, in respect of the London Mayor, is ongoing. The Standards Board estimate that the costs incurred to date are £45,000 by the Board and £7,000 by the adjudication panel.

Urban Migration

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent assessment the Government have made of levels of migration out of towns and cities. [42614]

Yvette Cooper: Evidence from the Census shows that between 1991 and 2001 net out-migration from the English core cities (Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield) declined dramatically and Birmingham, Bristol and Leeds all gained rather than lost population. In all cases, the population of city centres has risen as people have started to move back in response to the urban renaissance and new housing and job opportunities.

Preliminary findings from the state of the cities report show that many smaller towns and cities in England, particularly in the south and east, gained population over this period largely as a result of in-migration.

Further information on demographic trends including patterns of migration out of, into and between English towns and cities will be available from the state of cities report, due for publication in spring 2006. A full thematic report on demographic trends in urban England will be published later.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) Management Board meeting minutes of 15 December 2005; if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* the report sent to the Department and HM Revenue and Customs and *(b)* the paper on the sale of VOA data on the lessons learned from the CTR2007 programme. [43031]

Mr. Woolas: Both documents, namely *(a)* the report relating to the lessons learned from CTR2007, and *(b)* the paper relating to the Valuation Office Agency's (VOA) database were prepared as an input to the formulation of Government policy. Accordingly they cannot be made available.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants Living Overseas

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which benefits and allowances are payable to claimants regardless of whether they are normally resident in the United Kingdom; what rules affect whether benefits are payable during short stays overseas; and what steps he takes to monitor the eligibility by place of residence of claimants into whose bank account benefits are paid. [41058]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* Whether a benefit is payable to people who are not resident or present in the United Kingdom depends in the first instance on the entitlement conditions for each individual benefit. These conditions may be modified for EU nationals moving within the EU by the EU Regulations on Social Security for Migrant Workers, and in other cases by reciprocal social security agreements between the United Kingdom and other countries.

The effect of long-term or short-term absence abroad on each social security benefit is summarised in DWP leaflet GL29 'Going Abroad and Social Security Benefits' a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

The Department's International Pension Centre issues 'Life Certificates' to customers abroad to ask to confirm that they are still entitled to United Kingdom

benefit. The customer's signature must be witnessed by a person of standing in their community, for example a minister of religion, a civil servant, a police officer or a doctor. The purpose of Life Certificates is to uncover unreported deaths, and to provide an acceptable level of assurance that benefit is paid correctly.

Life Certificates are issued to a specific group of people chosen by, among other criteria, country, marital status, age and dependents. This allows for a manageable sample of customers to be chosen. The sample will, over time, reflect the customer variety. Customers are not selected on the basis of how they are paid.

Benefit is suspended if there is no contact from the customer after eight weeks. The letter advises the customer of this.

Benefit Entitlements (Women)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what entitlement is available for women who are supporting men aged below the state pension age; [44571]

(2) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women in England and Wales are receiving the adult dependency addition; and if he will make a statement. [44572]

Mr. Timms: There is a range of benefits available to people below State pension age. In some cases people may be entitled to additional benefit if they have adult dependents. Whether or not adult dependency increases are payable will depend on the particular circumstances of each case.

The information relating to the number of men and women getting an adult dependency increase in England and Wales is in the table.

	Men		*Women*	
Benefit	*England*	*Wales*	*England*	*Wales*
State pension	50,400	3,100	100	[1]
Incapacity benefit	29,300	6,600	2,100	400
Severe disablement allowance	800	100	300	[1]
Carer's allowance	7,600	800	4,500	400
Maternity allowance	n/a	n/a	100	[1]
Industrial injuries disability benefit unemployability supplement	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]

n/a = not applicable
[1] less than 100.
Notes:
1. Figures show Dependency increases paid in respect of a spouse or someone looking after a child.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. The maternity allowance figure for women in England is based on a five per cent. sample and is therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
Sources:
State pension, incapacity benefit, carer's allowance and severe disablement allowance information—DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. as at 31 May 2005.
Maternity Allowance—DWP Information Directorate: 5 per cent. sample as at 31 May 2005
Industrial injuries disability benefit unemployability supplement—Industrial Injuries Computer System 100 per cent. as at 31 March 2005.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of benefit fraud in each year since 1990–91; and if he will make a statement. [41331]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department produces estimates for the amount overpaid through fraud across the benefits system. Previously published results are in the table.

	Estimate of benefit fraud (£ billion)	*Comment*
Pre-1998	[1]	A few isolated reviews of fraud and error in individual benefits were carried out, but there was no systematic attempt to estimate the level of fraud across the whole benefit system
1998	2–7	Published in the Green Paper, "Beating Fraud is Everyone's Business". Around £2 billion was considered confirmed fraud, with the remaining £5 billion coming from cases where there was a suspicion of fraud
1998–99 to 2002–03	2	A change in methodology in the ongoing measurement system meant that cases were investigated in more detail, and it was no longer appropriate to include cases where fraud was suspected in the headline estimates. Figure rounded to nearest £1.0 billion
2003–04 initial estimate	1.5	Figure rounded to nearest £0.5 billion
2003–04 revised estimate	1.0	Figure rounded to nearest £0.1 billion. Development work to improve the quality of the estimate suggested that the original figure was an overstatement
2004–05	0.9	Figure rounded to nearest 0.1 £billion

[1] No overall estimate available.

In recent years, benefit fraud has been reducing and now stands at £0.9 billion per year—less than one per cent of total benefit expenditure.

On 13 October 2005, the Department published our achievements in reducing levels of fraud in the benefit system and plans to reduce it further in "Reducing fraud in the benefit system: Achievements and ambitions". Copies are available in the Library.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what representations his Department has received in the last three years regarding the use of lie detectors in the investigation of suspected fraudulent *(a)* incapacity benefit claims and *(b)* other benefit claims; and if he will make a statement; [44432]

(2) what discussions his Department has had in the last three years regarding the use of lie detectors in the investigation of suspected fraudulent *(a)* incapacity benefit claims and *(b)* other benefit claims; and if he will make a statement. [44433]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Secretary of State has received a small number of written representations in the last three years about the use of voice stress analysis. The Department is currently considering how the technology could be piloted in order to establish its effectiveness in relation to DWP business.

Bereavement Payments

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what bereavement payments are available to pensioners; and what the eligibility criteria are. [44569]

Mr. Plaskitt: Pensioners may be entitled to the bereavement payment. This is a lump sum of £2,000. The bereavement payment is available to a person over state pension age if their late spouse was not entitled to a category A retirement pension. A category A retirement pension is one earned by virtue of a person's own national insurance contributions.

Widows and widowers over pension age who are not entitled to receive any bereavement benefits may, subject to the normal qualifying conditions, be entitled to income-related benefits in the same way as any other person, including help towards funeral costs through the Social Fund.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will increase bereavement payments available to people over 65. [44604]

Mr. Plaskitt: We keep all our policies under review but there are no plans to increase the bereavement payment available to people over state pension age.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the Child Support Agency case compliance rate was on the *(a)* new scheme and *(b)* old scheme in each month since 1 January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [41373]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information can be found in table seven of the Child Support Agency's Quarterly Summary Statistics, a copy of which can be found in the House Library.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many claims were rejected by the Child Support Agency as a result of computer error in the 12 months up to December *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; [43367]

(2) what the *(a)* target time is and *(b)* average time taken has been before the claim is processed manually when there is a Child Support Agency computer fault that means a claim cannot be processed. [43368]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to my hon. and learned Friend.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 26 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

(1) You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claims were rejected by the Child Support Agency computer in the 12 months up to December *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005.

There are still a number of defects in the new child support (CS2) computer system which can prevent some cases from progresaing. I am unable to provide a full response to your question, as we do not collect information at the level of detail you have requested. The figures in the table below show the total number of cases requiring technical intervention to progress against all identified defects, outstanding at the end of each month. Data for 2004 is only available for November and December.

These figures include cases which have been removed from the system and are being progresied clerically as well as cases for which no further action is required but which cannot be closed without technical intervention.

The clerical process allows staff to assess these cases off-line and to ensure that any money paid in by the non-resident parent is paid out to the parent with care.

Month	*Total number of cases not being progressed on the CS2 system*
November 2004	36,128
December 2004	25,931
January 2005	30,109
February 2005	28,983
March 2005	25,420
April 2005	25,877
May 2005	21,295
June 2005	23,713
July 2005	25,557
August 2005	26,757
September 2005	28,237
October 2005	29,354
November 2005	32,830
December 2005	33,937

Note:
Figures in the table show the total number of cases not being progressed at that point in time. An IT scan is run monthly to provide this information.

Work is on-going to remedy these problems, and IT releases are planned during 2006 and 2007 to resolve the various system performance issues.

(2) You also asked what the *(a)* target time is and *(b)* average time taken has been where there is a Child Support Agency computer fault that means a claim cannot be processed before the claim is processed manually.

(a) The Agency does not have a set target time to move to clerical action as the final decision to progress clerically is taken on a case-by-case basis. This decision is determined by the

Agency's ability to progress the case and address the customer's needs. Where faults arise, the Agency makes every effort to identify the problem and rectify it as quickly as possible.

(b) Information on the average length of time elapsed before a case is progressed clerically is not available. Each case is decided individually, taking into account the needs of the customer.

I hope you find this helpful.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many cases over the last five years the United Tribunal has made orders for compensation against the Child Support Agency. [44254]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Appeals Service cannot make orders for compensation against the Child Support Agency.

Departmental Travel

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent by his Department on taxi travel in the 2005–06 financial year; and what proportion of such travel was undertaken in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37480]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available

Disability Benefits Unit

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures are in place to ensure services to clients are not disrupted during the reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit; and if he will make a statement. [44326]

Mrs. McGuire: The reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit is a matter for the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran, dated 26 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what measures are in place to ensure services to clients are not disrupted during the reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

In my reply to PQ41115, I referred to pre-implementation activities designed to safeguard services to customers during the reorganisation of the DBU. These include the deployment of a dedicated team that has targeted specific areas of work.

Additional measures include the gathering of management information on a daily and weekly basis through our IT systems and by means of clerical counts. This will ensure that all available work is visible and accounted for and the situation will be reviewed daily. The dedicated team will continue to be used to target specific areas, should this prove necessary.

The Customer Care Helpline will remain open during its usual hours throughout the implementation period and will continue to provide the full range of services. Normal contingencies will be used at periods of peak demand.

I hope this is helpful.

National Insurance Numbers

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the UK are eligible to receive a national insurance number. [44113]

Mr. Plaskitt: This information is not available.

Norcross

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what agencies and directorates within the responsibilities of his Department are located at Norcross. [45939]

Mrs. McGuire: The following agencies and directorates for which the Department is responsible are located at Norcross:

Disability and Carers Service

Jobcentre Plus

The Pension Service

Finance Directorate

Human Resources

Programme and Systems Delivery

Debt Management

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 43W, on Norcross (job losses), how many staff have been re-deployed from *(a)* Norcross, *(b)* Peel Park, *(c)* Warbreck House and *(d)* Moorland Road; and to where these staff have been redeployed. [44845]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the number of staff who have been redeployed from Norcross, Peel Park, Warbreck House and Lytham St. Anne's is in the following table. Staff redeployed from Moorland Road are not separately identified but are included in the total for Lytham St. Anne's.

Site	*Staff redeployed on site*	*Staff redeployed to other sites*	*Total number of staff redeployed*
Norcross	35	28	63
Peel Park	34	12	46
Warbreck House	1	0	1
Lytham St. Anne's	99	16	115
Total Redeployments	169	56	225

Note:
Numbers of redeployments are cumulative from 1 April 2004.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer questions *(a)* 26399, *(b)* 26327 and *(c)* 26331 tabled by the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon on 3 November. [33011]

Mrs. McGuire: Replies have been given to the hon. Member for all the questions as follows:

(a) 26399 on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2450W.

(b) 26327 on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 73W.

(c) 26331 on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 82W.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer question 34383 tabled by the hon. Member for Lancaster and Wyre on 29 November 2005 on the Gershon review. [42427]

Mrs. McGuire: An answer was given to the hon. Member on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1044W.

Pension Credit

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have claimed pension credit. [45855]

Mr. Timms: As at 30 September 2005 there are 1,714,600 women and 996,500 men in receipt of pension credit in Great Britain.

Notes:

1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. PC data from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS) 100 per cent. scans taken on 16 September 2005 and the figures have been rated up to give month end estimates. This is the data used for the Pension Credit Quarterly Progress Report (QPR).
3. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: 100 per cent. GMS data

Pension Service

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints were received by the Pension Service in each of the last 12 months; and what the average time taken to resolve complaints was in the last period for which figures are available. [44522]

Mr. Timms: Details of the number of complaints/inquiries received in each of the last 12 months are in the following table.

The last period for which figures are available is December 2005. The average time taken to resolve complaints was 2.9 days, broken down as follows: direct complaints—two days; MP inquiries—11 days; and PCA inquiries—eight days.

	Customer complaints received	*MP inquiries/ complaints*	*PCA inquiries*	*Total complaints/ inquiries received each month*
January	1,517	204	12	1,733
February	1,532	213	31	1,776
March	1,520	201	22	1,743
April	1,741	196	31	1,968
May	1,307	97	26	1,430
June	1,218	127	22	1,367
July	1,623	134	26	1,783
August	1,945	98	21	2,064
September	1,942	121	41	2,104
October	1,979	101	32	2,112
November	2,257	132	28	2,417
December	1,464	119	34	1,617
Total	20,045	1,743	326	22,114

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what consultations his Department held with *(a)* pensioner groups and *(b)* others before the decision was taken to terminate the contract of the Post Office card account; and if he will make a statement. [45587]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account contract is not being terminated. The Government will continue to fund the card account until March 2010 as always provided for in the contract. My officials will be meeting with customer representative groups and other key stakeholders over the next few weeks to discuss our future strategy for paying benefits and pensions.

Turner Report

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the effect on the employment rate of the Turner report's proposed 3 per cent. employer contribution to the National Pension Saving Scheme. [41387]

Mr. Timms: We are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Commission in detail. At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. One of the Commission's recommendations, to which we will be giving careful consideration, is the need for compulsory employer matching contributions. In looking at this option we will of course take account of possible impacts on business and on the labour market.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Air Passenger Tax

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the proposed diversion of revenue from the air passenger tax to fund development aid will *(a)* be a new addition to the UK aid budget on top of the increases already announced this year and *(b)* replace money from other tax sources. [42420]

John Healey *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

As part of an agreement to implement an international finance facility (IFF), the Government are prepared to allocate some of the existing revenue from the air passenger duty (APD) to provide a long-term financial commitment to the IFF.

The Government remains fully committed to its timetable for reaching 0.7 percent. ODA/GNI by 2013. As set out in Spending Review 2004, with the IFF the UK could achieve the equivalent of 0.7 percent. by 2008–09.

Biwater

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if the Government will act as insurer of last resort to Biwater through the Export Credit Guarantee Department after the company's losses in the Dar Es Salaam water system contract. [40774]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

In June 2003, the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) provided Overseas Investment Insurance cover to Biwater for their City Water, Dar Es Salaam water and sewerage contract.

It is not possible at this stage to say whether the reported action of the Tanzanian authorities will result in any claim against ECGD. If Biwater does submit a

claim, ECGD will examine it under the terms of its Overseas Investment Insurance policy and the Department would only pay a claim if it was satisfied that it was liable under the policy.

Iraq

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006 to the hon. Member for St. Ives (Andrew George), *Official Report*, column 1219W, on Fallujah, what assessment he has made of the position of the 61,000 people displaced from Fallujah since April 2004; and what assessment he has made of the ways in which aid disbursed to Fallujah has been spent, with particular reference to the repair of existing homes and the construction of new homes. [45345]

Hilary Benn: DFID understands that life in Fallujah is slowly returning to normal. A functioning local government exists and the population has voted in both the October 2005 constitutional referendum and December 2005 general election. The US now estimates the city's population to be at 239,000, compared to 300,000 before 2004. The US Government reports that there is currently no-one officially classified as a displaced person in the vicinity of Fallujah; many of those displaced by the conflict moved to stay with relatives or relocated to surrounding cities. A UN survey showed that 17 per cent. of former Fallujan residents (approximately 50,000) did not expect to return to the city.

The United Kingdom has provided advice but not financial aid for the reconstruction of Fallujah. In the aftermath of military operations in Fallujah, DFID staff and consultants made assessment visits to Fallujah and provided advice to the Iraqi Government on the management of health, humanitarian and co-ordination issues. The Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals continues to lead on the reconstruction effort, with support from the US. Financial aid came from the Iraqi Government and the US. We have made no detailed assessment of the ways in which aid disbursed to Fallujah has been spent. However, the following information, drawn from US assessments, may be helpful.

The Iraqi Government has allocated US$100 million for Fallujah's reconstruction and US$178 million in housing compensation for Fallujah's citizens. Shortly after military operations in Fallujah ended, the Government initially estimated the damage to housing to be in the region of US$500 million. Fallujah residents have so far received US$103 million in housing compensation. The Government recently announced a further US$75 million which will be paid to citizens over the next month, bringing the total to US$178 million. It is unclear whether any additional funds will be made available.

The United States is funding 81 reconstruction projects in Fallujah worth over US$100 million. Of these, 14 have been completed, 25 are underway, 22 have contracts awarded but have not yet started and one is being evaluated. Major projects include:

- electrical system improvement—over US$40 million. Electrical distribution lines are now connected to about 80 per cent. of homes and businesses in Fallujah;
- a new waste water treatment plant and collection system—US$28 million. The Fallujah Water Department reports that 98 per cent. of residences in Fallujah are now supplied with safe drinking water;
- new police facilities—US$7.6 million. Two new police stations are due to be completed in April 2006.

Smaller projects include reconstruction of the Fallujah railway station, renovating the court house and constructing new health care facilities. Four new health clinics are due to be completed between February and August 2006.

No official data exist on the repair and construction of homes in Fallujah. Anecdotal evidence from those working in Iraq suggests that around 15 per cent. of homes have been restored. This is expected to increase with the distribution of the extra US$75 million.

Water Action Plan

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he plans to publish the next update on his Department's work on water and sanitation since the Water Action Plan. [45495]

Hilary Benn: We plan to publish the next Water Action Plan update on the DFID external website by the end of March 2006.

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which African countries receiving budget support from his Department have spent 12 per cent. or more of those funds principally in support of increased access to safe water and sanitation. [45496]

Hilary Benn: DFID is currently providing budgetary support to Sierra Leone, Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia. The DFID report 'Financial support to the water sector 2002 to 2004' includes (page 22) an assessment of the percentage of public expenditure (including budgetary support) allocated to water and sanitation by partner countries. In the African countries receiving UK budgetary support, this varies between 0.3 per cent. and 4.8 per cent. No country allocates as much as 12 per cent. from central Government funds to water and sanitation services. Copies of the report are available in the Libraries of the House and also on the DFID website www.dfid.gov.uk.

World Trade Organisation

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he plans to take to promote the interests of the world's poor following the outcome of the World Trade Organisation's ministerial meetings in Hong Kong at the end of 2005. [44848]

Mr. Thomas: DFID recognises that the World Trade Organisation talks held in Hong Kong in December made only modest progress towards a pro development outcome to the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). We remain committed to work towards a successful conclusion to the round by the end of this year. A good deal that promotes the interests of the poor would include improved market access, particularly in agriculture, and significant reductions in trade distorting domestic support.

DFID places paramount importance on ensuring that the voices of developing countries are heard in trade negotiations. For some time DFID has provided advisory support and financial resources to help developing countries formulate their own trade policies and negotiate and participate in trade deals, including the Hong Kong talks; we will continue to provide similar support. Over the coming weeks we will remain in contact with the LDCs on their post-Hong Kong priorities. This will help focus our efforts on promoting the interests of poor countries where they want our support.

DFID believes that greater market access won't in itself enable the poorest countries to benefit more from trade; developing countries have to also overcome significant supply side capacity constraints, such as lack of investment in physical infrastructure and human capital. The international community has committed development assistance to support this so called aid for trade, pioneered by the UK during our twin presidencies of the G8 and EU. We have pledged to increase our own aid for trade to £100 million per annum by 2010. While this is not a substitute for significant changes to WTO trade rules, DFID believes it will assist poor countries to engage in and benefit from the international trading system. DFID will also focus its efforts over coming months on ensuring pledges on aid for trade are honoured.